



DESIGN

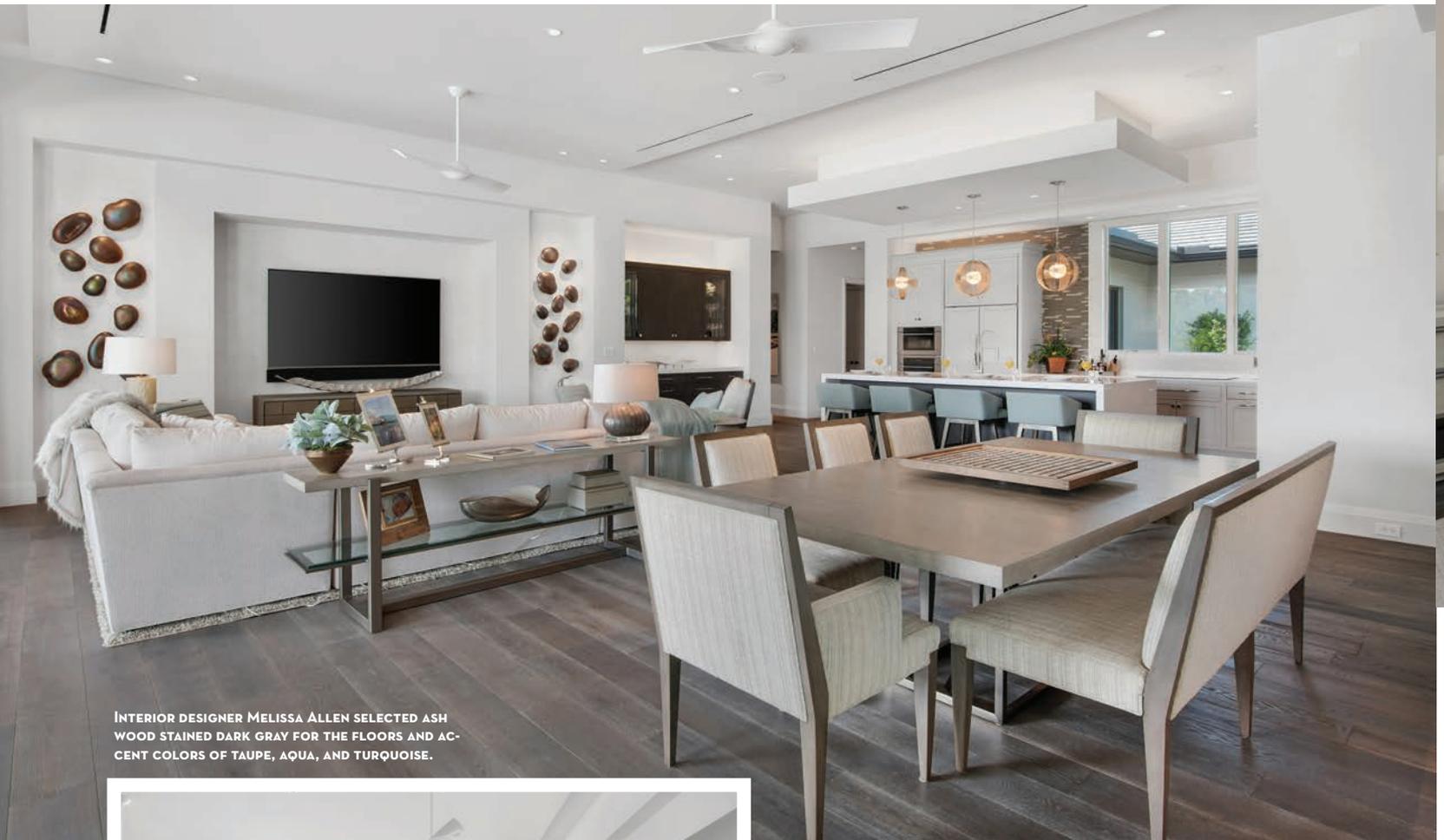
Modern PALACE

With its open concept and muted color palette, this contemporary home is a study in indoor-outdoor living

By Mary Thurman Yuhas | Photography by Wanderlust Photography

An entryway indicates a lot about a home. It offers a welcome to guests and establishes a visual narrative for the rest of the property. In the case of this custom home in Naples' Mediterra community, Melissa Allen, senior interior designer at Romanza Interior Design in Naples, consulted with her clients for nearly 18 months to create the look and feel they desired—for the entry and beyond.

Together, the couple and Allen reviewed photos, discussed how they wanted it to play, collected key and accent fabrics, and mulled over mood shots. "We had the accent pillows in the great room picked out before we chose the stone on the house," says Allen. "Once I start



INTERIOR DESIGNER MELISSA ALLEN SELECTED ASH WOOD STAINED DARK GRAY FOR THE FLOORS AND ACCENT COLORS OF TAUPE, AQUA, AND TURQUOISE.



putting all of the pieces together, I can picture how it is going to look, almost like a photograph in my head.”

