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APRIL/MAY 2021

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INSIDE OUT

A RALEIGH COUPLE TRANSFORMS THEIR BACKYARD INTO AN EVERYDAY RESPITE.

WRITTEN BY **BLAKE MILLER**

Unlike the brisk falls and springs in the North, the weather here in the Carolinas is temperate nearly year-round, save for a handful of winter months when it may dip below forty degrees. So when designer Kristin Bartone’s clients were ready to move out of their home of nearly three decades and build a custom home, one of the biggest priorities was to take advantage of Raleigh’s comfortable climate and create a sizable outdoor living space. “They love to be at home,” says Bartone of her clients, who are also longtime family friends. “They wanted this outdoor space to entertain but also to be a personal respite. They wanted to be able to stay at home but feel like they’re on vacation, too.”

The plans for their custom home were designed by architect Sophie Piesse, and the goal was set to create a seamless transition from the indoors to the outdoors. “The inspiration for this living space was to blur the lines between the interior and the exterior spaces in the home,” Bartone says. Piesse designed the home so that the covered outdoor living space off the main living areas was accessed by way of accordion doors on two sides, making it feel like a continuation of the interior living.

Bartone discusses the other features of this space that make it special.



TOP: The outdoor living space in this Raleigh home was all about durability and function. Cast-in-place concrete flooring and cedar paneling weather even the harshest elements, while accordion and nesting doors create a seamless indoor-outdoor flow.

BOTTOM: Designer Kristin Bartone teamed up with architect Sophie Piesse to design their clients’ backyard oasis.

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TOP: Bartone opted for customizable outdoor sofas with interchangeable backs, arms, and tables for optimum comfort and versatility. All cushions are swathed in a durable marine-grade leather.

BOTTOM: To maximize every inch of space, Bartone added a trio of teak chaise lounges with a slim built-in table attached.



THE FLOORS

Bartone chose the cast-in-place concrete flooring because of its durability but also because of its modern, clean aesthetic. “We chose to use this flooring in the interior and have it extend from the main home into the screened porch, creating a continuous statement,” Bartone says.

THE FURNITURE

To really enhance the day-to-day comfort and the ability to transform into a versatile entertaining space, Bartone chose customizable outdoor sofas with interchangeable backs, arms, and tables “so you can create the ideal environment for relaxing solo or entertaining friends and family,” she says. The sofas can easily transform into daybeds, as well.

THE MATERIALS

With the outdoor living space exposed to the elements year-round, the materials used for every facet of it had to be durable and weather resistant. The interchangeable furniture is swathed in a marine-grade leather, while the throw pillows,

including one by local artist Windy O’Connor, are in an indoor-outdoor performance fabric. The pair of rechargeable LED lamps are made of a lightweight concrete that stands up to rain, sun, and the occasional snow.

THE WALLS

“We have ghost screens that connect the screen porch to the outdoor patio and pool deck with a waterfall feature that enhances the serenity of the space,” Bartone explains. Accordion and nesting doors connect the screen porch to the adjacent kitchen for a complete open dining and entertaining experience. “It’s reminiscent of a vacation home on a tropical island,” she adds. Piesse also included a skylight to keep the space bright and airy.

THE ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS

To tie everything together, Piesse added the same cedar paneling found on the facade of the home to the ceiling of the outdoor living space. ♦