

The kitchen's custom distressed-walnut table by Exquisite Kitchen Design is attached to the island; its perpendicular orientation offers diners views of the stone fireplace or the action in the kitchen. Rather than hanging light fixtures over the island, homeowner Mikal Otten opted to position Arteriors' Egg Drop pendant over the table, "which brings this warm, welcoming feeling—and leaves the view from the family room to the main island nice and open," he says. The metal-and-leather Darcy counter stools are by Interlude Home.

TASTEFULLY TAILORED



Veteran kitchen designer Mikal Otten's innovative vision for his own Greenwood Village home merges old with new, soft with sleek, and elegance with ease.

story by **CHRISTINE DEORIO**
photography by **EMILY MINTON REDFIELD**



KITCHEN

An extra-tall stainless-steel toe-kick and polished Crisallo quartzite countertop lighten the look of the island, by Exquisite Kitchen Design, which is finished with a custom charcoal metallic paint and accented with brushed-brass hardware. For the room's perimeter, Otten chose custom walnut cabinetry and Greystone marble countertops with a honed finish. The marble-framed hood incorporates the same tile—Salvatori's Silk Georgette Chevron—that covers the family room's fireplace wall.

WINE ALCOVE

The homeowners gave up a portion of their primary bedroom's closet to make way for this wine alcove, which incorporates two Sub-Zero beverage refrigerators, plus plenty of glassware storage and a Crystal Blue marble serving counter that are partially obscured by panels of brass wire mesh.

POWDER ROOM

A powder room makeover wasn't part of the original renovation plans, but once the custom brass vanity by Exquisite Kitchen Design and Deco Hemp wallcovering by Phillip Jeffries were in place, "I thought, 'This might be the most beautiful room in the house!'" Otten says. The vanity is topped with a slab of Crystal Blue marble from Galleria of Stone and lit by West Slope sconces from Rejuvenation.



One might assume that when professional designers have the chance to personalize their own homes, the process is as simple as cherry-picking favorite details from projects they've completed in the past.

But not for kitchen designer Mikal Otten. When the owner of Exquisite Kitchen Design decided to overhaul the Greenwood Village home that he and his wife, Lisa, had recently purchased for their new life chapter as empty nesters, he wanted something entirely original.

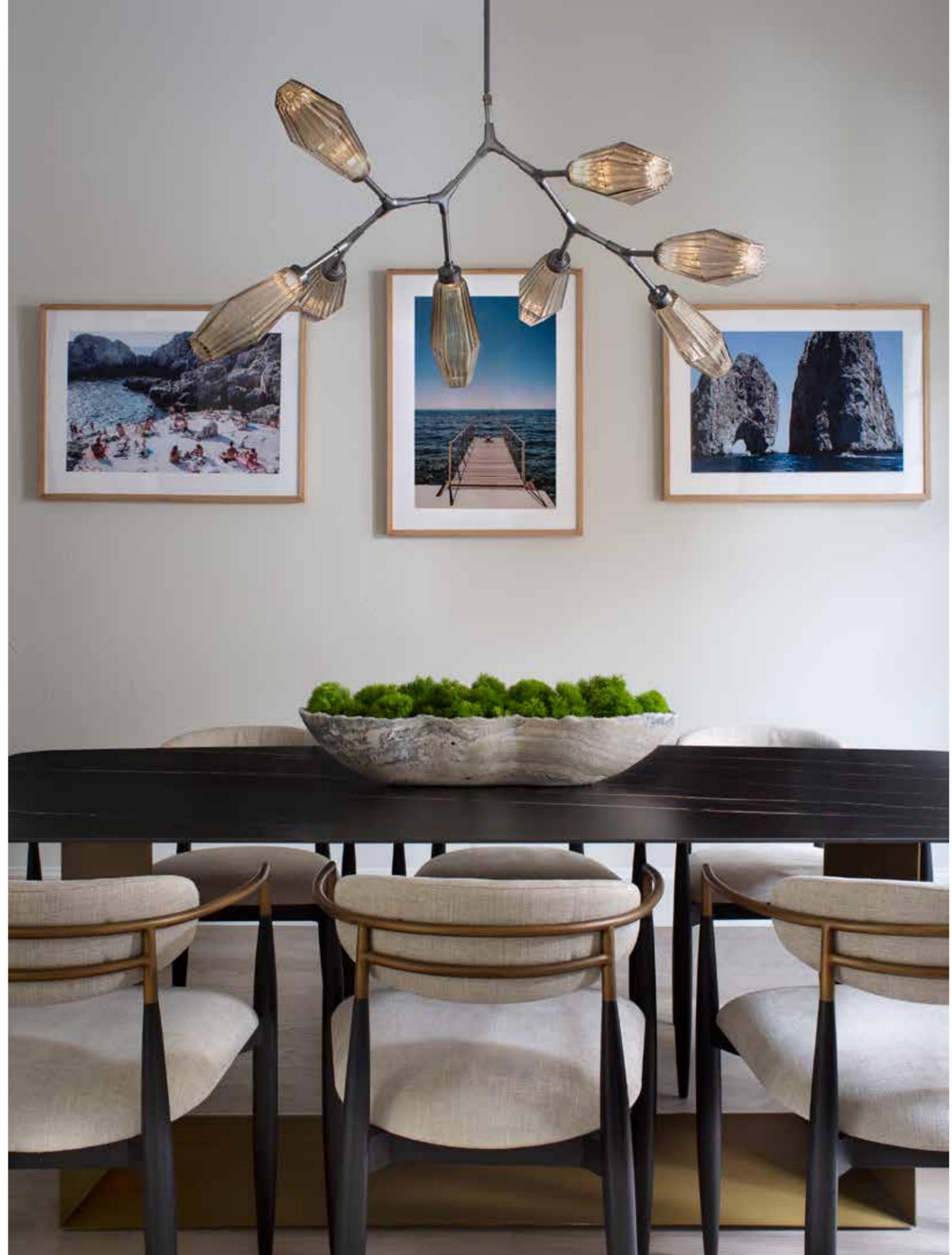
"I tell my clients, 'If you just do what's current right now, it's going to be outdated soon, so you've got to push it a little bit,'" Otten says. But to follow his own advice, he felt he'd need a push of his own, so he called on longtime design collaborator Beth Armijo, "whose soft touch was what I was looking to bring into this home," Otten says. "Our lives are busy, and I really wanted this space to be a calm retreat."

