

Tip

TILE THE WHOLE WALL.
“In European bathrooms, tiles typically don’t just go on the floors—and when we can get away with it, we go for the floor-to-ceiling look too,” says interior designer Miranda Cullen. “Having that extra texture gives the space a more special feel.”

Jour de Force

A wall-to-wall transformation aligns a Greenwood Village home’s interiors with its French Country-style facade—and its owners’ taste for timeworn and timeless beauty.

story by CHRISTINE DEORIO • photography by SUSIE BRENNER

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The master bedroom’s tight grouping of framed botanical prints from Uttermost “gives your eye something to interact with” below the vaulted, tongue-and-groove paneled ceiling, Cullen says. The latter is accented with wooden beams, decorative metal braces, and an Odyn custom ceiling fan from Fanimation.

BEFORE



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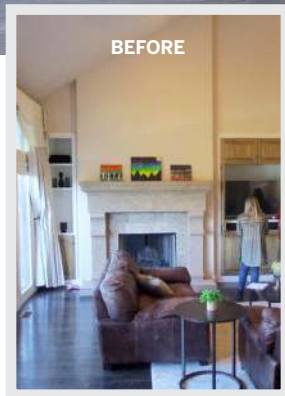
Hubband and wife Jason Rovak and Erin Flynn-Rovak had no intention of leaving their Congress Park neighborhood when they asked their real-estate agent to help them find a larger home to accommodate their growing family. So, when she told them there was a Greenwood Village house they just had to see, their response was, “Nope! Not moving to the ‘burbs,” Rovak says. But when they (hesitantly) agreed to at least see the house, it took about a minute for the couple to change their minds. “As soon as we pulled in the driveway, we said, ‘OK, we can look at this one,’” Rovak says. “We’ve always liked a classic French-country or industrial-meets-farmhouse kind of look, and this house, with its stone and stucco exterior, looked like an Old-World building.”

What took the couple far longer was determining how to make their new home’s plain-Jane interiors match that charming exterior and the classic aesthetic they both love. “Erin and I are terrible at shopping,” Rovak says. “We both have an idea of what we like, but we’re really bad at implementing it. So, for four years, [the house] looked like we had just moved in.”

Finally, the couple called Devon Tobin and Miranda Cullen, principals of Littleton-based Duet Design Group, for help—initially just with fresh paint colors and some built-ins and perhaps the master bedroom and bath. “And then Devon comes in and says, ‘Your kitchen is too small, your dining room is too big. Let’s knock out this wall,’” Rovak says. “After Erin and I recovered from the shock, we said, ‘Well, she’s kind of right about everything.’”

“The spaces really didn’t function in their original format,” Cullen explains. “When you walked in the front door, you were dumped into this really big room that the clients weren’t sure how to use. ‘Is it an entry foyer, a family room?’ they wondered.” The designers decided that both functions were possible, and employed some smart space-planning to delineate the “rooms” within the room.

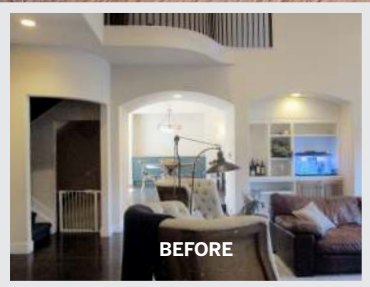
First, they strategically placed a round, distressed-wood table—formerly the family’s dining table—beneath a cluster of



Above: The designers chose a rich blue hue to accent the family room fireplace, then opted for a neutral yet texture-rich palette for the rest of the space. A pair of deconstructed wingback chairs from Restoration Hardware creates a seating area in the foreground; behind them, an antique workbench cozies up to a tailored sectional sofa from Precedent, which faces a custom, built-in television cabinet.

Previous spread: “I walk into our new bathroom and say, ‘I don’t think I can afford this hotel,’” Rovak says of the updated space, which features porcelain floor tiles—from MSI’s Brickstone Series Collection—that look like timeworn brick pavers, custom pebble-glass shower and lavatory doors with black metal frames, and an elegant soaking tub by Kohler. “A soft little something of a chandelier added just a bit of a feminine touch to the room’s more industrial-looking finishes,” Cullen says of the Fitzjames lantern by Currey & Company.

THIS SPREAD AND PREVIOUS SPREAD, BEFORE: PHOTOS COURTESY OF DUET DESIGN GROUP (3)



Tip
LET THE EYE REST.
 To ease the transition from a low-ceilinged entryway to an open living room, Cullen created a “midlevel interaction” with a grouping of blown-glass pendant lights that gives the eye a place to rest before taking in the dramatic vaulted space.



