



OUTSIDE IN

A CONTEMPORARY DENVER HOME EMBRACES NATURE
AND MAKES THE MOST OF ITS WASH PARK LOCATION.

INTERIOR DESIGN / COLIN GRIFFITH, GRIFFITH INTERIOR DESIGN LLC
HOME BUILDER / GEORGE SAAD, FORTE DISTINCTIVE HOMES
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / JOSHUA RUPPERT, LIFESCAPE COLORADO

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Blurring indoor and outdoor spaces was key for this Wash Park home. Designer Colin Griffith incorporated limestone columns as a means of bringing the outside in while also separating the entryway from the sitting room. The walnut front door was custom designed.



For many years, while residing in Oklahoma, a Colorado native dreamed of moving his family back to his home state. So, when a work change made it possible to return, it felt like a happy triumph. There was just one catch: The family had grown accustomed to the wide-open spaces of their property in the Sooner State, so their new home on an urban lot in the heart of Denver was an adjustment. They charged their design team—designer Colin Griffith, landscape designer Joshua Ruppert and builder George Saad—with giving their city house the same kind of connection to the land as their Oklahoma spread. Luckily, the home sits on a corner lot that overlooks Wash Park, so it came endowed with views of Smith Lake, flower gardens and winding trails.

To knit the house even closer to its site, the design team used a similar material palette—including limestone and tongue-and-groove wood panels—on both the interior and the exterior for a seamless effect. “We were creating zones for different activities within the indoor and outdoor spaces,” says Griffith. “Because they are so connected, they needed to feel similar.” The designer describes that feeling as “livable and relaxed,” which is a departure for these particular homeowners, as their previous home was much more formal. “In their Denver house, the style is sleek and clean,” says Griffith. “We used marble, steel and glass throughout, and this was something new for the clients.” In order to integrate some of the family’s traditional pieces in the contemporary space, Griffith added new

The airy sitting room is filled with natural light and provides a more intimate gathering space. Griffith designed the linen-upholstered sofas crafted by Imrovich Strepman Furniture. The Rosemary Hallgarten pillows and layered Tufenkian rugs add color and pattern to the serene palette.



upholstery and patterns. Conversely, he made some of the stark modern architectural elements and finishes more rustic to fit the furnishings. In the sitting room, for instance, the designer used a silk wallcovering to soften the effect of three stone columns that bring an outdoor feeling indoors, while the powder room features a mica wallcovering. For aesthetic balance in the mostly contemporary kitchen, Griffith wire brushed the cabinets for a patinaed effect, wrapped drawers in leather, and installed a bronze range hood over the cooktop.

To open up the home for entertaining, Griffith installed accordion glass doors between the living room and patio. Given that the interior was designed to meld with the back

courtyard, when the doors are open the transition between the areas is effortless. “The clients move through the rooms so easily, it’s almost a progressive dinner party within their own home,” Griffith says.

The family inevitably ends up in the living room, their chosen lounging spot. With that in mind, Griffith installed a roomy sectional topped with colorful pillows and shearling throws for what the designer dubs a “Colorado touch.” The room is anchored by a custom designed walnut and oak coffee table with a sculptural bronze base. The table has a special connection to the site, given that some of its wood was sourced from Wash Park by Thomas Harvey, a Denver artisan.

To highlight the vertical nature of the entry, Griffith turned the stairs into a sculptural element, combining industrial powder-coated steel columns with wood, glass and a custom bronze handrail. Landscape designer Joshua Ruppert planted a birch tree outside the stair window to create a woody ambience and conceal the view of the neighboring home.

The living room connects with the back courtyard to create one continuous indoor-outdoor space. Griffith modified a Dmitry & Co. Belgard sofa by covering it in silver-toned fabric and then adding a pair of Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams Cooper swivel chairs for a comfortable conversation area. The walnut and oak coffee table is by Thomas Harvey.



In the dining room, the limestone-wrapped fireplace picks up the material used in the entry and exterior façade for a seamless look. A black oak table contrasts with the light-colored stone and is surrounded by Bottega arm chairs from Design Within Reach and side chairs by RH. A glittering Emile Linear chandelier, also by RH, sets the room aglow.

In this house, the outdoor rooms are just as important as the interior spaces. On the rooftop deck, which offers stellar views of the park and mountains, the clients asked for a space that would allow up to 10 people to dine comfortably. Ruppert met the challenge with a dining area and a fire pit, as well as several trees for an “in the treetops” effect.

On the lower-level courtyard and patio, Ruppert used plants to provide beauty as well as privacy. “We layered the spaces with trees, shrubs and flowers in such a way that it feels private but doesn’t totally close out the yard from the rest of the neighborhood,” he explains.

Ruppert and his team used a similar planting strategy outside of the windows to create the feeling of a forest in the city. “We placed a birch tree right in front of the window that faces the stairway,” he says. “It’s lit up at night, so it feels like you’re in a wooded environment.”

Griffith says that, inside or out, the best thing about the new home is that people feel a sense of peace and relaxation in the spaces. “We are all so busy and tethered to technology today, but when you leave your phone and go for a walk in the park, it cleanses your mind, almost like meditation. We really tried to implement that feeling of tranquility in this house.” And, for this family, that feeling is the ultimate homecoming. ■





Griffith was looking to add a touch of "Colorado rustic" to the kitchen, so he installed scraped oak cabinets. The marble countertops by The Stone Collection and a polished brass Fournier range hood by Francois & Co. add elegant touches. The hand-blown pendants are by Hubbardton Forge.

Right: The entry to the master bedroom sets the tone for the sophisticated suite. "The homeowners travel a lot, so we created the space for rest and relaxation," says Griffith. The wallcoverings seen through the double doors are Bermuda Hemp II and white oak Cracked Cork on the ceiling—both by Phillip Jeffries.

Opposite: The designer created a suite of rooms for the daughter that embodies coziness and provides a place where she can both rest and spend time with friends. An ombre wallpaper mural by Lulu and Georgia is a quiet backdrop for an RH Teen sleigh bed. Tactile elements include a wool rug by RH, oversize pink pillows by Room & Board and a shearling lumbar cushion by Rosemary Hallgarten.





Above: In the powder room, Griffith used the same marble countertops and scraped oak cabinet finish found in the kitchen to evoke an aesthetic of modern, clean lines. A custom hand-knotted, wool and silk carpet by Modern Tibet adds warmth for bare feet and an RH mirror reflects the Phillip Jeffries wallcovering.

Right: The wife has an intimate work space tucked to one side of the kitchen and at the end of the back entry. It features a floating desk by Francois & Co. Both the entry storage and the desk are crafted with white oak and bronze pulls by Emtek.

