

# AT HOME tennessee

## Custom Building

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# Building with Purpose

**SOMETIMES THE BEST** way to get what you want in a house is to build it from the ground up. This Shelby County couple kept the focus on family and future while planning their dream home.

TEXT Carrie F. Simpson | PHOTOGRAPHY Mike Boatman





Guests entering this Shelby County home are greeted by an imposing Greek-revival façade and an impressive two-story entry, complete with a grand staircase, double crown molding and marble floors. The impression is one of tradition and grandeur, from the 20-foot ceilings and rich-toned wood floors to the perfectly balanced wings of the house. But for all its glory, this house was built with family in mind.

Because the homeowners have children, they knew they wanted a location, layout and design that would serve the whole family. The couple worked with architect Brad Shapiro and builder Mike Sinquefield to create a plan that would accommodate their needs. "We designed it to resemble old Midtown homes," says one homeowner. She describes the design as "classic, traditional and more formal than most." To accomplish the elegant décor that the homeowners wanted, they called on friend and interior designer Carol Johnson. "She coordinated the interior layout and the color scheme for the interior and exterior," says the homeowner. "The first thing Carol did was plan the furniture placement, and

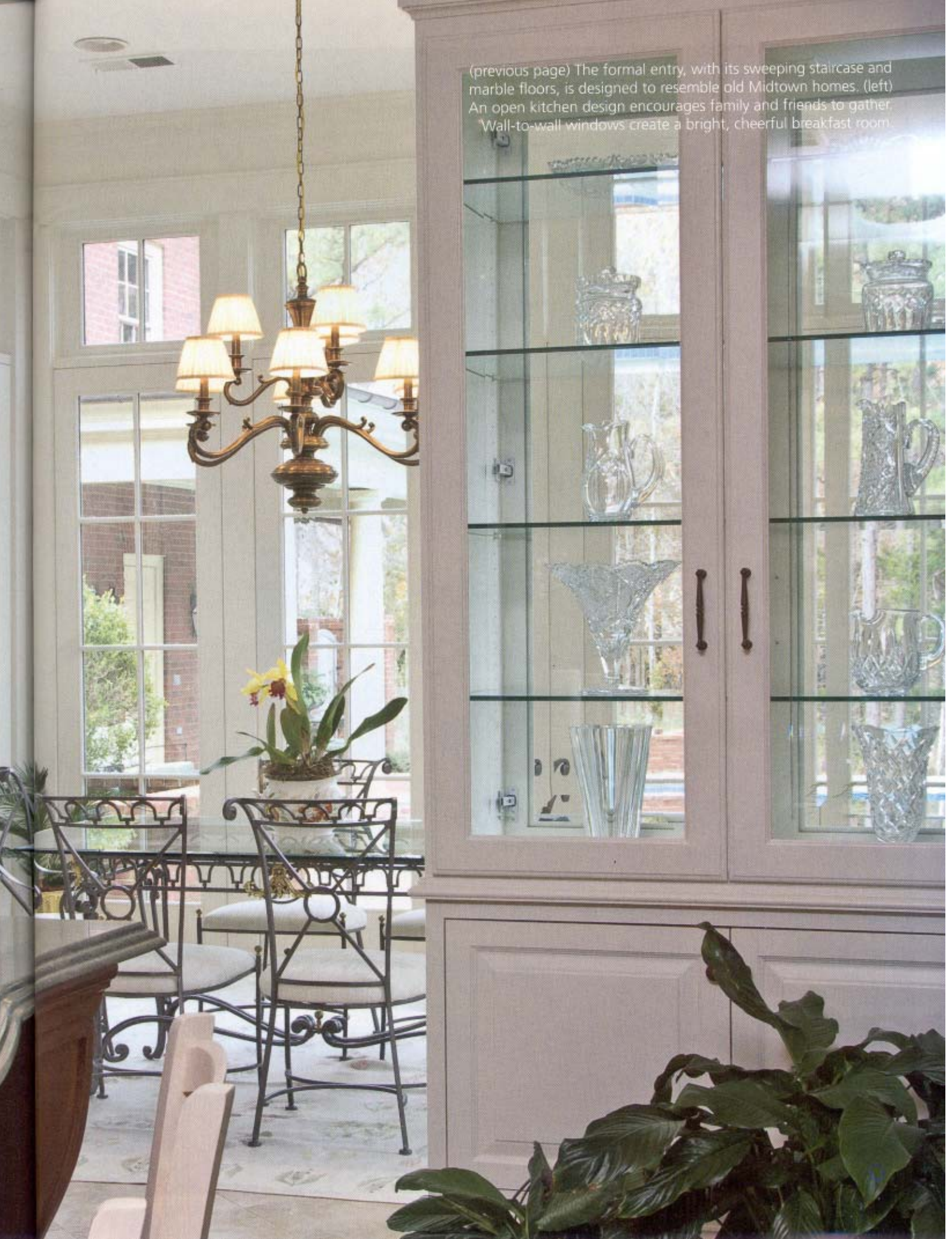
then she helped lay out everything from there. She also helped select paint colors, wood finishes, tile, light fixtures, architectural details and more." But, according to the homeowner, the process is ongoing; they are still working on accoutrements to complete their décor.

