

SIMPLE PLEASURES

AT THEIR SONOMA COUNTY RETREAT,
A POWER COUPLE MASTERS THE SLOW LIFE.

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ARCHITECTURE / ANDREW MANN, ANDREW MANN ARCHITECTURE
INTERIOR DESIGN / KATIE MCCAFFREY, ANGUS MCCAFFREY INTERIOR DESIGN
HOME BUILDER / KEN SAWYER, SAWYER CONSTRUCTION
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / CHRISTA MONÉ, CHRISTA MONÉ

When remodeling this Sonoma County home, architect Andrew Mann decided to keep the original midcentury modern wood ceilings in the living room. The owners entertain often, so designer Katie McCaffrey chose RH's roomy Italia Track Arm sectional sofa in stone and a modern armchair from HD Buttercup for generous seating. The chandelier by Lucretia Lighting makes a dramatic statement over the Corbett Extension dining table in walnut from Room & Board.



When Dr. Nadine Burke Harris sat down with architect Andrew Mann to describe the vision she had for her family's weekend home in Sonoma County, she didn't talk about what she wanted the place to look like. Instead, she described how she and her family live on the property and how they want to feel while there.

Mann was charged with remodeling the house belonging to Nadine, a noted pediatrician and author, and her husband, Arno Harris, a clean power and transportation entrepreneur. The primary goal was to create a retreat where the family, which also includes four children, could slow down and enjoy themselves. "We have incredibly busy lives with many pulls on our time and attention," Nadine says. "The way we wanted to spend our time in this house is simple: swimming, cooking, eating, gardening, drinking wine and hanging out with the kids."

It was Mann's job to translate the desire for a life unplugged into an architectural reality. Thankfully, he had an inspired jumping-off point—the original house is a classic midcentury style abode set on 5 rolling acres planted with orchards, vineyards and gardens. Some elements had aged gracefully, such as the home's iconic sawtooth form, soaring shed roof and tongue-and-groove wood ceilings; while others, including a cramped, isolated kitchen and a mustard-colored master bathroom, were painfully out of fashion.

In the dining room, an Eames lounge chair and ottoman in classic black leather is backed by windows that span the space from the floor to the ceiling and provide an ideal spot for unplugged repose. Black leather also covers the chairs from HD Buttercup.



“The dated elements felt completely out of character with the rest of the house,” says Mann, who worked closely with designer Katie McCaffrey and general contractor Ken Sawyer during the renovation. “We wanted any changes that we made to accentuate the drama of the home’s shape.” To that end, Mann reconfigured the U-shaped layout of the kitchen by removing a wall separating the space from the dining room and living room and creating two runs of counters centered around a marble-wrapped island. Modern, flat-front cabinetry (both bright white and smoky gray) replaced the previous craftsman-style cabinets that didn’t connect with the modern nature of the rest of the house. The island’s marble appears again in the countertops and the backsplash, where it’s bisected by a series of stainless-steel open shelves designed to keep essential ingredients close at hand. “Nadine loves to cook,” observes McCaffrey. “And with a large family, many guests and an incredible vegetable garden right outside, this space is used often.”

Now that the kitchen is open, it enjoys light and views from the dramatic, original windows that run from

the floor to the highest point of the shed roof in the dining room and living room. The branch-like brass chandelier seems to mirror the trees seen outside the windows as it floats above a long dining table and a new hardwood floor. Beyond, in the living room, a leather sectional embraces both the view and the large hearth and is generous enough in size to accommodate the whole family plus guests. McCaffrey says that adding the new elements to the vintage home was done with care. “Their philosophy is that this is a place where children can be children,” she says. “That said, these are sophisticated people.” The clean, contemporary lines of the furniture complement the couple’s style as well as the architecture.

As lovely as the built environment is, it’s designed in deference to the outdoors and the extraordinary gardens that ring the property. Bursting with flowers, fruits and vegetables, the landscape received a nurturing overhaul by Mann—who created the hardscape—as well as landscape designer Christa Moné, who was responsible for the plantings.

Statuary honed Calacatta marble cascades over the island in the kitchen, which Mann opened up to the main living space during the renovation. Flat-front cabinets replace craftsman versions that Mann and the clients felt didn’t relate to the home’s midcentury architecture. The round table is from Room & Board and the dining chairs are from HD Buttercup.



The highlight of the garden is the vegetable-ringed outdoor dining pavilion, a straightforward structure Mann elevated with elegant details. “I wanted it to be evocative of agrarian buildings, but bring it up a notch,” says the architect, who crowned the building’s shed roof with a graceful lattice. “The dappled light the structure provides and the richness of being able to see the sky beyond it turns a simple building into something a little more luxurious.” Mann also included ceiling mounted heaters and misters, to ensure a comfortable experience day or night, summer or winter. As a result, the family spends the majority of their time out in the gardens, pavilion and pool.

“We created this interactive oasis that they can explore and enjoy with their kids,” says Moné, who has been working with the family over the last five years to refine the gardens based on their needs. “This year we doubled the size of the strawberry beds because their youngest son just started walking and loves to wander around and pick berries.” Nadine describes the space as a place where the family comes together. “Arno makes pizza from scratch every weekend. The kids help—they pick arugula, Sun Gold tomatoes and figs straight from of the garden and toss them on,” says Nadine, who requested a wood-fired oven in the outdoor kitchen. “The team created something that is not just beautiful, but exactly how we envisioned living. It’s our joy.”



Opposite: The clean-lined trellis that wraps the shed-roof pavilion provides filtered shade and glimpses of the sky. Landscape designer Christa Moné put the vegetable and herb beds close by so ingredients can travel straight from stem to plate.

Below: In addition to vegetables, terraced garden beds contain cosmos, gladiola, roses, snapdragons and a riot of other blossoms.

The outdoor dining table from Shed is lined with Caprice chairs from Room & Board sporting red nylon seats. Mann designed the structure with an alfresco kitchen and a pair of sliding barn doors that conceal a large pantry.





The guest bedroom is a light-drenched aerie, which McCaffrey complemented with a bright yellow Comback rocking chair by Patricia Urquiola for Kartell and sunny soft accents, such as linen pillows from Wisteria. Nubby gray carpeting by Stark was selected to mimic the pebbles in the driveway outside.

Below, left: The guest bathroom features the same leafy views as the guest bedroom. The soaking tub wrapped with softly veined Bianco Carrara marble is from Integrated Resources Group. The concrete Hex Target tile on the floor is by Popham Design and was sourced from Morocco.

Below, right: In the master bathroom, Mann and McCaffrey designed the double floating vanity crafted with Bianco Carrara marble. The floors are covered with Ann Sacks' La Palma arrow tile, and the vanity sconces are by Apparatus.

