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# 210

## ELEGANT EXPANSE

A simple design request sparks a large-scale renovation in a Dallas residence that raises the bar for entertaining. *Written by Mindy Pantiel / Photography by Stephen Karlisch*

# 228

## MIXED MEDIA

Now based in Dallas, artist Arienne Lepretre draws upon her early years of residing around the globe as inspiration for her works. *Written by Tate Gunnerson / Photography by Justin Clemons*

# 234

## STARTING OVER

In Houston, a couple replaces their dated abode with a new house geared toward family togetherness. *Written by Jennifer Sergent / Photography by Nathan Schroder*

# 246

## HILL COUNTRY PERCH

The views take center stage in a Medina ranch home blending the wife's penchant for fabrics with the husband's love of the outdoors. *Written by Liz Arnold / Photography by Nick Johnson*

**ON THE COVER:** In a vignette near the family room stairwell of a Medina ranch home, designer Melissa Morgan topped an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish carved-wood table from The Cottage Antiques with pieces including vintage lamps from Parc Monceau in Atlanta and a vase from Robuck, also in Atlanta. SA All Weld fabricated the custom railing, and Overland Partners Architects specified the design of the window, which Escobedo Group executed. *Page 246*





# Hill Country PERCH

PANORAMIC VIEWS INFORM THE ELEGANT INTERIORS  
OF A WEEKEND RANCH GETAWAY IN MEDINA.

WRITTEN BY LIZ ARNOLD / PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICK JOHNSON

INTERIOR DESIGN / MELISSA MORGAN, M INTERIORS  
ARCHITECTURE / BOB SHEMWELL AND CHARLES SCHNEIDER,  
OVERLAND PARTNERS ARCHITECTS  
HOME BUILDER / CARSON CONKLIN AND MARLIN RODEN,  
JM LOWE & COMPANY GENERAL CONTRACTORS







Designer Melissa Morgan brought rich greens and neutrals into this Medina home's living room. Atop a Stark carpet, the Cameron sofa from George Cameron Nash wears Old World Weavers velvet, Cameron club chairs feature Claremont animal-print fabric, and the coffee table is from Jacqueline Adams in Atlanta. A Jan Heaton watercolor from Hunt Gallery punctuates the space.

This is not your typical ranch house," says designer Melissa Morgan, who oversaw the interiors of a newly built Medina weekend residence for a San Antonio couple and their three children. "The homeowners wanted something different that reflected their interests: her love of antiques and fabrics and his love of the outdoors." The result places traditional furnishings in bold colors against a backdrop of stately Texas limestone walls—all with views of the rugged landscape visible through grand arched windows running the length of the residence.

Architect Bob Shemwell, whose project architect was Charles Schneider, had designed the home with its striking surroundings in mind. To capitalize on the setting, he situated the structure on an area of the land he and builders Carson Conklin and Marlin Roden built up higher. "At the back edge of the nearby lake is a low bluff with limestone edges," Shemwell says. "You can see a long valley for several miles." The ground below the house's entrance and main level now stands about 12 feet higher than it did originally, while the residence drops in the back to lake level.

With its vaulted ceiling and oak trusses, the main floor contains the living and dining rooms as well as the kitchen. Across a bridge over the two-story height, the more private areas include the master bedroom as well as an intimate sitting area overlooking expansive vistas and the home's main spaces. Here, a staircase leads to a lake-level sitting area, a game room and the children's and guest bedrooms. A separate spiral staircase winds to an observation deck ideal for watching sunsets.





**Above:** Near a sitting area with picturesque views, JM Lowe & Company General Contractors installed a custom metal circular stairway by The Iron Shop that leads to an observation deck. Nearby, a console from The Cottage Antiques pairs with a custom Cameron sofa from George Cameron Nash in Old World Weavers fabric.

**Opposite:** Cameron armchairs in a sitting area wear Brunschwlg & Fils textile, and dining chairs from The Cottage Antiques surround a table from English Accent Antiques in Atlanta. The chandelier is from Edgar-Reeves in Atlanta. Overland Partners Architects specified the design of the windows, which Escobedo Group executed.







