Stately Style

The bold and brilliant transformation of a luxe Atlanta home achieves harmony in the art of its contrasts.

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Architecture: Robbie Pich, Harrison Design **Interior Design:** Michelle Jennings Wiebe, Studio M

In the heart of Atlanta, a stylish couple began the search for a new home, hoping to blend sophistication and warmth within a welcoming haven for their family of six. Serendipitously, they happened to meet one of the city's most celebrated architects, the late Bill Harrison, and mentioned their housing search. The timing couldn't have been better, as Harrison had recently bumped into former clients looking to downsize from the 1990s Buckhead abode he had remodeled for them more than a decade prior. Boasting classical flourishes and grandly scaled front rooms, the house quickly captured the couple's imagination—with a few caveats. Despite its winning past renovation by Harrison, "These new owners wanted the opposite of what the current home was," their longtime interior designer, Michelle Jennings Wiebe, reveals. "It felt old-world and ornate; think heavy moldings, travertine, dark woods and multilayered window treatments hiding the natural light." Confident Harrison could reinvigorate the residence to fit their personal tastes, the couple turned to his firm once more.

"This project was all about lifestyle," reveals residential designer Robbie Pich, who took over the project when Harrison passed away shortly after work began. Although the formal front rooms were suitable for entertaining, the back of the house felt cramped and compartmentalized. "It became a gut renovation at the back, a whole new footprint," Pich shares. He and Wiebe collaborated closely on the plans, which replaced the back of the home with a two-story addition that emphasizes the symmetry and sunlight their clients prioritized. New twin wings are linked by a large central living area, with the kitchen and family room situated toward the east and the new primary suite found toward the west. Rounding out the revisions, a redesigned lower level now hosts a bar, lounge, game areas and a theater, while new bedrooms and family spaces reside upstairs. The renovation also extended to an overhaul of the pool house, which reawakened the home to its park-like surroundings, revealing tree-lined views that further elevate the interiors.

"The trick was marrying the stately architecture with contemporary rooms," shares Wiebe, whose jumping-off point was the wife's request for white flooring. White oak and sleek porcelain tile provided the solution—and create striking contrast in combination with the designer's darker, bolder selections, including the dining room's showstopping black buffet. "These high-gloss materials add a little glitz, a little sexiness," shares Wiebe, who also specified Charleston green lacquer for the library's existing paneling. "It balances the drama of the adjacent dining room while giving everything a handsome, Art Deco feel," she adds of the moody refuge.

A grand, central corridor ushers guests past those formal front rooms and Pich's sweeping spiral staircase, giving way to the big reveal: floor-to-ceiling windows that flood the double-height living room with daylight. "We approached this elongated space like a hotel lobby: the living room to one side, a chandelier and central table in the middle, and the keeping room, which also has a bar, at the other," Wiebe explains. To enhance its airy feel, she and senior designer Meredith Hill customized two white-to-charcoal ombré rugs to anchor each side, balancing both with clean-lined but curvaceous seating and plenty of negative space. "It's the drama of a limited palette that highlights the sculptural forms of the furnishings," Wiebe explains.

The adjacent eat-in kitchen and strikingly vaulted family room continue the clean white palette—but they're Doritos-friendly zones thanks to an abundance of performance fabrics and rugs resilient against orange fingerprints. "The wife was instrumental in setting the interior design vision, and we discussed how the kids could live easily in these spaces," recounts Wiebe, noting that sophisticated choices need not be at odds with comfort. This theme carried through to the primary suite, a space that mirrors the family room's vaulted proportions, where Wiebe used gentle blush tones to create a cocooning aura. "The big question became how to bring a more human scale to this space," she explains. A canopy bed pulls its lofty dimensions down to earth while a cozy daybed by the window provides a snug spot for backyard views.

Today, the abode dazzles with a brightened, streamlined new appearance—yet retains its grandeur through thoughtful design choices that enhance comfort while preserving elegance. "It's just so much more livable now," says Pich. And for owners looking to embrace a family-friendly approach without sacrificing a bit of glamour and pizzazz, Wiebe adds, "It's a sanctuary."

In the dining room, a dining table by Baker and Natasha Baradaran side chairs from R Hughes appear to float atop polished Portugal porcelain tile flooring by Crossville Studios. Global Views' Facet chandelier illuminates porcelain butterfly wall sculptures by Alain Granell.

A Vanguard Furniture dining table divides the living space into two seating areas, each grounded by a Holland & Sherry rug. Highland House's O'Neal Bench joins chairs by Century at left while a custom Nathan Anthony sectional cradles a Baker lounge chair at right.

Above: At the keeping room bar, Hammerton Studio's Rock Crystal pendant lights shine on Gabriel Scott's brass-detailed Bardot Barstools from Jacqueline Downs Interior Design. Maya Romanoff's Weathered Metals II wallcovering sets off a painting by Leslie Archer.

Opposite: Ashley Norton hardware and Newport Brass faucets pop against the kitchen's bespoke cabinetry by Kingdom Woodworks. Visual Comfort & Co. pendants cast light onto Daltile-sourced porcelain slabs and live-sawn white oak flooring from Mill & Woods.

Above: Gabriel Scott's Myriad Chandelier suspends above a baby grand piano in the music room, where Noir's Hotaru side table sits beside a Donghia Pavel sofa upholstered in Hickory Chair velvet. York Wallcoverings' flocked Velveteen wallpaper softens the acoustics.

Opposite: In the library, a Hickory White desk and Century chair face Nathan Anthony's swiveling Aerie armchairs dressed in Kravet's Villandry velvet. Sherwin-Williams' Greenblack and Harlequin hardware by Myoh update the existing millwork.

Above: John Rosselli's Mia Barrel Chandelier for Visual Comfort & Co. crowns a freestanding Kohler tub in the primary bathroom. The polished Thassos marble and Dolomite limestone shower tiles are from Stonelux; the plumbing fittings are by Newport Brass.

Opposite: Matouk linens and an upholstered Hickory Chair bed bring softness to the primary bedroom. Aerin Lauder table lamps for Visual Comfort & Co. top Theodore Alexander chests. Dmitriy & Co slipper chairs complement the Century chaise.