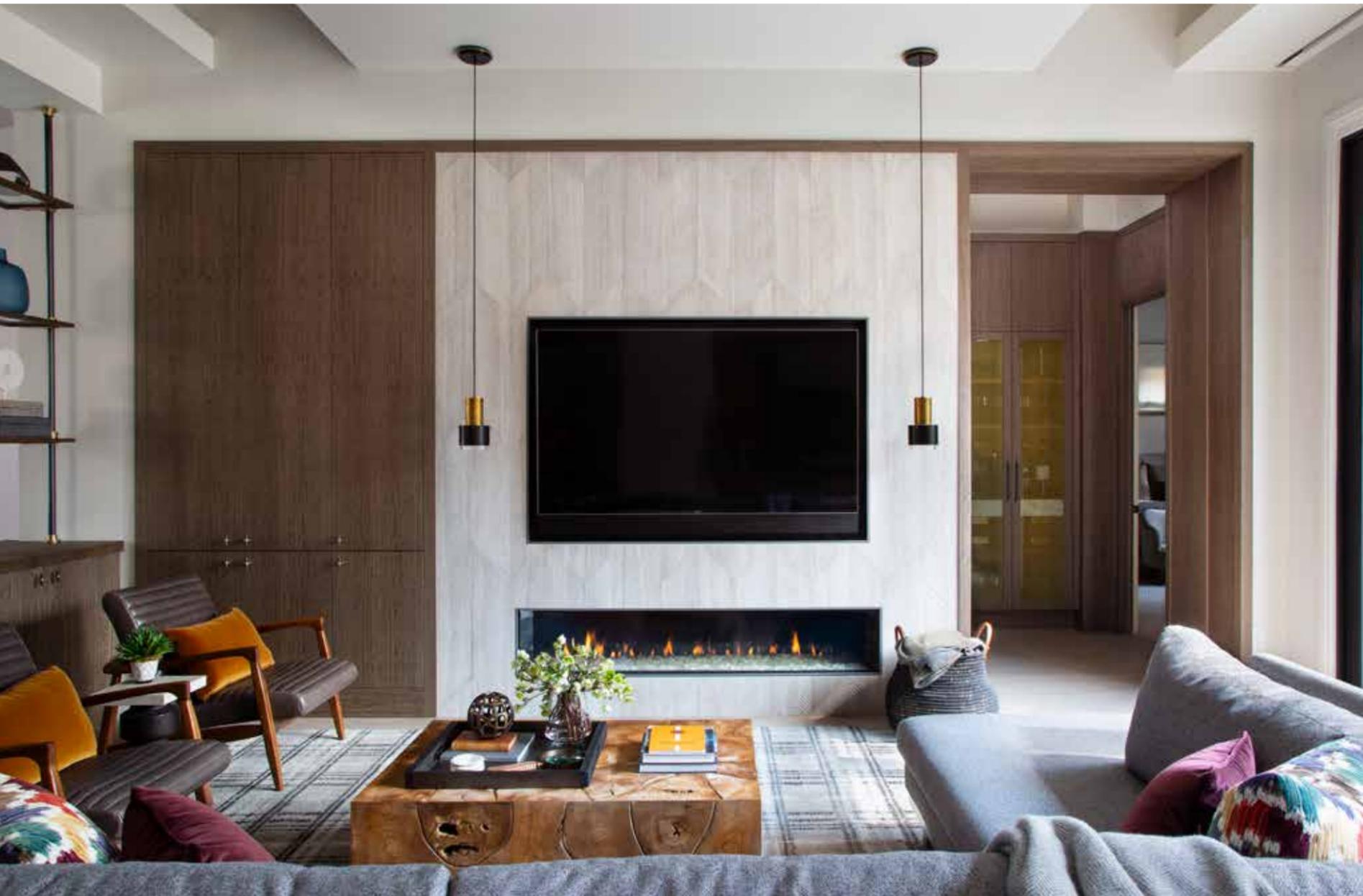
But before adding a thing, the duo considered how to strip away some of the dwelling's tired Tuscan style, which clashed with Otten's contemporary taste. "There were some bones we could work with and



