

Capturing Home



This California design duo uses mood boards as the creative beginnings for beautiful and expressive spaces.

When we are reimagining the spaces people live in, we always begin with *how* they live. We look at their everyday routines, what they love to do, the things that give them the most joy when they are at home.

Details like color palettes, furniture styles, and surfaces will soon come into play, but the most important step is this first one: During our initial conversations, we grab hold of the vision for how a space can tell the story of someone's life. When people feel truly at home, the difference in how they live is profound. We want our design to offer that freedom.

Once we have the vision, we use a mood board to bring it to life. For 14 years we have worked as a team, with Kate as a stylist and Amy as a lifestyle photographer. This background gives us a unique visual approach. We always look for simple yet dynamic elements to add in layers. Textures. Colors. Personal art. Items that ring true to the homeowner. Then we move those objects around like pieces in a puzzle. We don't have rules, we just go from the gut. Once it's right, we capture the mood board with photographs. Those photos become the compass that steers the rest of our design.

We want people to have moments of sheer joy—when they walk into a space that feels like who they want to be and where they want people to gather. By looking closely at a few mood boards we've created next to the finished rooms, our hope is that you glimpse how the vision for a space can translate into final execution. Then when you are thinking of your own spaces, that this process might be inspiration for how your dreams can become reality.



mood board: WARM AND WELCOMING

For this newly single father of two, we wanted a comfortable space where he and his girls could forge new family memories. When one daughter requested pink, we wanted to honor that with a color that her father would like as well. Our mood board shows the shades we worked with before creating our own toned-down blush. We envision the girls' artwork connecting them to the space. And the foraged elements represent the California-casual attitude we wanted to embrace.

ROOM TO GROW

The finished kitchen stayed true to our original vision for a lighter, brighter place to spend time together. The patina on the playful tile will only look better as it ages. The strawberry plant growing outside the window over the sink means they will always have a piece of nature in reach.





mood board:
MAKING IT PERSONAL

For this working musician, we wanted to incorporate her energy and rock-star edge while still leaving details that nurture the soft ease that comes along with her creativity. Our mood board showed this mix with feminine shades complementing the black-and-white foundation we knew would lead the space.

COLOR AND LIGHT

With the bold contrast of the checkerboard floor, a lowered pendant to anchor the space, and whimsical chairs, we were able to keep a relaxed feeling while still giving the room a pulled-together sophistication that feels right for gatherings. Minimalist light fixtures add depth on the back wall, which helps the small room feel spacious, as does the daily sunlight that floods in.



INSET PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF MAGNOLIA DISCOVERY VENTURES LLC. © 2023. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMY NEUNSIINGER

mood board:
MIDCENTURY GEMS

This couple said that in the past they had trouble agreeing on design styles, so we wanted an eclectic mix that would give everyone something to love. Because the house is midcentury, we wanted finishes and patterns that would speak to that time period, with modern pieces mixed in as well. We intentionally kept the color palette predominantly neutral so that when we reached for color, it would really pop.

FINDING CENTER

For a room with white walls and no focal point, we used a bookcase as the center to begin with and then build out from. On it we layered items that bring interesting shapes, texture, and meaning into the space, and ones that really bring the color palette of the mood board to life in the room. Retaining some empty space on shelves keeps the feel airy and casual.



mood board:
OLD MEETS NEW

With kids getting older, this family of five could finally make room in their very functional home for a beautiful point of view. Our mood board brings in elements they already had—deep wood tones in antique furnishings and colors that reflect the natural California landscape—for us to arrange in a new way.

SPACE TO GATHER

The island is the heart of this kitchen. Opening it up immediately gave the room a lighter feel. New countertops and cabinet fronts add the updated feel we wanted while staying in a natural color palette. The art and chandeliers offer a touch of elegance that's kept approachable when combined with houseplants and wooden barstools.