



coming home

A GEORGETOWN RENOVATION BALANCES TRADITION WITH CONTEMPORARY COMFORT, MAKING AN 18TH-CENTURY TOWN HOUSE IDEAL FOR A YOUNG MODERN FAMILY.

WRITTEN BY **JORGE S. ARANGO** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MARCO RICCA**

INTERIOR DESIGN Patrick Sutton, Patrick Sutton Associates

ARCHITECTURE Anthony Barnes, Barnes Vanze Architects, Inc.

HOME BUILDER Bertram S. Winchester III, Winchester Construction Company

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Barnes Vanze Architects meticulously restored the windows and façade to their original Georgetown elegance, capturing the bowing bricks by building an interior-reinforced concrete shell.



When a young, successful entrepreneur purchased a circa 1791 townhome on an idyllic treelined street in Georgetown, the phrase “you can’t judge a book by its cover” had never been truer. “You could touch the mortar on the bricks and it would crumble,” his wife says about the home he bought as a pied-à-terre for her and their two school-age children. According to the couple, the façade was bulging and in danger of collapse, and the interior layout, the wife adds, “was bizarre.”

Still, the husband had started his successful apparel business in the house next door, which had belonged to his grandmother and now to his mother. Sentimental reasons and the opportunity to preserve some Georgetown history informed the family’s decision to purchase the then crumbling home. Once the deal was done, they enlisted designer Patrick Sutton, who had worked with them on other homes, as well as a couple of commercial projects.

Floor tiles by New Ravenna Mosaics—from Chesapeake Tile & Marble—add interest to the entry hall. The red door’s lion knocker is a nod to the husband’s zodiac sign, Leo. Just inside the living room, an A. Rudin club chair is covered in a Holly Hunt silk-mohair in Pine Cone; the bronze side table is by Interieurs.



The custom ceiling by Duncan Cabinetry of Wrightsville, Pennsylvania, provides traditional style while echoing the entry's tile pattern. A Kevin Reilly pendant from Holly Hunt and O'Lampia Studio sconces illuminate Siren side chairs (also from Holly Hunt) and a custom steel-and-walnut-topped console.

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"We're generally more traditional, but we wanted to go a little more modern with this one," the wife says. "We wanted clean lines, something simple and elegant, but we needed to keep the essence of Georgetown." Comfort was also crucial, she adds, explaining her desire to "nap together on the couch and dance on the tables if the kids wanted to."

"I had to make it conducive to a modern family," says Sutton, who supervised a gut renovation. His new scheme moved the kitchen up a floor from the basement, which became a family room and lounge, and reconfigured rooms on the upper stories.

To address the bowing edifice, Sutton recruited architect Anthony Barnes and builder Bertram Winchester III. "The renovation had to be carried out from the inside," explains Barnes. "We erected a rigid concrete framework inside, just a few inches from the brick, and put plywood on the external walls so the bricks wouldn't explode out. We then injected, at high pressure, a concrete slurry that captured the bricks from inside and at the same time



A dramatic lichee root table by Chista adds an organic sculptural element to the living room's cushy furnishings that include a Verellen sectional, a Kyle Bunting hide rug and a Jean de Merry tufted chair. Dovetail Woodworkers crafted the limed, wire-brushed white oak built-ins.



Blackman Cruz's marble-topped Ellipse Op table and more Siren chairs gather under a Couronnes chandelier by Bourgeois Bohème Atelier in the dining room. The kitchen's marble backsplash is by New Ravenna Mosaics, purchased at Chesapeake Tile & Marble.



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stabilized the exterior. It will give the building another 100 years." Barnes also discovered that the original door and transom light had been taller, so he returned this entry to its intended grander scale, making it "more appropriately scaled to the existing windows and the rest of the façade." Last, he restored said windows and repaired the stucco on the exterior.

Inside, Sutton riffed on classic Georgetown details. He replaced floors with antique heart pine but stained them dark "rather than the typical orangy-red," he says. Sutton also mirrored the right-hand wall inside the entry, visually expanding the space. New octagonal-shaped articulated ceilings in the living room were created to weave the separate spaces together. Usually made of plaster or darkly stained, the ceilings were given a lighter treatment that feels more contemporary while still retaining that traditional warmth the family craved.

"Both the husband and wife have very masculine tastes," notes Sutton, so the palette throughout, as well as the details, is more handsome than pretty. Sutton knew, for example, that "covering the master bedroom walls in men's suiting would appeal to them," which explains the plaid-clad surfaces. Yet he balanced the manliness with a chair boasting a more feminine silhouette.

