

# Southern home

## The COLOR Issue

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# JOY IN COLOR

Designer Ashley Goforth creates  
a joyful home for a Houston family  
from the ground up.

TEXT TIFFANY ADAMS | PHOTOGRAPHY KERRY KIRK







In the formal living room, the side chair's navy-and-pink floral fabric was the starting point for the design. The homeowner loves hot pink, so Goforth brought it out as an accent on pillows and the drapery trim. "The house has a lot of color, so we tempered it here to make it feel sophisticated," Goforth says.









When Allison and Geoff Leach made the decision to build, they weren't interested in neutral interiors. "I wanted color, and I knew exactly who could help me with it," Allison says. "Otherwise, this house would be blue and white everywhere," she adds with a laugh. Having followed Houston native designer Ashley Goforth on Instagram, Allison and Geoff reached out to her while blueprints for their River Oaks home were being drawn.

While their neighborhood is well-established, the existing structure on the Leaches' property was in need of extensive repairs in some areas, prompting them to want a fresh start. Working with architect Kelly Cusimano, they formulated a plan for a new home tailored to their needs and tastes on the same site, even updating the pool and an outdoor pavilion. "This home is slightly more traditional than some of Kelly's work, but it fits perfectly within the neighborhood," Goforth explains.

Built with family as well as entertaining in mind, the downstairs flows from formal living and dining rooms into a more casual lounge area with a quartet of conversation chairs and a pass-through bar.

A Schumacher wallpaper in the dining room ties together the home's colors. An antique chandelier, custom mahogany table, and newly reupholstered dining chairs complete the look. Steel doors open to the home's wine room, while the doorway leads to a china pantry, two features that offer convenience when serving a crowd. At the entry, guests are met by a French marble-top buffet paired with a work by South Carolina artist Emily Jeffords.





Above: A lounge area outside the bar is a chic spot for the couple to host friends. Below: His-and-hers powder rooms flank the service window at the bar. "We call these the Barbie and Ken baths," Goforth says with a laugh. Opposite: The homeowner wanted a blue kitchen from the start. Goforth carried the color onto the trim to create a graphic outline. A lighter shade is seen in the adjoining breakfast nook's wallpaper.







His-and-hers powder baths, each with a decidedly masculine and feminine style their own, flank the sides of the bar. Deeper into the residence, the kitchen adjoins a casual family room where the couple and their daughter can relax. “I have a knack for family-friendly projects,” Goforth says. “I want homes to be both livable and luxurious because we have to be able to truly live in them.”

To this point, the selections—from furnishings to accessories—are ones that truly bring the owners joy. “I like to take my clients to Decorative Center Houston and ask them to find five fabrics they really love. We use those as building blocks,” Goforth says. For example, the navy-and-pink fabric seen on the living room’s armchair was one of Allison’s selections and the starting point for the hot pink accents. “I thought her play on color was so much fun!” Goforth says. “They wanted a white house that was fresh and crisp but also bright.”

While blue and white are not the only colors seen, Goforth notes unifying neutral walls and a thread of blue do tie the home’s interiors together. From the sky







The family's main hangout is located just off the kitchen, allowing conversation to flow easily between the two spaces. Goforth notes the large-scale work by Virginia Beach artist Lucy Williams was found at the end of the project but became a unifying piece. Outdoors, a covered porch area and separate pavilion offer plenty of room for friends and family to gather around the pool.







A separate sitting room and bedroom give the Leaches' teenage daughter plenty of space for homework and hanging out with friends, while the lighter palette is reflective of her style.

blue seen on the breezeway ceiling to the rich navy in the primary bedroom, shades of the color are found in nearly every space on the ground floor. Upstairs, in their teenage daughter's room, a lighter palette comes into play. "Teens are into softer hues," Goforth says, pointing to the gray, pink, and green tints in the room. Consulting with both mother and daughter, Goforth opted to create a mural using a botanical wallpaper they all loved and focused the rest of the design around the focal point.

Goforth also felt it was important to add visual interest with detailed layers and timeless pieces. For example, the dining room has an air of formality thanks to a traditional prism chandelier and a scenic wallpaper. "We wanted to go for the wallpaper to up the level of interest in this room," the designer says of the standout feature. Similarly, antiques find a home among more contemporary furnishings. "I feel like every house needs an antique to give the home character and age," Goforth says, pointing to a French marble-top buffet in the entry. Custom furniture fabrication, including chairs in the family room that were made using the dimensions of a chair that belonged to Allison's father, also play into the intentional personalization throughout the spaces. "I think this was a really fun project for Allison. She is joyful, kind, and really a breath of fresh air. I think that is exuded in her home," Goforth says.







The primary suite is a symphony of blues; navy takes the lead in the bedroom, and softer shades play off it in the bath and sitting room. "It all coordinates, but each space is differentiated," Goforth says of the approach.