The property’s outdoor elements played an important role in the overall design. With a small lake in back and a preserve across the street, this 5,823-square-foot, five-bedroom residence is ideally situated to embrace nature in all its glory. The home’s architecture celebrates these surrounds with floor-to-ceiling windows (concealed, motorized shades provide privacy when desired) that run along the front of the home and foyer. Two plush benches in the entryway are a charming touch, while the magnificent view through the residence beckons

guests to venture farther.

This viewpoint from the front entrance continues through to the great room, where a bronze-finished chandelier strikes an impressive silhouette. A flawless transition to the expansive outdoor living area via sliding glass pocket doors further aggrandizes the elegant space. Additional artworks, such as a giclée entitled *The Moon is a Bowl of Dreams II* by artist Marla E., nicely complement the home’s sophisticated yet subdued color palette of taupes with splashes of aqua and turquoise.

For the flooring, Allen selected a wide-plank, wire-brushed ash wood stained dark gray. “Wire brushing adds a textured look to the wood,” she notes. “The great room rug is warm and ties everything together, but our clients are not spending a fortune on them like they used to. Whereas rugs were the first item purchased in the past, they are now the last.”

Also within the great room is a dining area, one of many that suit the clients’ penchant for entertaining. Here, wood-framed chairs in contrasting fabrics surround a custom-sized formal dining table. The uber-chic corner also displays another giclée titled *Impression Reflection*.

Cabinets in the sleek kitchen were painted a light gray and paired with integrated appliances that continue the home’s upscale look. Backs on the swivel barstools were kept low so as not to obscure the view of the stone-and-glass backsplash. Like fine jewelry finishing an outfit, silver-champagne pendants hang above the white quartz waterfall island as a final elegant note.



SUBTLE YET STYLISH DETAILS, LIKE THE RECESSED WALL WITH VENETIAN PLASTER IN THE MASTER BEDROOM (LEFT), CREATE A SENSE OF SOPHISTICATED ELEGANCE. THE MAIN DINING ROOM (BELOW) FEATURES CHAIRS OUTFITTED IN CONTRASTING FABRICS.

The casual family room combines comfort with stylish practicality. “Family rooms need to be very accommodating and useable but aesthetically pleasing,” Allen says. The chenille sectional invites family and visitors to kick back and relax, and wheels on the wood coffee table over the turquoise ottoman allow it to be moved. The adjacent casual dining area was designed to be used for playing cards and games as much as sharing a meal.

A work of art in itself, the wine room is the jewel of the home. Glass walls bookend the space, with wine bottles resting from the floor to the ceiling on iron racks against the back wall. A stream of light shines between the racks and bottles and can be seen from the foyer when entering the residence.

One of Allen’s favorite nooks is the voguish powder bathroom. To highlight the marble countertop, a light-gray Venetian plaster was applied behind the vanity. The metal door boasts a champagne finish, while a yellow orchid delivers an unexpected pop of color.

Among this modern property, the only truly traditional item of furniture to be found is the desk in the study. In order to keep it in step with the rest of the home’s decor, the desk received a custom charcoal finish. Another notable office feature is the kerf-cut reveal barn doors, which are made of walnut.

In the master bedroom, the bed is nestled within a recessed wall—a niche further accented through the incorporation of a linear Venetian plaster that begins at the floor and stretches across the ceiling. A work entitled *Fragments* rests above the bed, and a large wool rug unites and softens the space. Accessories in shades of gray, steel, and white, as well as lamps with clear bases, enhance the artsy vibe.

Two floating wood beams with lights divide the spa-inspired master bath into three distinct areas. An exceptionally large shower provides ample room to towel dry and dress, while mirrors over the floating vanity cover recessed medicine cabinets. “Everything is integrated—even the trash can is integrated into the vanity,” says Allen, who also used beams within the children’s guest bedroom to support cantilevered bunk beds.

The adult guest room exudes a masculine aesthetic, complete with photos of the Chicago skyline, an iron lamp in an abstract shape, and hand-twisted



ABODE



FIRE URNS ACCENT THE INFINITY POOL, ADDING DRAMATIC FLAIR TO THE OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING AREA. THE CHILDREN'S GUEST ROOM (ABOVE) BOASTS A LOFT-STYLE BED THAT BRINGS A COOL, PLAYFUL AESTHETIC TO THE SPACE.

lampakanai rope ottomans. Yet another guest room captures a more serene vision through details like a nightstand with a hand-painted finish that resembles Herrera marble and high-gloss, urn-like white lamps.

"I use oversize lamps so nightstands don't need additional accessories," explains Allen. "Behind nightstands, I have USB outlets so guests can plug in their technology. I also make sure that nightstands have a place for guests to store their personal items."

The peaceful natural environs surrounding the home are the perfect

backdrop for the exterior living area. Top-of-the-line cooking appliances, attractive and cozy furniture, and amenities such as a flat-screen TV create an outdoor oasis as comfortable as the interior spaces. Bowl-shaped fire features dot the corners of the infinity-edged pool, and a separate fire pit adds even more romance and warmth for chilly nights.

From the high-style entrance to the calm-inducing alfresco area, this modern escape balances livability and cosmopolitan design while still honoring its lush, quintessentially Floridian setting. ◀



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