The entryway’s cluster of blown-glass pendant lights from Kichler’s Riviera collection—each hung at a different height—catches the eye before allowing it to wander higher to a custom iron Juliet balcony and a rustic, distressed-wood ceiling treatment. Glass cabinet doors display drinkware in the family room’s built-in dry bar.

blown-glass pendant lights hung just inside the front door, “allowing for a moment of pause when you walk in the house,” Cullen says. “You’re greeted by this really warm gathering of collected accessories, and then you can walk [around the table] to the left or right to get into the family room.”

Next, the design team divided that too-big family room into three distinct spaces: a lounging spot next to a dry bar, a tailored sectional sofa for watching television—which can be hidden within a new, custom built-in cabinet—and a cozy armchair by the fireplace, which the designers highlighted with a bold blue mantel.

In the adjacent kitchen, Cullen and Tobin opened up walls, relocated appliances, and reconfigured the island—which now features an attached dining table—to create a functional space. “The drop-down

Tip
PRIORITIZE PROPORTIONS.
 “Put a teeny pedestal sink and mirror in a powder room with a tall ceiling and you’ve got a hot mess,” Cullen says. But “choose a tall mirror and bigger light fixtures and you’ll create that mid-level moment, so you don’t feel thrown into a skinny tall space.”

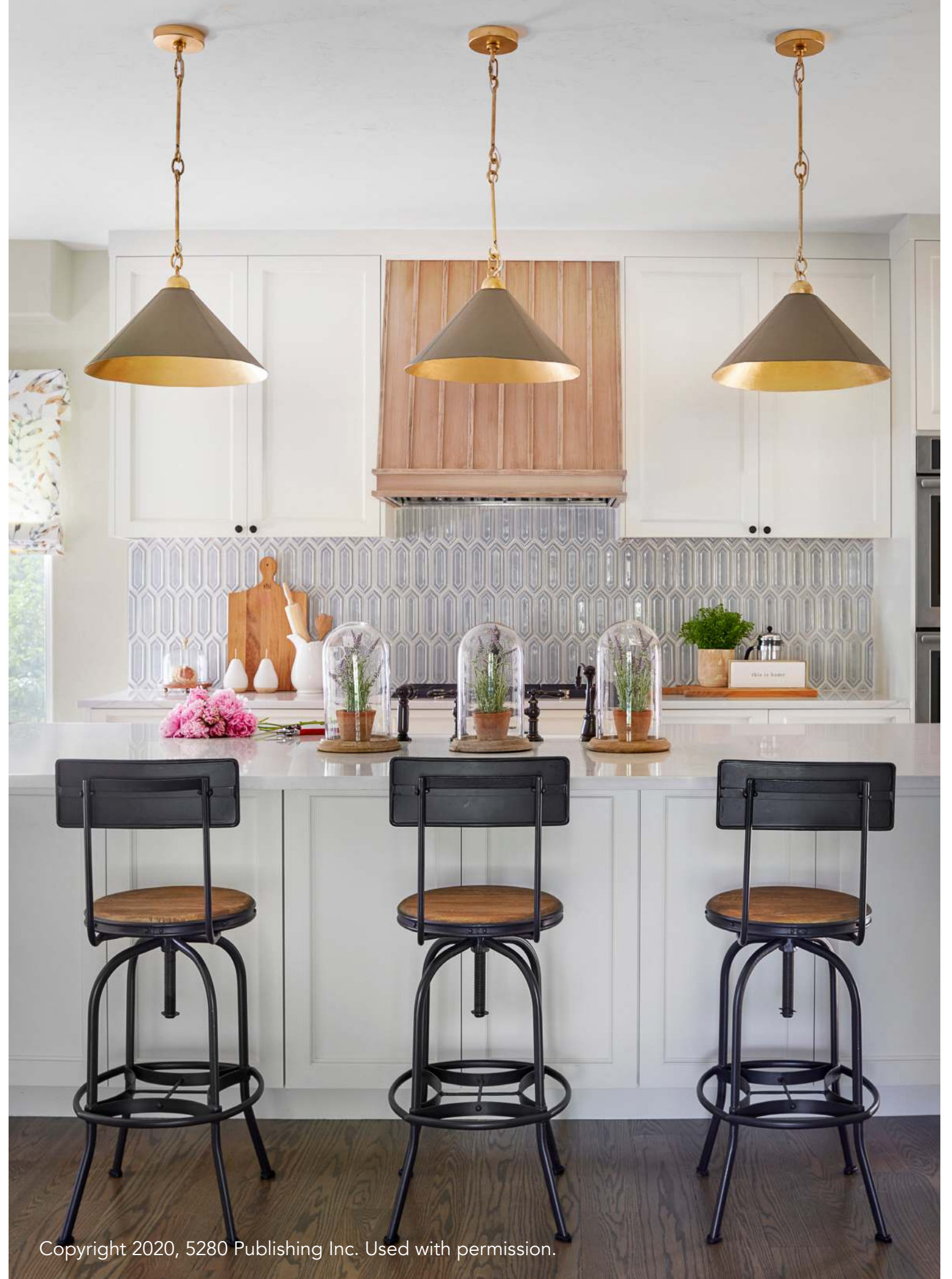


Left: “We consider the powder room the jewelry of the house,” Cullen says. With that in mind, the designers chose Cole & Son’s large paisley-print Malabar wallcovering to provide a dramatic backdrop for oversized, brass wall sconces by Currey and Company and a distressed-gold-leaf-finished mirror from Mirror Image Home. The Maison vanity is from Restoration Hardware.



Above and facing page: Soft blue picket tiles by Soho Studio, a custom wood hood, black spool chairs by Ballard Designs, and a trio of Arteriors’ Scarlett pendants—which feature taupe leather shades with gold-leaf interiors—pop against the new kitchen’s crisp quartz countertops by Cambria and simple, Shaker-style cabinetry.

BEFORE PHOTOS COURTESY OF DUET DESIGN GROUP (2)

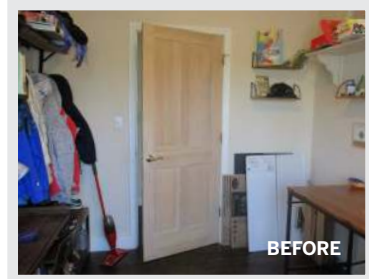




Tip

CREATE A DISPLAY.

Resolve the perennial issue of what to do with the kids' artwork by installing lipped shelves and investing in frames of different shapes and sizes. Swap out artwork as you want—and inspire your young Picassos to keep creating.