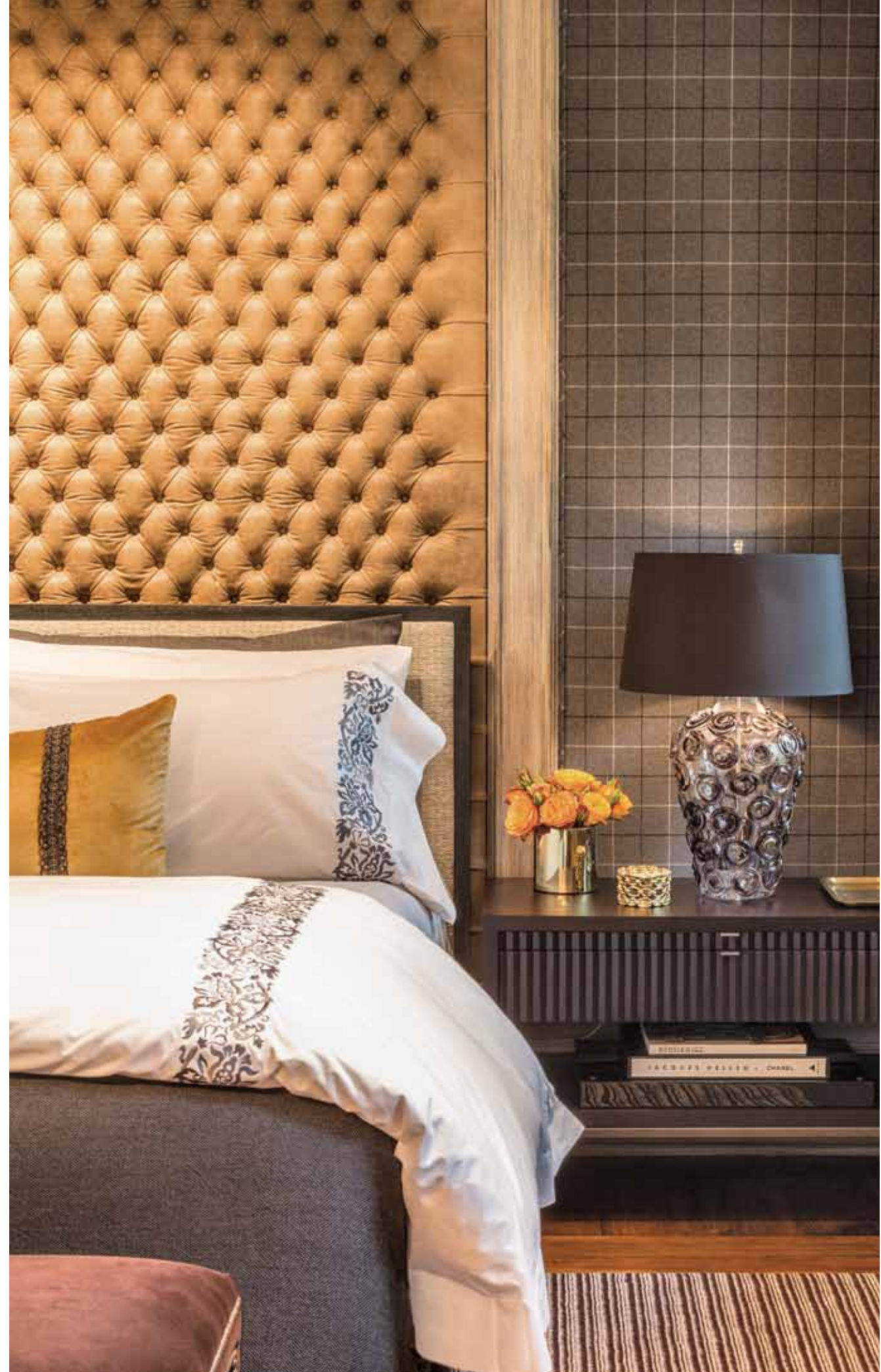
Avanti Marble & Granite provided the London Gray marble slabs for the kitchen countertops and fireplace surround. The vibrant painting above the fireplace, *Finding Nucleus Yellow* by Charles Marksberry, is part of the owners' growing art collection.



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“They’re very tactile people,” Sutton says, “so everything had to be soft.” With that in mind, Sutton had 20 percent of the sofa cushions’ down removed to make them more “lumpy.” Fabrics like the sofa’s chenille, an adjacent club chair’s silk mohair, leather family room walls, and the velvet on its lounge chairs predominate. Juxtapositions of more natural accessories, such as the living room’s lichee root table and a sartorially tufted chair by the fireplace ensure a down-to-earth atmosphere that’s also “cool and put-together,” says Sutton. To conjure up another popular aphorism, in this town house, what you see is definitely not what you get. **L**

A 1960s Vistosi Murano chandelier hangs over a curvaceous Niermann Weeks French Deco-style club chair to provide glamorous, slightly more feminine touches that contrast with the master bedroom’s overall handsomely tailored look. The painting conceals a flat-screen television.



Designer Patrick Sutton layered the master bedroom with a B. Berger plaid wall-covering from Michael-Cleary and a tufted panel of Garrett Leather behind the bed. The bed is dressed in Sferra linens from Timothy Paul.