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CLEAN SLATE

When a pair of empty nesters moved from Chicago to Denver, they wanted to hit the refresh button, with a completely (and we mean *completely*) redone home in Cherry Creek North.

BY ALISON GWINN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMILY MINTON REDFIELD

Out with the old, and in with the new: That was the guiding principle behind the remodel of this Cherry Creek North home by Duet Design Group.

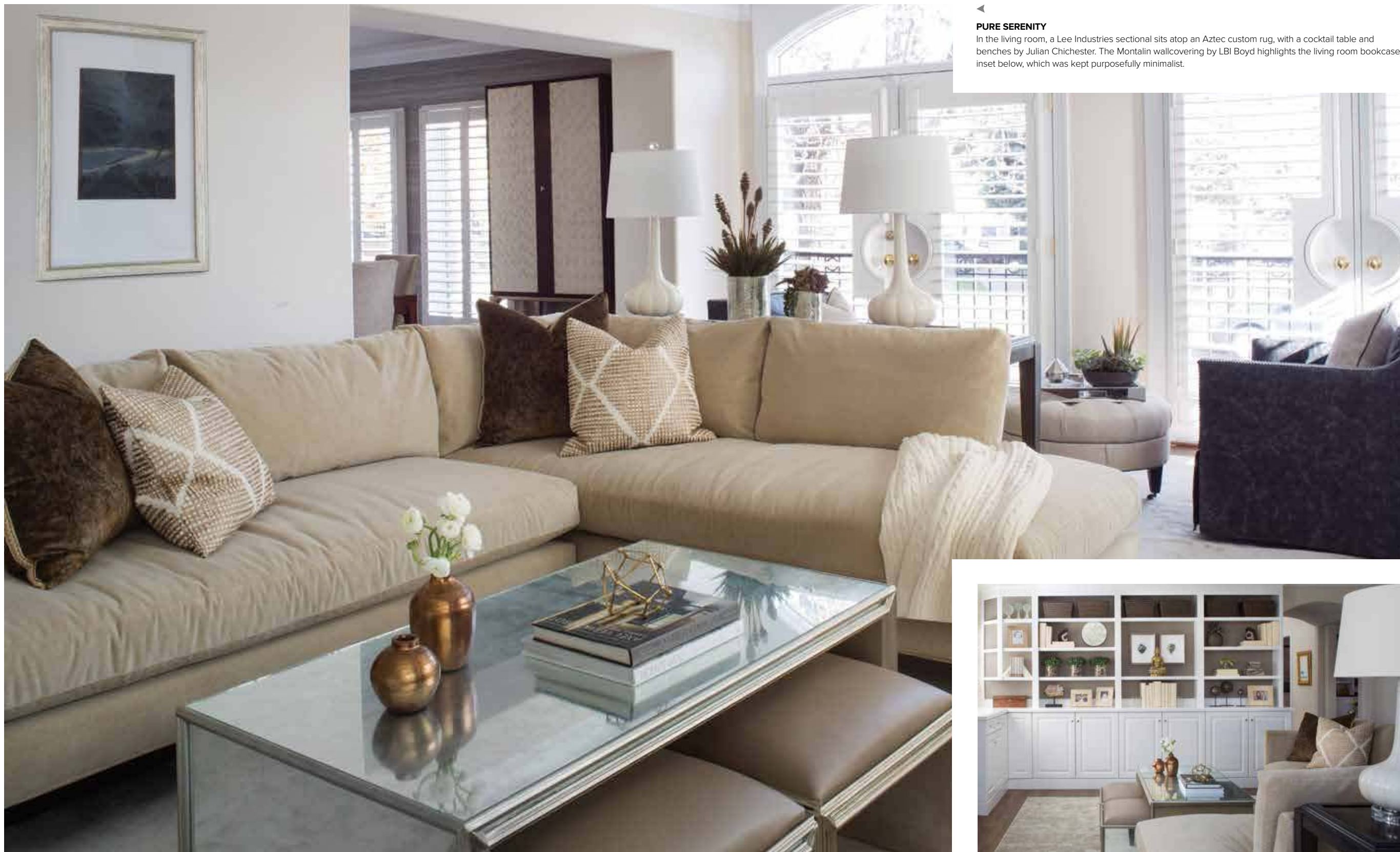
The homeowners, Bob and Micaela Gibson, empty nesters who had both recently retired from United Airlines (he was a 777 pilot, she was a human resources executive), downsized from a huge suburban Chicago home and wanted to spend their retirement in Denver, which is equidistant between their two children and their families.

