



STYLE IN NAME AND NATURE

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Flowers from THE NOUVEAU ROMANTICS

IN BUILDING HER FAMILY HOME, LIFESTYLE EXPERT CAMILLE STYLES CREATES A BRICK-AND-MORTAR EXPRESSION OF HER WARM, SOPHISTICATED AND BREEZY STYLE



From the back of Styles and Moore's home just west of Camp Mabry, one can see both downtown Austin and Lake Austin.

E

vent guru, stylist and Austin's "it" lifestyle expert, Camille Styles, makes throwing a party for 100 look as effortless as pouring a glass of champagne and kicking back on a patio. Her knack for designing beautiful, stress-free events—and for helping home hosts re-create them—has made her

how-to blog, camillestyles.com, grow from a side project six years ago into a behemoth that receives 500,000 unique readers each month. Creating content for this audience gives Styles an enviable work schedule, which could skip from a meeting with former supermodel Christy Turlington (to plan an event supporting her charity) to styling an autumnal Thanksgiving party video for the home and garden cable giant HGTV.

When it's time to go home, though, Styles loves nothing more than to retreat to her sanctuary tucked into the lush hills west of Camp Mabry. "My home is a haven from the outside world," she says. "It's always the place I most look forward to at the end of a long workday." And it's not hard to see why. The four-bedroom house, which Styles shares with her husband, Adam Moore, and their almost 2-year-old daughter, Phoebe, is the epitome of laid-back luxury. The front door opens into a dreamy living space that flows to a sun-kissed terrace where friends and family gather for alfresco lunches by the pool. The abode's undeniable warmth is testament to what can happen when a seasoned host is given the opportunity to build a home from the ground up.

That opportunity was born in 2008, before Styles and Moore, co-founder and CEO of software company Space-



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 Styles' design philosophy is evident throughout the house, from the Caesarstone countertop in the kitchen (top left), to the Restoration Hardware outdoor furniture on the terrace (above) to the bar cart from Target in the living room.

OPPOSITE PAGE
 In the dining room, a light fixture and chairs from Restoration Hardware flank a white oak table that Styles and Moore designed and had custom built.

Craft, were married. Moore, who'd been wanting for some time to put down roots around Mount Bonnell, had found a mid-century house surrounded by thick brush. It wasn't the house per se that attracted Moore, but rather the land it occupied at the top of a bluff where he sensed there was untapped potential. "I remember we climbed onto the roof of the original house to see what we could find," recalls Styles. What they saw spread beneath them was an ocean of tree canopies anchored by the city skyline on one end and Lake Austin on the other. "When we saw the lake, we were so excited about what we could create on that spot," she says.

The complete demolition of the original house and construction of the new one didn't start for another year, during which time the couple sought inspiration from travels to beloved destinations like the Napa Valley. Their honeymoon on the sybaritic island of Capri was a turning point in the creative process. "We loved the colors, the inside-outside spaces and even just the vibe," Styles says. "Watching the Italians have

these three-hour lunches on a weekday made us want to bring some of that enjoyment into our home."

To realize this vision, the pair called on Ryan Street & Associates, whose portfolio of Austin homes includes the 8,000-square-foot abode built for Lance Armstrong. "Ryan's style perfectly captures the modern Mediterranean look we envisioned," says Styles. The modern aesthetic was the key because while the couple wanted elements of *la dolce vita*, the home also had to feel "clean, serene and contemporary—but not cold," she says.

These ideals were achieved by builder Michael Deane's coating the exterior walls with vanilla stucco and tiling the roof with concrete shingles to add a cooling note. Inside, broad slabs of honeyed travertine line the ground floors and extend out to the terrace, so the interiors and exteriors flow like water. Dialogue with the bougainvillea-, olive- and lemon-planted garden, landscaped by Mark Word, is further heightened through generously scaled windows. About these, Styles says, "They



"MOST OF OUR PARTIES ARE CASUAL," STYLES SAYS. "WE'LL PUSH OPEN THE BACK DOORS; I'LL LAY FOOD OUT FAMILY-STYLE AND LET EVERYONE HELP THEMSELVES."



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Blue-and-white poufs from West Elm (left) add interest to the house's neutral color palette while a custom white-marble tub in the master bathroom provides a luxurious setting for a bath.

OPPOSITE PAGE
The master bedroom features a bed from NEST Modern and chairs and a table from Crate & Barrel.

don't leave much wall space for art, but we love having nature be the focus." Moreover, Street was able to engineer a 30-foot retaining wall lifting the back of the house to capture the sensational vista of Lake Austin shimmering in the distance.

Styles imagined the 4,000-square-foot home's core to be a seamless space of living-kitchen-dining. Eschewing the formal dining room ("everybody ends up at the kitchen table anyway," she says), Styles insisted on an open plan so she can always be close to her guests. "Cooking then becomes part of the party instead of this thing you have to do before everybody arrives," she says.

Styles also needed something that could function as a stage for her professional creativity. For three years, her team worked in a spare room and the photogenic common space was used as a giant set for the blog's huge lineup of productions, from an outdoor pizza-making party to a Christmas gathering shot by the fireplace. Similarly, her kitchen has been the scene of hundreds of hours of testing for recipes appearing on the blog and in her new book, *Camille Styles Entertaining*, out in October. With Electrolux icon appliances, nougat-hued Caesarstone countertops and open shelves stacked with sturdy white dishes, it's a masterful study in hiding functionality beneath designer looks.

The same could be said of the rest of the house, which strikes that rare balance between elegance and comfort. Here, rugs are woven from hard-wearing reed fibers, and the living

room "coffee table" is a square ottoman topped with a wide wooden tray for bearing drinks. "I didn't want anything to be too precious, so people felt like they couldn't just put their feet up and relax," she says. Styles, who designed the interior herself, stuck to a neutral palette, choosing to add interest via textural elements like a collection of bone-white coral that mingles with lustrous mother-of-pearl candle holders, or a comfortable couch upholstered in sandy boucle. Meanwhile, dark wooden shelving, chocolate-colored beams and black steel on the main doors and light fixtures lend dashing definition to the expanse of earthy tones.

Tucked off the common space are the master suite, Moore's study and Styles' former office. (Having outgrown the space, her blog's team of six recently moved into a bungalow four miles away.) Another guest room and the nursery are located up a flight of stairs, where a gallery of family photos in uniform frames lines the walls. With touches of Carrara marble and walls painted in the palest blue-gray, the second floor is an ethereal aerie floating above home's heart.

For somebody like Styles, nothing quite matches the feeling of when this heart beats with the rhythm of friends and family. "For me, home is the place where I'm surrounded by the people I love, making great food and wonderful memories together," she says. "Adam and I created this house so we could fill it with people." ■