

CAKE BOSS

*The best baker you've
never heard of*

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Clever Contrasts

It's all there in black and white

by LISA MOWRY

DON'T LET THE FRONT of this Decatur cottage deceive you. Inside, streamlined spaces accented with rich colors and imaginative details create a sophistication that belies the modest exterior.

"This was definitely an example of making lemonade out of lemons," says architect/designer Ili Hidalgo-Nilsson of TerraCotta Properties. "The house had been in foreclosure, vacant for years, and had been renovated at least twice before—not successfully."

Because of the house's location in a flood plain, the remodeling firm had to work within the existing footprint. TerraCotta moved some walls to create a better flow, added new windows, and installed hardwood floors throughout.

The modern kitchen—with its indigo-blue island, glossy white cabinetry, and globe pendants—is the star of the house: a dramatic space where the family spends the most time. The designers convinced the homeowner not to fear a bold color, noting that "blue is such a soothing tone that it almost looks like the ocean."

The designers also played with contrasts in the office, pairing glossy black walls with a white shag rug and table. "I give the homeowner a lot of credit because many people wouldn't let us do a black office," says Hidalgo-Nilsson. The spherical light fixture was special-ordered from the U.K. "That light is stunning," she adds. "At night, to have the dark walls and the pinpoints of light from the fixture . . . it's magical."

Generally, the living and dining rooms are more understated. However, built-in bookshelves are backed with a turquoise zig-zag wallpaper, with an adjacent club chair to match. "The bookcase is the first thing you see when you walk in, so it needed to stand out," explains Hidalgo-Nilsson.

Stand out and recede are both important considerations in design, and both are well represented here. ■



A formerly dim home office (top) was opened up with pocket doors leading to the living room and two sets of French doors to the front yard.





The dining room's Jonathan Adler chandelier, above, is a focal point that reflects spherical fixtures in other rooms.



Turquoise zigzag wallpaper turned the living room's built-in bookshelves into a focal point.

French doors in the kitchen open to an outdoor seating area with a fireplace and covered pergola.



Pocket doors, minimal window treatments, and streamlined moldings make the living room feel more spacious.