DINING ROOM

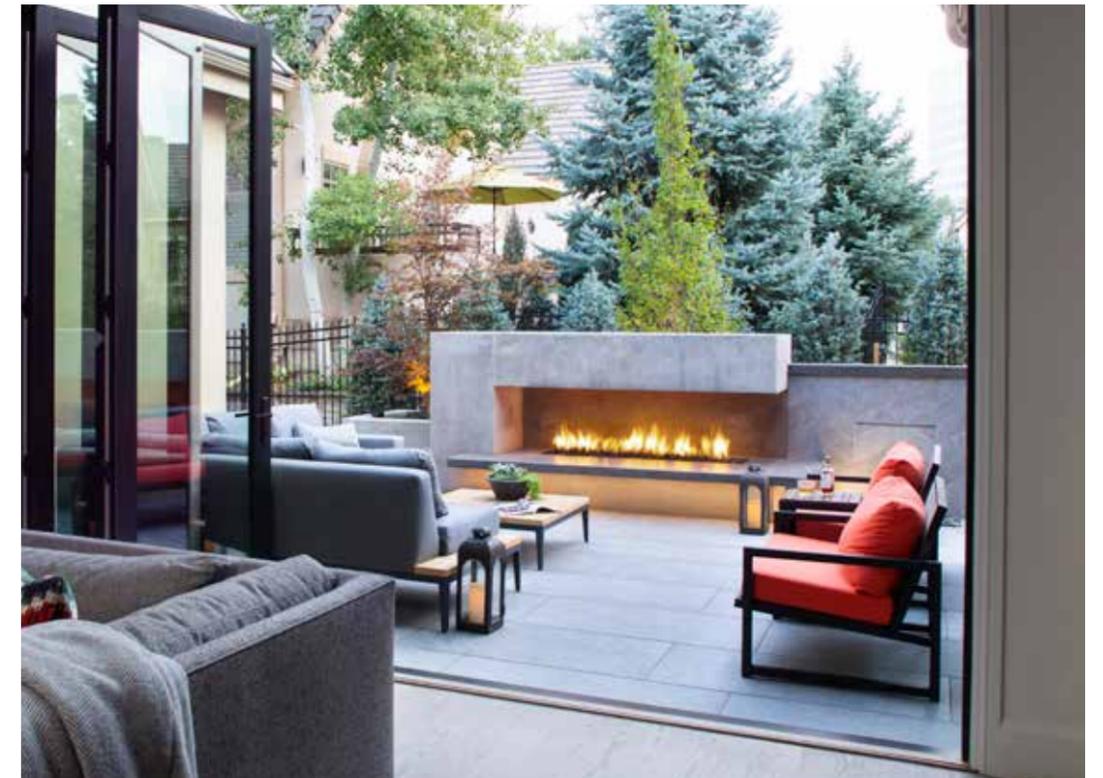
In the formal dining room, designer Beth Armijo married pieces the Ottens have enjoyed for years—including a sleek table and photos taken around Lake Como—with Hammerton Studio's blown-glass Aalto Modern Branch chandelier and Arhaus' Jagger armchairs.





“OUR APPROACH WAS VERY EUROPEAN: KEEP THE OLD BONES, BUT PUT MODERN THINGS IN IT.”

