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[DESIGN]
HOME



MALE CALL
Clockwise from top left: Mark Sheinkman's mod painting and a Joseph Company sectional punctuate the soaring living room's masculine decor; pavers of polished concrete placed in a random pattern create a unique front-yard approach for guests; teak Eggersmann cabinets are topped with Silestone counters in a suede finish in the kitchen.

WELL SUITED

A NEW RICE-AREA HOME WITH LIGHT APLENTY AND DECOR INSPIRED BY MEN'S SUITING MAKES A BRIGHT PAD FOR A STYLISH BACHELOR.

By Carla Jordan
Photography by Julie Soefer

When a '50s ranch-style home unexpectedly hit the market not far from Rice and tony Southampton last year, an international mergers and acquisitions attorney—a bachelor with great style and a taste for the good life—moved fast to secure it. Talk about a smooth acquisition!

Because the house was in teardown condition, he decided to start fresh; he hired architect Kurt Aichler, who had created his previous home, and did his design due diligence. "I put a lot of thought into the architectural plans and design," says the homeowner, who asked not to be named. "I read several books on building a new home... and provided lots of input on the architectural drawings."

The lawyer asked Aichler to create a comfortably modern space with a sleek,

masculine vibe. He wanted clean lines but not stark modern, lots of natural light and a first floor with good flow and room for multiple areas of seating.

Early in the planning stages, Aichler suggested adding an interior designer to the mix, so the structure and decor would sync up. The homeowner's flair for research kicked in again, and he went online to look at portfolios. He quickly gravitated to Chandos Dodson Epley, whose classic-modern design aesthetic mirrored his. Soon he would learn that her meticulous organization skills were akin to his as well, and a beautiful partnership began.

"During our initial meeting, Chandos showed me a sample project binder with a calendar and a detailed budget in an Excel spreadsheet," he notes. "I'm very



BRIGHT SIDE Clockwise from left: The dining room boasts an adjacent back-lit wine room; a Jay Giroux oil painting hangs above the foyer's console; a hallway becomes a showplace for collectibles; the master bedroom with Ralph Lauren accents.



business-oriented, so that was the deal clincher for me." It didn't hurt either that the attorney also wanted to build a serious contemporary art collection—something for which Epley's team is known.

With the design crew now in place, work began on the 4,200-square-foot home, which was intended to complement the nearby Museum District architecture. Since the lot is located in an area of the city known for its spectacular trees, care was taken to preserve the grand 85-year-old live oak in the front yard and make it a landscaping focal point. To accommodate the outdoor amenities the lawyer wanted—a pool, fountain and ample entertaining space—Aichler designed a U-shaped structure that wrapped around an inner courtyard, while Epley talked the homeowner out of *one* item on his must-have list. "I wanted a swim-up bar, but Chandos said no," the homeowner laughs. "And that was the right call."

As the structure took shape, the attorney went online to gather thoughts on the interiors he liked. "My iPhone's Houzz app was a huge help and gave me lots of ideas, which I shared with Chandos," he says. "I wanted to make sure that my home would be functional and suit my lifestyle. I'm a bachelor with no kids, who doesn't like clutter and knick-knacks. For me, the things in my home should have a purpose."

In the end, his design wish list was characteristically succinct. "He wanted interiors with warmth and timeless appeal—a very comfortable sofa, pet-

friendly decor, beautiful wood floors and a killer wine room," says Epley. From his previous home, he brought only an art deco bar by Ralph Lauren, some mirrors and his master bed. So, for the most part, his designer had a clean slate, save for a few broadly stated restrictions: nothing frilly, nothing over-the-top and nothing purple.

Since he liked neutrals, his designer turned to men's suiting fabrics for inspiration, opting for a warm palette in dark brown, charcoal gray and ivory. These hues complemented the richly understated modern art and helped ground the decor in spaces like the living room, where a soaring a 23-foot ceiling, overhead skywalk and large window expanses could have proven overwhelming. Luxe herringbone, wool, linen and velvet are mixed with supple leather for subtle contrast and texture; these are also durable picks for the home of a bachelor who, despite being intensely private, likes to entertain and hang out with his Cavalier King Charles spaniels, Major and Martin.

Walls were painted white to create a light, airy feel—and help art, like Jay Giroux's oil-on-canvas "Mostly Cs and Zeros," show well. "Its street-graffiti, urban style adds a youthful quality to the space," says art advisor Lindsay Davis, who consulted. "The client had a strong sense of color, texture and harmony, so he gravitated toward art that had a sense of the artist's hand." To enhance

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COURTYARD CHIC
Clockwise from top: The U-shaped home wraps around an inner courtyard; the pool glows by night, visible from almost every room; a guest room outfitted with Phillip Jeffries Shagreen wallpaper and lush bedding from SDH and Brahm's Mount is a serene retreat.



...CONTINUED architectural interest, touches of plaster, iron, wood and stone were added, as were hand-hewn, hand-scraped, bleached wood floors. "We also used textural grass cloth and wool wallpapers," says Epley. "A [menswear-recalling] wallpaper adds texture to the master bedroom, while geometric-print wallpapers create small-space wow in the guest bath, an upstairs hall and on the master closet ceiling."

Epley also used tile in transformative ways, with attention to detail that had the perfectionist homeowner singing her praises. "She even had the tile installers lay out the tile on the ground so she could inspect each tile to make sure all were perfect," he says. Metallic bronze wall tile adds a touch of gloss to the dining room, while richly veined marble tile in a rectangular format makes the powder

bath appear larger and grander. In the backyard, just beyond the pool, is a wall fountain fashioned of ceramic tile that recalls corrugated steel, flanked by two massive pieces of black honed granite.

The stunning wine room off the dining room—with glass walls and back lighting that illuminates the bottles and makes the space sparkle like a jewel box—may be the house's most unique feature. "Although I'm not a wine collector, I enjoy drinking and sharing it with friends and family," says the lawyer.

He not only shares the occasional bottle with his friends, but he also shares the home itself, frequently inviting others into the space he loves so well.

And what do they think of it? "Truthfully," he says, smiling, "they are blown away." ■

