

Party of Five

This family home fluidly balances full-tilt fun with sophisticated style. **TEXT** CHRISTY WRIGHT | **PHOTOGRAPHY** PHIL CROZIER



ABOVE & RIGHT The front entry's pendant lights are the starting point to this home's sophisticated vibe. "They make a beautiful, almost masculine statement," says designer Reena Sotropa. Their characterful scale and gold tones factor in a bit of glam to the mostly neutral entryway that's furthered by a genius addition: a built-in desk with chic stool. "We created this little desk to act as a catch-all surface that would accommodate the family's comings and goings," says Reena. "We designed its millwork to float above the floor, which allowed us to tuck a small custom-made bench underneath." The bench's fabric is the home's first introduction of green, which is judiciously continued throughout.

PENDANT LIGHTS, SCNCE, Hudson Valley; Custom **STOOL**, Red 8 Interiors; Stool **FABRIC**, Schumacher.



There is something so appealing about a child-friendly home that still manages to speak to grown-up tastes; a home that delights little ones with its playfulness, as much as it pleases adults with its style. Calgary designers Reena Sotropa and Alanna Dunn, of Reena Sotropa In House Design Group, know just how to design such a space. “We wanted to give the homeowners and their three young children the family-focused design they desired, while capturing their youthful personality,” says Reena. “They were incredibly open to our ideas and suggestions.” →



OPPOSITE & ABOVE Rethinking each room and how the family would use it netted an unexpected result: a play space beside the front entry. “Given that our clients have three very young children, we decided to treat this space as a play room rather than a formal dining room,” says designer Alanna Dunn. “It’s a more practical use

of the space and the owners can transform it into a formal dining room when the children are older.” With that transformation in mind, the designers introduced a handsome coffered ceiling (look up!) and nixed any permanent built-in storage. Free-standing shelves offer open cubbies for decorative items and closed storage

that houses the bulk of the kids’ toys on this level. “We also chose a ceiling light that is a semi-flush-mount, so it can easily be swapped for a chandelier when the time comes.”

SHELVING, Pottery Barn Kids; **PIN BOARD**, RH Baby and Child; **TABLE, CHAIRS**, IKEA; standing **BLACKBOARD**, Melissa & Doug; **RUNNER**, West Elm.

The setting for the duo's ideas was a 4,000-square-foot new-build in Calgary's Currie Barracks neighbourhood. While its mostly neutral backdrop was open to many different design interpretations – truly a blank canvas – that didn't mean anything goes; in fact, just the opposite. Durability and no-fuss maintenance were the designers' guiding principles, influencing everything from material selection (they chose sturdy engineered oak floors) to storage (they devised a dream mudroom) and furniture specifications (hello, easy-to-clean leather sofa).

When implementing colour, the designers felt that continuity was key and restraint was essential, as too many shades could overpower the classic backdrop. "We were very strategic with our use of patterns and colours," says Alanna. For proof, look to the fun prints layered in with wallpaper or to the open-plan living area where bold Kelly green adds interest; it pops up again in the principle spaces achieving the desired continuity, and also holds its own against the home's saturated teal and sky blue hues. Alanna says, "The mix of colour and pattern is young and playful, the backdrop is pale and classic and the result is a sophisticated and stylish home." And one that suits all five family members, from the youngest to the young at heart.



"As the kitchen, dining and living areas are all one space, we opted for a white kitchen designed to be a quiet backdrop to the busiest space in the home," says Reena. The casual dining area is simply furnished with black Windsor chairs, chosen to reference the bits of black sprinkled throughout the home, and a contrasting grey table.



A bevelled marble finish puts a sparkling spin on the backsplash's classic subway tiles, the gold pendant lights are in sync with those in the entry, but perhaps the most distinctive feature is the island seating. "We wanted to incorporate a natural element with the saddle-leather stools," says Reena. "Not only are they a chic juxtaposition against the white surrounds, the leather makes them practical for a young family."

Island **PENDANT LIGHTS**, Hudson Valley; **STOOLS**, CB2; **TABLE**, RH; dining **CHAIRS**, CF Interiors; dining **PENDANT LIGHT**, Visual Comfort.

"We opted for a white kitchen designed to be a quiet backdrop to the busiest space in the home."

-Reena Sotropa





“Storage is so important, especially in a family home.”

-Alanna Dunn

The designers lent edge to the neutrality of the living area with colourful accents (including a Kelly green cushion) and accessories, all of which can be easily changed if desired. The sofa cuts a handsome silhouette, yet is sturdy and easy to clean, and the coffee table works overtime with a top that opens to

serve as a laptop desk, while also concealing a storage area within. Monochromatic artwork and the fireplace's Nero Marquina marble facade transform the TV area from everyday to extravagant, while lower storage cabinets keep it functional and orderly for family living.