The house they found, which had been built in the early 1990s, was in a perfect location—“walkable to everything,” says Micaela—but it felt tired. Besides which, it was empty.

“In Chicago, I’d had an estate sale and sold everything,” Micaela says. “I had a lot of antiques, Asian screens, Oriental rugs, and chichi curtains in that home. It was very formal, and the scale of the furniture was too big for this place. I didn’t want to do that any more—I wanted something lighter and airier.”

Though she initially thought she could redo the approximately 3,000-square-foot house on her own, she changed her mind when she saw Duet Design Group’s work. “Once I saw their website, I knew they were what I was looking for—and as soon as I met with them [the firm was founded and is co-owned by Devon Tobin

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PURE SERENITY

In the living room, a Lee Industries sectional sits atop an Aztec custom rug, with a cocktail table and benches by Julian Chichester. The Montalin wallcovering by LBI Boyd highlights the living room bookcase, inset below, which was kept purposefully minimalist.



▲ Vivian mini chandeliers and a Katie Acorn pendant, all from Visual Comfort, brighten up the kitchen. Hi-Ho-Lo counter stools from Caracole and Hartmann Forbes grassweave shades complete the space.

► **DINING IN**
A striking Currey and Co. Frappe oval chandelier is the centerpiece of the dining room, with walls in Nobilis Monumenta wallcovering and a Caracole hutch.

and Miranda Cullen], I knew they were the designers I wanted to work with.”

“I felt like she wanted to reinvent herself and her identity here,” says Tobin. “And what better place to do it than in your home’s interior? She wanted a totally new feeling. She came from a very, very traditional home in Chicago. She wanted this home to be elegant and light and bright and feel the complete opposite.”

The Gibsons began their work with Duet by filling out an eight-page questionnaire, to which they attached photos of designs they liked. “Then the designers came to our house with maybe six bags full of fabrics, and we sat down at the dining room and went through them,” says Micaela. “My husband called it the Rorschach test, because we could only look at a fabric for a second before saying whether we liked it or not. In fact, at one point, he tried to fool them by saying he liked a particular fabric. Devon said, ‘No, you don’t.’ And he said, ‘You’re right, I don’t!’”

The Gibsons love all the sunshine and light in Colorado, and overall, they wanted a neutral,

calm look. And with four grandchildren under age 4 who visit often, they wanted the furniture to be sophisticated but also durable.

“The thing she kept saying to me was, ‘I want it to be very elegant, very calm.’ I think that after spending 30-something years with kids’ toys and equipment, with lots of pattern to create a nurturing environment for your kids, your life shifts and you think, ‘I need to calm down,’” says Tobin. “She also said, ‘I want this house to be livable for my grandchildren, but take into account that my grandchildren don’t live here.’”

