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BOLD BUSINESS

VIBRANT YET REFINED, DISTINCT YET COHESIVE, PERSIAN YET SWEDISH—THE ROOMS OF THIS FAMILY-FOCUSED HOME TELL ONE COUPLE'S STORY OF LOVE AND TRIUMPH

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A STRIKINGLY SIMPLE BLACK-AND-WHITE COLOR PALETTE ALLOWS THE DETAILS OF THIS MAIN-FLOOR LIVING SPACE—LIKE THE PAIR OF STRIPED ARMCHAIRS, GEOMETRIC COFFEE TABLE, AND GOLD STRIP OF DETAILING ACROSS THE FIREPLACE WALL—TO TAKE CENTER STAGE.



The year is 2008, and a young entrepreneur just sold his prized sneaker collection in an effort to springboard a new business with his wife. The unusual, and seemingly permanent, sacrifice for the fashion-loving couple not only generated equity, but—fast-forward to 2021—resulted in a modern-day success story. Another byproduct of the investment? A new 7,327-square-foot home in the Twin Cities’ west suburbs.

Now juggling multiple businesses, two young children, and 80-hour work weeks, the couple needed a home that prioritized convenience and maximized every moment of their bustling lives. “We looked at several other properties, but we just kept coming back to our goal: to keep our family closer together,” the wife says. “We moved to have a shorter commute to work, to our bank, our grocery store...we wanted to take our circle and make it smaller.”

The outcome: a six-bed, six-bath phenomenon on a beautiful near-acre lot that is all that—and then some. To meet the family’s needs in both form and function, they enlisted Rebecca Remick, owner/builder of Edina-based City Homes, and Kathryn Alexander, architectural designer and part owner at Alexander Design Group. The first request was to integrate separate yet connected spaces that encourage multiple uses but still allow for distinct adult/child boundaries. “A lot of families let kids infiltrate their entire home,” the wife explains. “I believe there’s a kid space, and there’s an adult space. That needs to be respected, and I actually think our kids appreciate that.”

For example, the playroom and adjoining sport court (completely kid-centric with a slide that connects the two spaces) allow Mom to keep a watchful eye from the kitchen; a no-kids-allowed office keeps quiet conversation and business matters private; and an in-law suite above the garage boasts a full kitchenette, separate entry, washer/dryer set, and more.

The main challenge of creating those separate spaces was making sure the house still felt like one home with a cohesive theme, Remick explains. The couple’s early decisiveness and excitement helped, she says, as did the careful and thoughtful decisions by interior designers at The Sitting Room. “We really had to make sure the angles didn’t fight with each other,” says one of the designers. “I ask myself, ‘When I’m sitting here, what do I see? When I’m sitting in a chair looking across the room to the entry, do I love every part of this view? Is it exciting?’ I need to make sure each space flows but feels different. Otherwise—especially with open floor plans—it starts to feel a little muted.”

Thankfully nowhere near that, the interiors themselves are inspired by the husband’s and wife’s heritage: He’s Persian and loves jewel tones and a touch of glam, while she’s Swedish and prefers clean lines, white finishes, and all things comfy and cozy. The process began with a Pinterest





CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: WHEN CRAFTING THIS 7,327-SQUARE-FOOT ABODE IN THE TWIN CITIES' WEST SUBURBS, A GRAND ENTRYWAY WITH A HIGH-CONTRAST, ELEGANT DESIGN WAS A FIRM NON-NEGOTIABLE FOR THESE HOMEOWNERS. A NEARBY POWDER BATHROOM INCORPORATES THE HUSBAND'S LOVE FOR BOLD PATTERN AND COLOR. DOWNSTAIRS, A FULL BAR, WINE CELLAR, AND COZY FAMILY ROOM MAKE FOR THE PERFECT SPOT TO UNWIND AFTER LONG WORK DAYS. BACK UPSTAIRS, THE KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM—WHICH FEATURES A FLORAL MURAL BY ABBY HOLDEN—PAINT A LASTING IMPRESSION WITH THEIR RICH COLORS AND MODERN DESIGNS.