In the open kitchen with magnificent views, Holland MacRae barstools offer warm contrast against custom cabinetry by Madera Millwork painted Benjamin Moore Galveston Gray and the Idris by Ait Manos Ann Sacks tile backsplash. The Viking range is from Ferguson. Sourced from English Accent Antiques, a trio of antique glass cloches-turned-pendants illuminates the room.

The house's materials palette connects the structure to the land. "Limestone was an obvious choice," Shemwell says, "because it ties to the bluffs and hills around the residence." Traditional yet clean-lined elements—such as the limestone, reclaimed-oak floors left in their natural state and a custom copper range hood in the kitchen—give the abode an up-to-date feel. At the same time, the home also embraces an old-world aura. "The thick walls make it feel ancient, and we played off that heavy permanence with elegant steel windows in the narrowest style," Shemwell explains. "It's a very pretty contrast that emphasizes the purpose of the house: to highlight the landscape."

The colors of the property's lake and trees influenced Morgan's palette for the interiors as well. "A lot of blues and greens felt best," she says. "So much of a room's design is about how it looks outside, too." The dining room's dozen Maison Jansen chairs, for example, wear a verdant-hued woven-linen-cotton-tapestry material, while a banquette in the kitchen's casual dining area dons a blue linen velvet that matches fabric on the nearby chairs around an antique pedestal table.

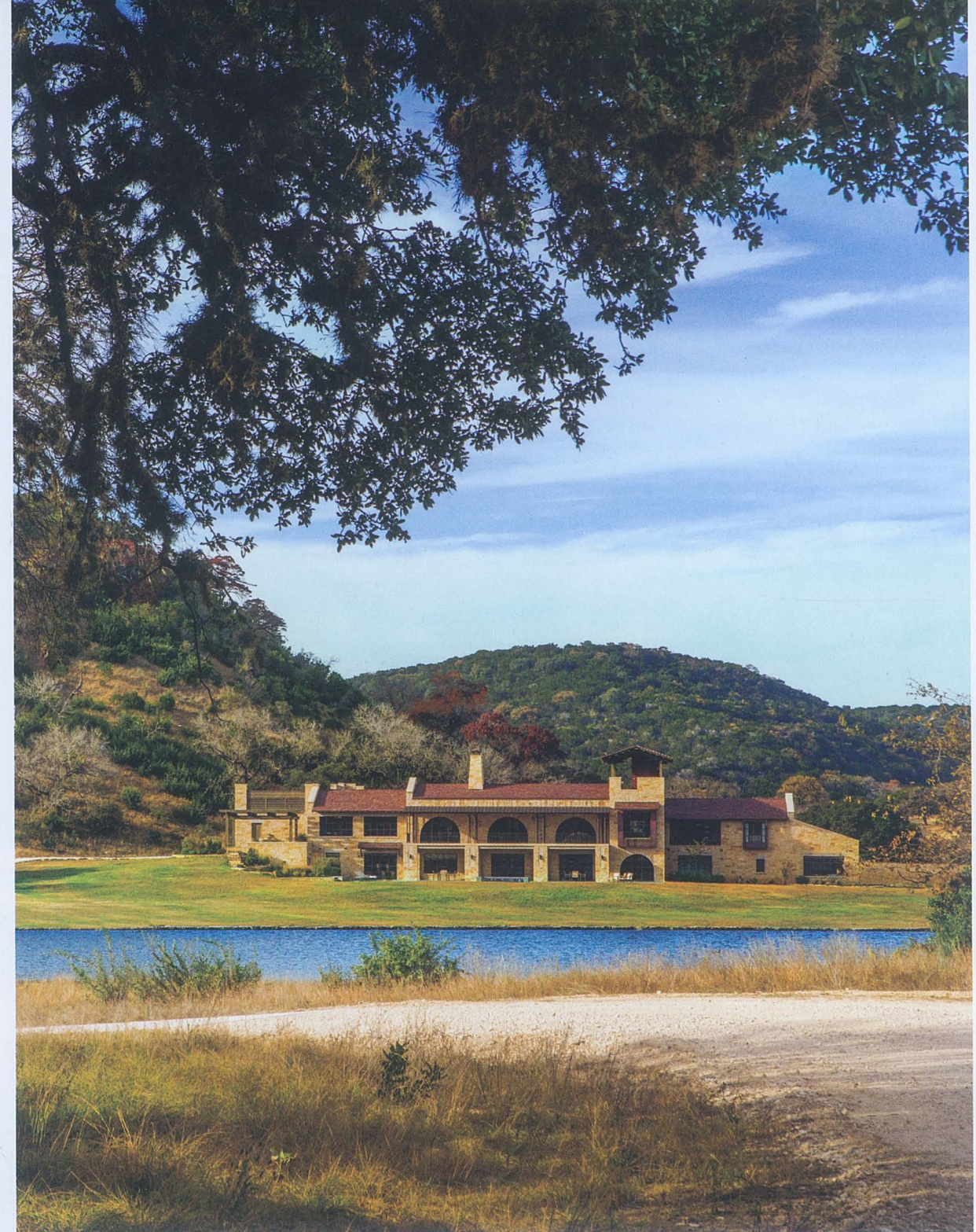
Continuing in the master bedroom, vibrant chinoiserie drapery references the blues and greens of nature. It's not unusual to spot deer, turkey and elk on the property, so touches of animal print throughout the residence—such as giraffe-print fabrics in a guest bedroom—bring in a dash of the wild. "The home's interiors are enhanced by colors and prints that echo the natural landscape," the designer explains.