Leather **SOFA**, black **LAMP**, CF Interiors; custom **SIDE TABLE**, MTHARU; **COFFEE TABLE**, **CHAIR**, West Elm; black and white **CUSHION**, CB2; Jonathan Adler brass **SIDE TABLE**, Dade Loft; grey **SOFA**, Kravet Furniture; green **CUSHION FABRIC**, Schumacher; **RUG**, Crate and Barrel; Mary Gaspar **ARTWORK**, Minted.





The master bath's colour scheme was inspired by the sleek black tub. The monochromatic palette is in line with the black-and-white accents found in the rest of the home, and takes on warmth with the addition of brass accents and fixtures. "The water closet's wallpaper is the only colourful interruption in the space," says Alanna. "Its use

of memorable pattern and colour connects the ensuite to the adjacent bedroom." The black vanity, which boasts tons of closed storage, feels light thanks to its floating silhouette.

MIRRORS, CB2; **SCONCES**, Arteriors; planter **POT**, Group Partner; **TUB**, Bain Ultra; plumbing **FIXTURES**, Delta; Kelly Wearstler **WALLPAPER**, Kravet.





“We wanted it to be a relaxing refuge.” - Alanna Dunn

The master bedroom is a master-class in how to decorate with colour. “We wanted it to be a relaxing refuge, but still connected to the rest of the home, which has a more playful palette and pops of green,” says Alanna. “We chose a very saturated tone of teal and used it in a large dose on the bed’s upholstery, as well as in the adjoining water closet’s wallpaper. These strong elements of colour work because they’re balanced by their neutral surroundings.” The golden light fixture is a common denominator throughout the home and the designers nicely play it up here with a metallic stool.

Ceiling **LIGHT**, Hudson Valley;
BED, NIGHTSTANDS, RH; SCONCES,
Visual Comfort; **THROW**, HomeSense;
Hex **TABLE**, West Elm; Cushion
FABRIC, Kravet



Brave pattern and a jolt of colour enliven one of the children's bedrooms. Leaving the walls bare and applying wallpaper to the ceiling upends expectations and has a fun effect that's furthered by matching bedding. Custom drapery in a dreamy sky-inspired blue feels distinctly fresh.

BED, NIGHTSTAND, IKEA; BEDDING, WALLPAPER, Hygge and West; drapery **FABRIC,** Avant Garde; custom **DRAPERY,** Global Shades; ceiling **LIGHT,** Hudson Valley; **LAMP,** RH.



RIGHT & BELOW “Without a doubt, mudrooms are one of the hardest-working spaces in any house and this family’s home was no exception,” says Reena. “We redesigned the floor plan to allow for a large walk-in closet across from open locker-style millwork with hooks that are easy for kids to use.” The snazzy flooring looks like painted cement tiles but is easy-to-care-for porcelain. “Using a porcelain tile meant long-wearing durability and less maintenance over the long term, as the cement would have needed to be sealed,” says Reena.

Ceiling **LIGHTS**, Hudson Valley; felt **BASKETS**, IKEA; **HOOKS**, Anthropologie; **HARDWARE**, Lewis Dolin, Banbury Lane.



BELOW “We love designing powder rooms with personality!” says Reena. “The bold pineapple-print wallpaper makes a playful statement off the more formal entry hall. The floating vanity allowed us to tuck a small blush step stool underneath, which the kids use to reach the faucet.”

WALLPAPER, Hygge and West.





Good design always looks ahead. "Our aim was to create a feminine room that could grow with this little girl," says Reena. "The colour palette was inspired by the floral wallpaper in her ensuite. Alanna sourced this particular floral pattern as it had an even mix of colours, which would provide an opportunity to move away from a pink scheme down the road if desired." The playful hooked rug offers some unexpected pattern.


Ceiling **LIGHT**, Hudson Valley; Juju **HAT**, Juju Boutique; **RUG**, Chintz and Company; **CHAIR**, West Elm; drapery **FABRIC**, Robert Allen; custom **DRAPERY**, Global Shades.

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The fun and youthful quality that the designers wanted to inject in this home is on fabulous display in this whimsical bedroom. The “fort bed” was a family purchase and it inspired them to create an outdoorsy theme complete with birch tree wallpaper and more pops of green.

Ceiling **LIGHT**, Hudson Valley; **BED**, RH Baby and Child; **BEDDING**, Wayfair; **WALLPAPER**, Cole and Sons; drapery **FABRIC**, Robert Allen; custom **DRAPERY**, Global Shades; custom **POUF**, Red 8; pouf **FABRIC**, Kravet.



“I love all the youthful elements in this house.” – Alanna Dunn