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erenbe, located southwest of Atlanta, is a picturesque community known for its rolling hills, dense woodlands and slower pace reminiscent of yesteryear. It was the area's agrarian beauty and history that inspired the nostalgic design of one couple's new house. While it needed to be spacious enough to

accommodate their growing family and visiting relatives, it was equally imperative for the abode to remain inviting rather than grandiose. The wife also emphasized the importance of a strong connection to the pastoral setting. "We did not want it to look like it had been plunked down on the ground," she recounts. "We wanted a sense of permanence." Luckily for the owners, they found a design team with a knack for making the new feel long-lived: designer Anna Booth along with husband-and-wife architectural designers Matthew and Lauren Russell.

Before the Russells began their design, they devised a fictional narrative that would guide it. "We always try to establish a story for our homes, and we like to tell it through our work," Lauren says. The story they chose to tell here is one of an old stone barn which has been added to over generations. Constructed by builder John Bynum using traditional materials—oak, terra-cotta tile and stone with the earthy hues of Georgia red clay—the house was intentionally designed to be rambling and unpretentious, just as the clients had requested. "We made a commitment to low, wide proportions," Matthew explains. "We wanted the house to settle into the landscape and have a quiet stature." At the same time, an abundance of modern steel-and-glass windows and doors brought a freshness to the design.

An updated old-world feel also suffuses the interior, where many of the exterior materials were repeated. For example, the living room's vaulted, oak-beamed ceiling and stone walls reinforce the impression of a historical barn but without the rustic discomfort. "The house was always meant to be warm and welcoming," Booth recalls. A mix of inviting pieces furnish the room, including a terra-cotta-toned Persian rug that echoes the saturated hues the designer gravitated toward throughout the home. Pleasing-to-the-touch fabrics further enrich the space,

such as velvet, linen, wool and the enticingly brown-sugar-shaded mohair that covers the sofa. In other words, "We used every fabric you can think of," Booth notes. Adept at using time-honored pieces to soften the polish of new construction, the designer paired distinctive furniture with comfortable modern upholstery. "When you're working with high-end antiques, fresh seating like this keeps the room from feeling stuffy," she explains.

Booth is especially proud of the master craftsmanship evident at every turn, crediting Bynum and his expertise for successfully executing her designs, including all the millwork. "Everything was done with integrity," she says, noting the kitchen's white oak cabinetry which brings some warmth to the room's stone floors and countertops. The primary suite has its own share of skillfully crafted finishes, from the bedroom ceiling's plaster detailing to the bathroom shower's honed marble tile, creatively applied in a pattern reminiscent of wood paneling. That spirit of originality extends to the home's many art pieces, which Booth carefully curated to reflect the wife's Palestinian heritage.

The outdoor spaces were also thoughtfully detailed. Taking his cues from the home's composition, landscape architect Alec Michaelides says that he "decided to give the grounds a transitional feel, but with a rustic twist." A combination of traditional stone walls and modern cast-concrete pavers—like those surrounding the swimming pool—sets the theme for the property, where he introduced plantings such as black-eyed Susans, hydrangea and viburnum. There are even a few surprises, notably a garden folly that the Russells designed in a charming English Cotswold style.

Even though it is impressively sized, the house is anything but intimidating, which is exactly what the wife hoped for. "It doesn't feel overwhelming. It feels livable," she enthuses while adding, "The design team nailed that sense of permanence." ■

Architecture: Matthew Russell and Lauren Russell, Heyward Russell Studio
Interior Design: Anna Booth, Anna Booth Interiors
Home Builder: John Bynum, John Bynum Custom Homes
Landscape Architecture: Alec Michaelides, Land Plus Associates, Ltd.

STORIED CHARM

A GEORGIA HOUSE EMBRACES ITS RURAL SETTING WITH NOVEL TOUCHES
BY DESIGNER ANNA BOOTH AND ARCHITECTURAL DUO MATTHEW AND LAUREN RUSSELL.

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER BOLES | PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS LUKER | STYLING BY ELEANOR ROPER



Above and previous page: At one end of the living room, an antique walnut table from Robuck serves as a games table, surrounded by Holland MacRae chairs in a Jerry Pair Leather fabric. Verellen's mohair sofa and club chairs offer fireside seating. Rose Tarlow Melrose House chandeliers hang from the vaulted ceiling made of white oak from Crafted Supply.

Opposite: The dining area is furnished with an antique trestle table joined by Verellen's Thibaut banquette and Lee Industries chairs wearing Rosemary Hallgarten linen. Designer Anna Booth used lightweight wool from Otis Textiles for the gossamer curtains.

White oak millwork, which was designed by Booth and constructed by builder John Bynum, lends warmth to the kitchen, while its Venetian plaster ceiling and walls reflect natural light. Holland MacRae's Firth counter stools line the island topped with Calacatta Viola Monet marble from Bottega Surfaces.





Above: The bar, whose marble countertops echo those in the kitchen, features a cloud painting by Catherine Erb. The brass sink faucet is from Waterworks.

Opposite: A Lacanche Chagny 1800 range equips the kitchen. Cabinet hardware from Rocky Mountain Hardware quietly reinforces the layered palette.

“THE HOUSE WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE WARM AND WELCOMING.”

—ANNA BOOTH



Above, left to right: The primary bathroom is appointed in white oak cabinetry and Walker Zanger stone countertops. Brooks & Black Fine Framing fabricated the custom mirrors. Waterworks' Bursa Beige tile clads the shower walls and floors, while the brand's Easton showerhead punctuates the space.

Opposite: Upholstered in Rose Tarlow Melrose House's Luciana linen, the primary bedroom's custom bed stands on a rug from Designer Carpets. Bedside lighting is provided by a pair of Adam Otlewski wall sconces, sourced from R Hughes. A Claire Rosen photograph is poised above.

The home's stonework was crafted by Villegas Stone and Brick LLC. The roof is finished in Ludowici's terra-cotta tiles. Other exterior details include windows by Brombal and lanterns by Bevolo Gas & Electric Lights.