The formal dining room, living room, family room, kitchen, breakfast room and game room comprise the home's main entertaining space. The family room sits at the rear of the home and is a comfortable, yet well appointed space that flows easily into the kitchen, which was designed by Karen Kassen, CMKBD, of Kitchens Unlimited. Kassen worked hand-in-hand with both the homeowner and the architect to finalize a kitchen plan that complements the traditional nature of the home and fits the functional needs of a family. "We began working on the design for the kitchen before [the homeowners] even had their plans finalized," says Kassen. "We quickly realized that the type of kitchen that the homeowner wanted was not going to work with the first few preliminary plans that she brought in to me, so it was back to the architect and back to the drawing board several times." The large space also presented a challenge for Kassen. "With





(previous page) The formal entry, with its sweeping staircase and marble floors, is designed to resemble old Midtown homes. (left) An open kitchen design encourages family and friends to gather. Wall-to-wall windows create a bright, cheerful breakfast room.







The study features warm-toned wood paneling, leather-bound books and bronze statuary. Just off the main entry, it mirrors the formal dining room (right) in size. The homeowners designed the house to be symmetrical to complement their traditional style.









balance being very important to how the kitchen related to the other end of the very large gathering space, we centered the cooking area under a massive mantel-style hood, rich with wainscoting, and used very large scaled corbels at either side to support the visual weight," she says. To accommodate the family and their entertaining needs, Kassen incorporated a unique refrigerator/freezer alcove, which provides a full six feet of food storage, topped with a neoclassic pediment. The pediment was then repeated on a custom entertainment piece in the family room to add balance.

For additional family convenience, the homeowners included two master suites, one upstairs and one on the main level. "We created two grand master suites with bath and dressing areas so that the homeowners may select the area of the house that they are most comfortable in as their children get older and leave the home," says Kassen. "I think these days, there is a demand for an upstairs and downstairs master bedroom and bath, especially for extended family or for easier access when you are older because there would be no steps to climb," says the homeowner. Currently, the couple

occupies one suite and uses the other as guest accommodations. While both the master baths have similarities in style and color, the spaces are unique. "This made it very fun for the homeowner because she got to pick her favorite choices in two areas," says Kassen. Both rooms are built with luxury in mind and feature marble counters and floors as well as deep soaker tubs with jets and chromotherapy lights.

The yearlong planning process has certainly paid off in this new home. From the well-organized layout to the meticulous attention to detail, the home is everything the family wants and needs, both now and for the future. As Kassen puts it, "The home is classic, yet reserved, and the materials speak for themselves as one can feel a warmth that is only added to by the lovely family and friends who live, enjoy and utilize this home as a welcoming gathering space. •

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One of two master bathrooms in the home, this space is pure luxury. Architectural details, such as the arched door, tie the room into the overall design. (left) The antique perfume bottles and brush set are family heirlooms and make a lovely counter display.