



The sitting room's west-facing windows illuminate the interior's harmonious combination of natural materials, from wood and glass to brick and stone.





# The natural

Organic materials bring simple  
charm—and relief from the  
ordinary—to a Baltimore County  
Arts and Crafts-style home.

BY KESSLER BURNETT  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY ALAN GILBERT







*Above: The Arts and Crafts-style house blends perfectly into the surrounding rolling hills.  
Below: A contemporary stained-glass wall in the foyer depicts the property's woodsy surroundings.*

TYPICAL TENDS to become boring quickly, so when planning the construction of their new house, this Baltimore County couple knew they wanted to change up things dramatically. "We spent 15 years in a contemporary home, and we were done with predictable drywall and moulding," says the husband.

"Plus, we wanted to get away from the typical big-box house with an open floor plan that offered no privacy whatsoever," adds his wife.

Drawn to Arts and Crafts architecture, the couple opted for a scape of warm, intimate spaces defined by interesting, natural details. "Our architect, Bruce Finkelstein, asked us what materials we wanted in the house and we knew we wanted to incorporate glass, metal, wood, stone and brick," explains the owner.

"We also wanted to use recycled materials as much as we could," adds his wife. "While we didn't set out to do a 'green' house, we wanted it to be as green as possible."

The result is a 6,000-square-foot Arts and Crafts-style house defined by balanced spaces that are anything but ordinary. "It's perfection," his wife adds. "I call it my 'George Clooney' house."





OF THE MOST WHIMSICAL AND STUNNING INTERIOR DETAILS is the contemporary stained-glass window that frames the many front door. Jointly designed by the couple's Ellicott City-based interior designer, Tina Wojtal of TLW Interiors, and their architect, Finkelstein, it depicts a gently abstract woodsy scene. "I wanted light in that room, but I also wanted privacy," says the wife. "When people come in, they talk about what they see in the picture, and everyone has their own interesting interpretation."

The foyer floor is a teaser of the unexpected design elements that await inside. Unlike the rest of the house, which is laid with cherry flooring, here Wojtal chose a flannel gray, metallic porcelain-glaze tile floor, with its squares outlined in copper bands. "Its

industrial glow adds another layer of texture, and it doesn't compete with the stained-glass window," says Wojtal.

The sitting room features two brick walls, one in a traditional broken-joint pattern, which frames the dining area, and the other in an unexpected herringbone pattern, above the fireplace. The gently vaulted pine ceiling is supported by repurposed barn beams that hang above Brazilian cherry floors. An arched stone window opening frames the center of the kitchen, while a metal chandelier of leafy branches (from Gutierrez Studios) frames the reclaimed wood dining table. A hint of the foyer's stained-glass wall is continued in the window transom high on the north-facing wall.

The surrounding furnishings are a study in no-fuss simplicity.



Gentle punches of color, such as orange club chairs and moss-green dining seats, enliven the main living space.



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"We had to be able to live on every piece. We're so casual that if we couldn't sleep on it or eat on it, we didn't want it."



**Above:** The "men-only" den is the ideal spot for the owner's cherished Bruce Springsteen painting. **Left:** "This is a true Arts and Crafts-style room," says Wojtal, about the office. "We specifically chose lighter, maple cabinetry in this room so that it would have its own identity."

"We had to be able to live on every piece," says the wife. "We're so casual that if we couldn't sleep on it or eat on it, we didn't want it."

The sitting area holds a chocolate velvet couch and chocolate leather ottoman, while subtle punches of color are found in the moss-green suede dining chairs and orange leather club chairs. "When you design with so many materials, you don't want competing patterns in the furniture," explains Wojtal. "It's important that the space feels calm, so you have to be willing to edit a lot so that things don't get too complicated."

"THAT'S THE ONLY ART I OWN," SAYS THE OWNER, A DIE-HARD fan of "The Boss," with a chuckle, about the Bruce Springsteen painting hanging in his den. The energetic piece sits comfortably under an intricate Arts and Crafts-style ceiling and amid dark chocolate leather furniture and built-in cherry cabinetry, which casts a warm shine on this space intended to entertain manly types. "I wanted a place I could go to watch sports," says



The addition of an arched stone wall cut-out on the exterior of the kitchen is reminiscent of an aged hearth.



the owner. "Kramer [the dog] can come in because he's a boy."

The kitchen, which integrates slate floors, soapstone counters and birch cabinets, is a study in elegant efficiency with its practical galley design. Says Wojtal, "Galley kitchens are the most functional of all layouts. There are about seven feet of space between the two rows of cabinets and tons of counter space, so no one is working on top of each other."

Height is achieved in the master bedroom thanks to the tufted gold velvet headboard that grazes the sophisticated contemporary ceiling. The selection of linen lampshades above the bedside tables and a nubby chenille chaise lounge add to the calming, natural elements in the space. Above the bed hangs a Currey & Co. wrought-iron chandelier dressed with a sparse swag of crystals, which lends the room width and a hint of shine. Wojtal chose golden-hued drapery, which echoes the color of the headboard and allows for a seamless shift in color against the pale aqua walls.



The galley kitchen, with slate floors and black soapstone countertops, is what Wojtal considers the most functional of all kitchen designs.



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## RESOURCES

**Architect** Bruce Finkelstein, HBFplus Architects,  
410-486-0253, [hbfplus.com](http://hbfplus.com)

**Interior design** Tina Wojtal, Ellicott City, 410-461-9360

**Construction** Robin Ford Building & Remodeling,  
Hampstead, 410-239-8850, [robinfordbuilding.com](http://robinfordbuilding.com)

**Lighting design** Carol Crampton Lighting Design,  
Towson, 410-494-4477, [cramptonlightingdesign.com](http://cramptonlightingdesign.com)

**Custom metalwork** Gutierrez Studios, 410-889-5341,  
[gutierrezstudios.com](http://gutierrezstudios.com)

The same layering of natural materials found throughout the house shows up in the master bathroom, complete with matte glass tiles on the shower walls, stone floors in the walk-in shower and slate tile flooring throughout.



The copper-roofed pavilion is the preferred spot for reading and entertaining, come summertime.







"It's perfection. I call it my 'George Clooney' house."



*Above:* A study in quiet neutrals, the master bedroom is charged with a touch of shine from the wrought-iron and crystal chandelier.

*Left:* The well-lit crema marfil marble dressing table is an ideal spot for pre-party primping.

"Lighter drapes would have created a more jarring effect against the dark trim," explains Wojtal.

"It's so cozy inside in the cooler months, but come spring, we live outside under the pavilion," says the owner. "I basically read out there all summer and fall, and we can easily fit 15 out there for entertaining."

The copper-roofed pavilion is fronted by a koi pond and comfortably holds an oversized sectional couch and chairs and a spacious coffee table. The slate terrace floor, post-and-beam pavilion design and brick walls smartly integrate into the space crucial elements found within the interior. "Choosing what I call our 'dream team' of the right architect, builder and interior designer was the best thing we've ever done," says the wife.

Adds her husband, "... besides getting married." □

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