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: A MASSIVE TWO-STORY CLOSET HOUSES THE FASHION-LOVING HOMEOWNERS' THRONG OF LUXURY ITEMS, DESIGNER CLOTHING, AND TREASURED SNEAKER COLLECTION—ONE ORIGINALLY SOLD TO SPRINGBOARD THEIR NOW-THRIVING BUSINESS. PERSONAL SPACES (LIKE THE MASTER BEDROOM, BATHROOM, AND DUAL-LANE, HIS-AND-HERS OFFICE THAT FEATURES A WORKING LIBRARY) ARE BOTH ABUNDANT AND MEANINGFUL TO THE CLIENTS. THE COUPLE'S TWO YOUNG CHILDREN HAVE SPACES OF THEIR OWN, TOO—including A PLAYROOM AND KID-CENTRIC SLIDE THAT LEADS TO AN ADJOINING LOWER-LEVEL SPORT COURT. NEARBY, A GYM, YOGA STUDIO, BAR, AND WINE CELLAR ROUND OUT THE DOWNSTAIRS ATTRACTIONS.





board, one bursting with photos that would later inspire the metal finishes, leopard and snakeskin patterns, and bold color selections. Despite its many different components, the design works, largely due to the home's neutral base palette, which allowed the designers to layer elements and "have excitement everywhere" without overwhelming the eye. A designer says, "If you put too much special stuff by each other, it stops being special."

This vibrant yet refined approach is further demonstrated in the materials, art, lighting, and finishes used throughout the home, but nowhere quite like the open-concept main living space. There, a black-and-white theme takes precedence, and pops of color keep every view sensational. One can't walk through the seating area without noticing a pair of striped armchairs or the thin, gold strip of delicate detailing across the fireplace wall. The nearby dining room makes an equally impactful impression with its herringbone wood floors, large windows—two of Remick's favorite elements—and a hand-painted floral mural by local artist and entrepreneur Abby Holden. "There's just so much good in it," the wife adds.

From the dinner table, views of the adjacent kitchen intrigue with its all-black cabinets and elaborate geometric backsplash, while organization techniques by NEAT Method's Lauren Alsop promote harmony where it's needed most. (Think sectional inserts inside drawers for order and definition; durable, translucent bins in the pantry for easy snack grabbing; turntables in tricky corners to maximize space; and clear canisters to quickly gauge ingredients levels.) "Lauren looked at every cabinet and every corner, and because of that, I feel so settled and comfortable in my home," the wife says.

That organization is only enhanced by the kitchen's symmetry—a more abstract desire Alexander picked up on during preliminary design meetings. "[The homeowners] never actually said this, but it was very clear to me," she recalls. "They wanted something that was symmetrical; like the symmetry of the kitchen windows and the balance around the range. The little things were big things to them."

Another big thing—in both priority and literal size—is the entryway. A favorite space and firm non-negotiable for the family, the foyer makes a bold statement with its black-and-white checkerboard tile, extravagant crystal chandelier, and simple elegance. "There isn't one area that doesn't stand out," says Remick. "Every space makes sense exactly where it is."

That includes the business owners' office that doubles as a library—a dual-lane, his-and-hers space featuring far more than just a monitor and mousepad. "We were married in a library, so we put one in between [our desks]," the wife explains. "It's a space that brings us back to when we had nothing. There's a lot behind it—our beginning, the hard work we've put in, and our marriage."

Additional standout spaces in and outside the home include a yoga studio, gym, family room, wine cellar, and bar on the lower level; a pool and outdoor entertainment area in the backyard; and a lavish owners' suite defined by its two-story master closet—an area Alexander says was "tweaked to perfection" and "a huge detail to get right." It houses a throng of Chanel, luxury lifestyle items, and, most notably, a floor-to-ceiling sneaker collection.

"When we first started out and my husband sold his entire sneaker collection to put into the business for equity, he said to me, 'You know, one day, when we can, I want to buy these back because they all have a story,'" the wife says, "and when we were able to, we bought all the shoes back." Every single pair...plus a few hundred more, perhaps. ❧