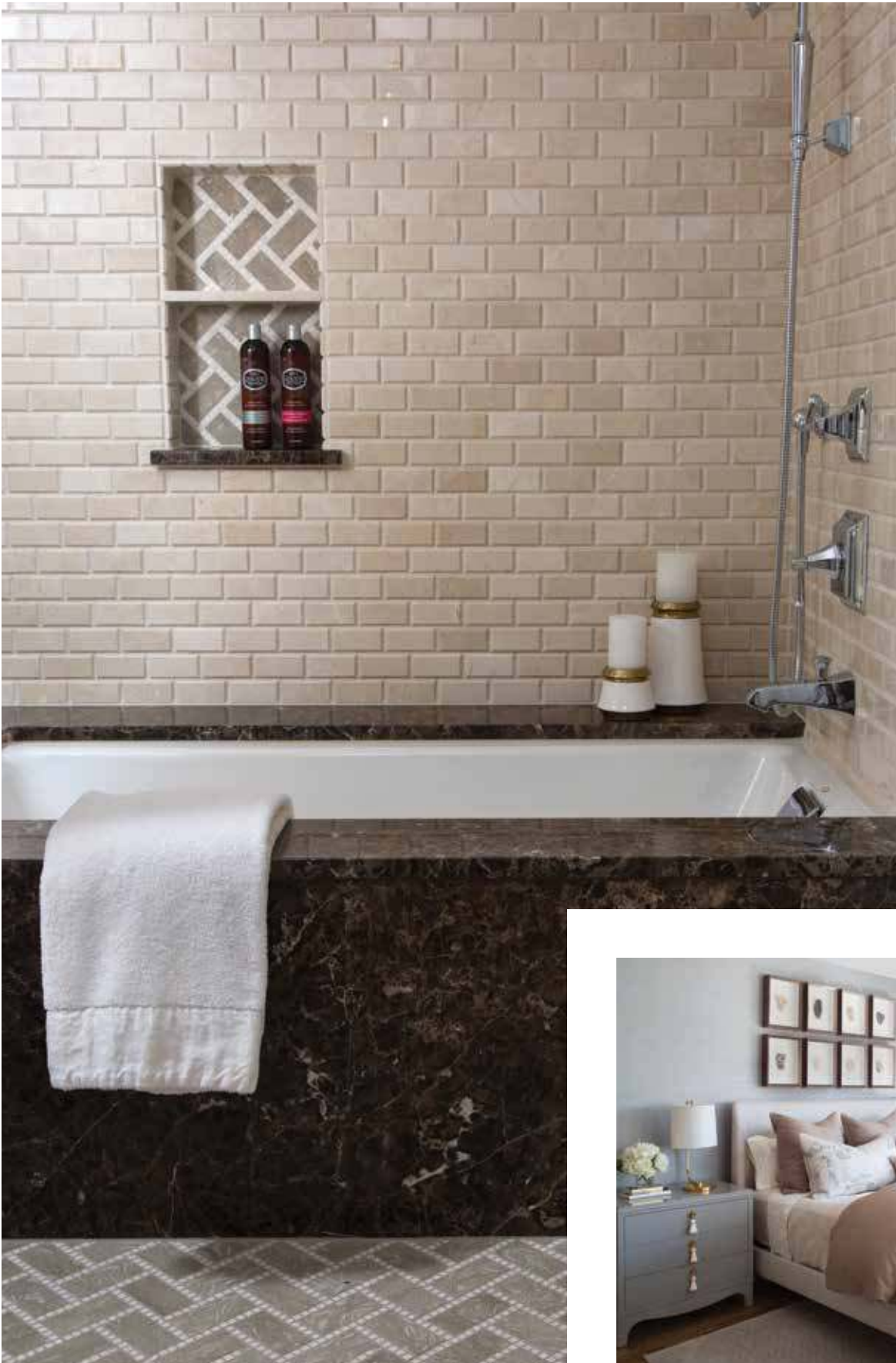
As with all of its work, the plan that Duet Design Group came up with was a full-blown design—“every piece of fabric, every tile, every curtain, all of the accessories and art, which was great,” says Micaela. “It was really such a professional presentation, and we decided to move forward with everything. They heard what we said and they really nailed it—the color schemes, the fabrics, everything.”

The result was a whole-house redo. “We gutted the kitchen, updated the floors, painted everything, updated the powder bathroom, redid the built-ins, and fixed a fireplace,” says Tobin. “We designed and touched every single room in the house” (except the master bath).

Center to the remodel was a redo of the kitchen, which now includes a huge island with a quartz countertop, huge windows, and bright white cabinetry. That flows into a living room that is clean and serene. And on the lower, garden level, Duet created a guest area that includes a guest bedroom, new bath, and two other bedrooms. “People just love that area,” says Micaela. “The bath has a heated floor and a shower-tub combination that is just beautiful.”

“When I walk in there, I feel elevated,” says Tobin. “There’s a level of sophistication and maturity, the whole palette of the home is warm but neutral, and yet it’s also no-fuss.” +





RESOURCES

Interior Designer

Duet Design Group
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303.783.9327
duetdesigngroup.com



WARMING UP

A redone bath incorporates a floor tile from SOCI in a Manhattan pattern as well as an Emperador Dark marble surround and Crema Marfil natural stone wall tile, both from Daltile.



PRIVATE RETREAT

A Kravet rug anchors the master, which has a Caracole Hug Me king bed, Oomph Easton nightstands, and Visual Comfort table lamps. The art is from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams.

