

Silver Bells



GLISTENING SILVER ORNAMENTS AND SWAGS OF BLUE AND LAVENDER RIBBONS SHIMMER ON A 16-FOOT-TALL TREE, LIGHTING UP A SERENE BLUE-AND-GRAY PALETTE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

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THE BEST WAY TO TURN A

brand-new house into a well-loved family home is to bring on Christmas. The paint was barely dry and the furniture hardly arranged in Julie and Brad Lich's recently completed eastern Tennessee home when they hauled in a towering Christmas tree and heaved it in front of French doors in their new living room.

"The kids were adamant that we pick out a tree," says Julie. "It's always been a tradition in our family to go out to the tree farm and choose a big tree the first week of December." When the couple and their two teenagers, Megan and Scott, made the outing in 2013, they weren't even living in the house yet—but they were counting on being there by Christmas. "We put the tree in a bucket on the porch," Julie explains. Just days before Christmas, everything was finished. "We brought in the tree and I threw on some lights. We didn't put on any of the other decorations," Julie adds. But an important family tradition remained intact.

Building the home, which overlooks the 17th hole of a private golf course in Jonesborough, was a long-distance effort that started with a design by Atlanta architect William T. Baker. The Liches had been visiting relatives in Atlanta years before when they admired a house there that Baker had designed.



Living room A pair of turned-leg benches from Hickory Chair offer convenient seating. **Chest** Ginger jars and rustic Christmas trees sit on a "Monks" chest by Formations. **Homeowners** Julie and Brad Lich. **Foyer** Double doors open to the spacious foyer anchored by a "Trieste" table from Formations. Glass Christmas trees from Simon Pearce on the table are gifts from Brad's mother. **Exterior** Brad's study and the dining room enjoy front bay windows. The exterior shake siding is stained with Sherwin-Williams' "Blue Shadow." **Preceding pages** Armchairs in blue velvet from Clarence House cozy up to the François & Co. fireplace. The coffee table is from Formations.



Dining room Draperies in a fretwork-pattern fabric from Schumacher accent the bay windows. A metallic thread in the blue side chair fabric adds subtle sheen. The "Tissage" chandelier is from Niermann Weeks. Fumed white oak floors are laid in a chevron pattern. Kitchen Custom glazed gray cabinets feature a diamond motif. Cabinet doors to the left of the built-in Miele coffeemaker slide back to reveal the TV. Dining area A Snoopy and Charlie Brown lithograph hangs above a console that houses a built-in dog bed. Klismos chairs are covered in indoor-outdoor fabric from Dedar.







Back porch The covered side of the porch is set for dining with Century's "Andalusia" chairs and a table from Elegant Earth. **Brad's study** A large antique clock, a chandelier from Circa Lighting, and walls painted Benjamin Moore's "Rockport Gray" make the room "cozy and approachable," the designer says.



Once construction was under way, Julie and Brad brought in Atlanta interior designer Amy Morris. "I always had strong feelings about what I liked and disliked, but I struggled to put it together," Julie says. "This project was very fun and collaborative. Amy guided the process but made sure the choices were mine."

From the start, Julie wanted a blue-and-gray color scheme, and Morris enlivened it with lavender and eggplant-hue accents. Armchairs in the living room are upholstered in an inviting plush blue silk velvet trimmed with a purple-tinged piping. In the dining room, Morris laid down a blue-and-ivory rug and draped a side table in an aubergine waffle-texture fabric hemmed with lavender velvet. "The eggplant color is used in small ways throughout the main level, and that helps to tie all the rooms together," Julie says.

Even the towering Christmas tree is decked out with color-coordinated ornaments and wide ribbons. Four blue velvet stockings hang from the composite-stone mantel, which is draped with cedar garlands and adorned with blue and silver balls.

"I love fresh greenery," Julie says, adding that Morris taught her a clever trick of putting plastic wrap underneath arrangements on the mantel or tabletops. "It protects the mantel from the sap, and I can mist the greens every day without damaging anything underneath. The greens last all season."

Morris layered the soft palette with metallic bronze, gold, and silver accents on light fixtures, paint finishes, accessories, and hardware. "That's another thing I learned from Amy. Not everything has to match," Julie explains. In several rooms, nickel, brass, silver, and gold finishes mingle happily.

Walls throughout are painted shades of soft gray, deepening to a dark charcoal in Brad's study. "The darker color makes his study very cozy and approachable, not too grand," the designer says. Varied paint sheens—from flat to eggshell—on walls, furniture, and trim also add energy to the quiet palette.

There was one designer-to-client "trust me" moment when Morris encouraged Julie to paint the interior doors a dark charcoal. "I was skeptical, but I love how they look. So many people comment on how great the doors are," Julie says.


The Liches frequently entertain large groups of family and friends—particularly during the holidays—so the architect designed a flowing floor plan with the foyer, living room, kitchen, and porch all open to one another. The living room's vaulted ceiling soars to 26 feet and is spanned by dramatic white-oak timbered arches. Three sets of eight-foot-tall French doors open the living room to a back porch with views of the rolling golf course and the Appalachian and Blue Ridge mountains beyond.



The high ceilings and spacious rooms required Morris to beef up furnishings, many of which were custom-made to fit the space. The living room features an eight-foot-high chinoiserie screen above the fireplace, as well as a five-foot-wide metal-arm chandelier. "Scale was definitely important in this house," Morris says.

Atlanta-based kitchen designer Mary Kathryn Timoney helped Julie and Brad lay out the kitchen, which features a massive island topped with honed Calacatta Gold marble. Functionality was key because Julie and Brad typically host a couple of holiday parties, entertaining up to 60 guests—and Julie does the cooking.

Sixteen-foot sliding doors open the kitchen to the covered portion of the back porch. "We wanted the doors so we could open up the house for entertaining and to make the indoors and outdoors blend," Julie says. "Even in early winter we can sit out on the porch because we have heaters and fireplaces."

When family gathers for Christmas, there are waffle breakfasts and beef tenderloin dinners. Coffee is always ready in the kitchen, where dogs Otto and Lily curl up in their bed under a console table. A new home, yes, but one enriched by holiday traditions. 

Architect: William T. Baker **Interior designer:** Amy Morris

Kitchen designer: Mary Kathryn Timoney, Design Galleria

For more information, see sources on page 113



Master bedroom A dainty settee at the foot of the bed is covered in a hand-painted velvet from Coleman Taylor. Draperies in soft blue are finished with a Greek key trim and buttons on the tulip pleats.
Master bath A New Ravenna marble tile border creates a glimmering tile rug near the Waterworks tub.