**Left:** Keeping the striking landscape in mind, architect Bob Shemwell placed the residence on a flat portion of land he raised with builders Carson Conklin and Marlin Roden for better access to the views. Zack Dereze of Kerrville Landscaping, with project manager David Valdez, oversaw the home's landscaping, visible in the distance.

**Opposite:** Texas limestone walls by Dean Mitchell Masonry and a Stark sisal carpet impart the dining room with a warm, casual feel. Maison Jansen dining chairs from 1stdibs covered in Old World Weavers fabric pull up to an antique dining table from Jacqueline Adams while antique chandeliers from Robuck in Atlanta hang above.



“THE HOME’S INTERIORS ARE ENHANCED BY COLORS AND PRINTS THAT ECHO THE NATURAL LANDSCAPE.”

—MELISSA MORGAN





**Opposite:** A lumbar pillow in a guest bedroom wears Travers' whimsical Samango linen print from George Cameron Nash, complementing the brand's Burchell material covering the Ferrell Mittman headboard. Prelle fabric pops on the bench from English Accent Antiques.



**Below:** A guest bedroom's blue-and-white theme continues in a nearby reading nook, which features an armchair and ottoman from Lam Bespoke and draperies in the Samango print. Art is from Hunt Gallery.





**Left:** In a vignette in a guest bedroom, the lamp and the framed antique Italian engravings are from the clients' collection. A Schumacher grass-cloth wallcovering provides a textural backdrop.

**Opposite:** Morgan dubbed this space the "giraffe guest bedroom," so named for her use of Pierre Frey's Ismaelia fabric on the bed skirt and a lumbar pillow. Cowtan & Tout's Nile textile, also from Culp Associates, covers a bench from English Accents Antiques. The headboard is Louis J. Solomon.



Morgan had a sense of what would work for the design, having collaborated with the couple before. "We spoke the same language," says the designer, who brought in a handful of her clients' existing antiques. She also spent time shopping with the wife, turning to places like San Antonio for artisan pieces and artwork and Atlanta for furnishings. The wife prefers items that have history, "but nothing in the home is delicate," Morgan explains. "It's a ranch house, so they never wanted to say, 'Don't put your foot on that!' Everything is durable." Case in point: the wide and sturdy late-19<sup>th</sup>-century Louis Philippe dining table rests on an informal sisal rug. And in the living room, mismatched antique French side tables flank a rectilinear plush sofa

upholstered in emerald-green linen velvet. "I bought the tables at a flea market in Paris, and they don't match," the designer says. "But I like that look—it feels more casual." That lived-in quality is apparent throughout the residence. "The home is meant to entertain," Morgan says, noting the abode is comfortable for two people or 20. "With a house like this, you just want to use it." However, the end goal was always as much about letting the property's natural beauty shine through as it was about the built environment. "Coming down the exterior stairs near the kitchen, you can see huge boulders of stone quarried right off the property," Morgan says, marveling at the breathtaking site. "You can't plan for that." ■