

# PICTURE



**For Ashley Bray,** opportunity had come knocking at what seemed the perfect time.

After living in Bixby for several years in a home she helped design, Bray felt it was time for a change. She wanted a warm, kid-friendly dwelling where she could raise a family and potentially live for the rest of her life. In 2008, the opportunity arose to purchase land in south

Tulsa, and Bray decided the moment was right to build her perfect dream home.

Single at the time, Bray decided to build with herself in mind. She was inspired by the classic looks of the “Home Alone” house.

“It was always my favorite house,” Bray says of the 1920s Georgian-style home featured in the 1990 Chris Columbus film. “I just love that classic look because they just don’t really build it anymore.”

# perfect

Inspired by traditional charm and architecture, one Tulsa woman's home-building adventure includes luck, love and a little design magic.

by ANNE BROCKMAN



With the famous set in mind, Bray set out to build her house with the help of Duvall Architects. Architect John Duvall worked with Bray to achieve the desired look on the outside while Melissa Bean worked to complete the interior. (Bean has since opened her own design firm, Austin Bean Design Studio, with partner Bailey Austin).

Bray pored over house plans, gathering elements from classic, Georgian and colonial

styles. Bean then transferred onto paper the specific design elements from her ideas and inspirations, all consistent with Georgian style. Bray wanted a paradise just for her — a home that included a family-centered living space, a dream kitchen, unique features, plenty of outdoor living space and a master suite that any woman would love to call her own.

As the planning progressed, it was finally time to begin construction with BMI Properties.

Two polished silver and beaded glass chandeliers light the kitchen, which is decked with Calcutta marble countertops and beveled subway tile to complement the white cabinetry and coffered ceiling. The kitchen and living room are tied together with quartersawn oak floors, planked in varying widths and sizes. The kitchen ceiling inspired the rest of the space's design.

*Continued on p.98*

Continued from p. 97



These custom armoires were designed to balance the living room's oversized fireplace and scale of 12-foot ceilings and 8-foot doors. Chateau Designs built the armoires while Antiques Warehouse created the custom "antiqued" mirrors that were used. The drapes were chosen to soften the space and complement the fabrics in adjacent rooms.



Influences from Daniel Bray's love of flying are present throughout the house, including the items on the entryway table.



The home's 12-foot ceilings grow taller in the hearth room, where a stone fireplace centers the space.

The building process took almost two years, partly because of the time involved in prepping the undeveloped, wooded home site.

Around the same time Bray was breaking ground on her dream home, she began dating Daniel, who would become her husband in October 2010. Their son was born when the home was nearing completion.

"During construction I was miserably pregnant," Bray says. "Mel took the reins, and she did what I needed her to do."

As the saying goes, life waits for no one. With plans already in place, the couple moved forward to create Bray's dream.

Attention to detail is evident throughout the 8,400-square-foot home.

"We did a lot of things in here the right way, not the easy way," Bean says.

One example is the kitchen's coffered ceiling, which both Bray and Bean say launched much of the design inspiration in the down-

*Continued on p. 100*



The master bathroom's trefoil-patterned tile provides a soothing color palette for the entire room.



After drawing inspiration from a magazine, the designer and homeowner worked to create a dream closet complete with washer and dryer, purse and shoe storage, plenty of space for hanging clothes and three full-length mirrors.



The goal of the master bedroom design was to create an informal space that was sunny, yet cozy. The linen-upholstered bed and drapes add to the casual feel.

*Continued from p. 98*

stairs living space that includes the kitchen, informal dining area, hearth room and living room.

The four spaces also are a reflection of Bray's goal to make the home an inviting retreat. Each of the spaces has characteristics of its own, from the brick floor and commanding stone fireplace in the living room, to the custom armoires in the hearth room, to the handcrafted cabinetry and beveled marble subway tile in the kitchen. All of these elements contribute to the overall cohesiveness and the updated, traditional aesthetics of the home.

Details abound as well in the master suite, which includes the master bedroom, bathroom, exercise space and closets.

"The master bedroom, other than the kitchen, is pretty much where we live, so it had to be cozy and informal," Bray says. "I just wanted (it) sunny and bright and light."

With blackout curtains, Bray was able to have her bright bedroom while making the space adaptable to Saturday morning sleep-ins. Bean also designed the space to be beautiful, yet casual, with several textures, including using linen for the drapes and headboard.

During the home's design phase, Bean and Bray happened to be in different Ann Sacks Tile stores in different states on the same day. Bean called the homeowner to say she had just found the perfect tile for the master bath. By chance, Bray was looking at the same sample. Was it fate? Perhaps. But more importantly, it set the palette for what would become a dream bathroom.

The trefoil design made of honed Ming green, blue celeste and white thassos marble paves the floor with a complementary trim, floor and shower design. Five windows fill the bathroom with natural light that reflects off the silver chandelier, chrome fixtures and flickering candles.

Not to be outdone is Bray's closet. While Bray doesn't consider herself a fashionista, the closet is one even Carrie Bradshaw could envy. Inspired by a picture from a magazine, the space is complete with windows, a washer and dryer, three full-length mirrors, shoe and purse storage, four hanging clothes sections and a sitting area.

"We wanted this to be her space," Bean says.

Daniel's closet pales in comparison — a hazard of falling in love and getting married during home construction already in progress.

"It was one of those things that was an afterthought, and we couldn't really do anything about it," Bray says. "We would have preferred to have our closet together. In the tiny rent house (we lived in while this house was being built) we shared a closet and bathroom space, so when we moved we kind of missed each other."

While the overall process took two years, the family can't imagine life anywhere else. That's why the detailed processes were important and why Bray designed the home the way she did.

"I wanted this to be the last house that we live in," Bray says. "We are going to stay here, hopefully, for a long time, so it was really important to get it right." ☐