The designers transformed a disorganized catchall space into a super-functional home office and homework zone. Four Hands' Rupert Work Table features four attached stools that swivel into place under the reclaimed-pine top when not in use. Visual Comfort sconces—chosen to complement the Paige Island ceiling pendant from Lightology—illuminate a collection of the children's artwork displayed on custom alder-and-iron wall shelves.

DESIGN PROS

Interior design: Miranda Cullen and Devon Tobin, Duet Design Group

table was a fun way to add additional seating without having a 50-inch round table in the center of the space, which would have created confusion about how to circulate around the room," Cullen says. That streamlined approach complements the room's airy new vibe, set by light quartz countertops, soft-white Shaker-style cabinets, and pale-blue backsplash tiles. "We very specifically placed these pops of blue throughout the house to create a sense of movement," Cullen says, "but you'll notice that everything else is neutral—because too much of a good thing is not a good thing anymore."

The design team struck the same careful balance when adding moments of eye-catching texture. In the family room, a distressed-wood

ceiling and custom iron Juliet balcony stand out against simple plaster walls. In the kitchen, a rustic stone archway contrasts with the crisp-white cabinets and countertops. And in the redesigned master suite, a tongue-and-groove wood paneled ceiling accented with wood beams and decorative iron braces makes a bold statement.

Though nearly every piece of furniture in the house is new, the assortment has the look of a collection that has been gathered—and well-loved—over the years. "With an aesthetic like this, it doesn't really matter if things don't match, because everything goes together," Cullen says. Take the dining room, for example, where the homeowners' old bistro chairs and a new batik-upholstered

bench pull up to the table, and black, high-back Windsor chairs preside at each end. That same dark finish makes an appearance on the kitchen's turned-wood dining chairs, and again in the living room, where an antique workbench—once used in Rovak's grandfather's St. Louis cabinetry factory—has a new use as a sofa table.

The mix is an ideal match for the home's "Hansel and Gretel" exterior, Cullen says, but also for the homeowners' taste. "We didn't want to make it look like just another luxury house," Rovak says. "We wanted it to look unique, and the designers chose things that truly did that. It looks like this is what should always have been here." Or, in other words, like a new(ish) house with an old soul. ■

BEFORE PHOTO COURTESY OF DUET DESIGN GROUP