—designer Beth Armijo



some we couldn't," Armijo explains. "We removed some of the ceiling arches and stair railings but kept some of the fireplaces and solid wood doors—because I find that if you go all one way, it becomes pretty typecast to a certain time period or style. Our approach was very European: Keep the old bones, but put modern things in it."

In the family room, the original fireplace's carved stone surround was replaced with a chevron-patterned limestone-tile accent wall that abuts new, built-in eucalyptus cabinetry. In the kitchen, an original stone fireplace stayed, "but we brought the eucalyptus millwork around it to modernize it," Otten says. "I'm not a traditional guy, but I love [the old fireplace] in there now. It strikes just the right balance."

When reimagining the rest of the kitchen, Otten embraced his contemporary proclivities, topping a steely gray island with Cristallo quartzite and the walnut perimeter cabinets with a dramatic dark marble.



FAMILY ROOM
The family room's custom eucalyptus partition displays family collectibles, including a Murano glass sculpture (on center shelf) by Silvano Signoretto. Armijo accented the Ottens' existing Callan leather chairs, from Room & Board, with ochre velvet pillows made by Genesis Custom Drapery. The gnarled teak coffee table and Cone lamp are by Noir.

PATIO
Lifescape Colorado created the modern outdoor fireplace, which is perfectly positioned to be enjoyed from the family room when the new, 10-foot-tall accordion-style door is opened wide.

He mingled streamlined bronze and brushed-brass hardware with stainless-steel appliances, and above the Wolf range, he designed a custom hood that incorporates the same tile used around the family room fireplace. "I think the more layers we can add, the more life the space is going to have," Otten says of his approach. "Twenty years ago, all we needed was cherry cabinets, granite countertops, and stainless-steel appliances. Now, we need a lot more to keep it alive."

"Mikal approaches texture in his kitchens the same way I use materials in other rooms," says Armijo, who was tasked with giving each space an understated yet elegant style. "I like to mix them, creating a tactile interest. All of Mikal and Lisa's fabrics are wools and linens and leathers—super durable but also soft."

Armijo's choices merge timeless materials with clean lines. There's the family room's smartly tailored sectional that wraps around a teak coffee table with crisp corners; a grasscloth wallcovering surrounding

the powder room's sleek brass vanity; and a branch-like blown-glass chandelier that hangs above an ultramodern dining table. To this mix, she added accents of ruby red, ochre, and teal, and a few carefully chosen patterns, including the family room rug's modern take on a Ralph Lauren plaid.

"My immediate thought was, 'No, I don't do plaids,'" Otten says of the latter. "But then Beth showed it to me in a room and I said, 'Wow, that's so cool.'"

"I love that kind of innovation that Mikal and I achieve when we work together," Armijo says. "It's fun because he's willing to take risks and not copy what's out there on Instagram. We've been doing this longer than a lot of influencers, so it's nice to do things differently."

Innovative as it is, the design feels perfectly tailored to Otten's style and new way of life. "This was about Lisa and me," Otten says. "It was the time when we got to do something just for us."

MAIN BEDROOM

Wool tweed upholstery by Denver Upholstery, velvet pillows made by Genesis Custom Drapery, and inviting layers of linens dress the primary bedroom's clean-lined custom bed. The nightstands are also custom pieces, by local furniture-maker Ryan Schlaefer. The Duprey settee is from Arteriors and the Phoebe Stacked table lamp is by Visual Comfort.

MAIN SHOWER

The primary bathroom's spacious shower—which can be accessed from Mikal's or Lisa's side of the room—is clad with honed limestone tile on the walls and a limestone mosaic on the floor. "We always do that for

grip and interesting texture," Armijo says of the latter. "Clients sometimes ask, 'Are mosaic floors trendy?' Um, no. You can go to Pompeii and this pattern is probably there—which I just love."

MAIN BATH

The primary bathroom originally had a 12-foot ceiling "and it was just cavernous," Otten recalls. "Even after we lowered the ceiling to 10 feet, the room still breathes." The custom, white-oak dual vanities and tub wall show off a contemporary chevron pattern—a motif that repeats throughout the house. The floors are honed limestone, "which is so beautiful with white oak," Armijo says. 📍



DESIGN PROS

INTERIOR DESIGN
Beth Armijo, Armijo Design Group

KITCHEN & BATH DESIGN
Mikal Otten, Exquisite Kitchen Design

GENERAL CONTRACTOR (RENOVATION)
Helton Enterprises

LANDSCAPE DESIGN
Lifescape Colorado