



Inside Out

A talented team creates a modern open home for a young St. George family

BY BRAD MEE PHOTOS BY SCOT ZIMMERMAN



Retracting glass window walls open the home's great room to the spacious pool area. Ceramic floor tile and basalt-style wall tile flows seamlessly from the interior to the patios, blurring the line between indoor and outdoor living.



When Dustin and Sabrina Ward decided to build a new home in St. George, they envisioned a house that would foster their young family's active lifestyle, embrace the outdoors and reflect their love of modern design. "We wanted clean lines, authentic materials and indoor-outdoor living spaces," Dustin says. Thanks to architect Shawn Patten, contractor Markay Johnson and designers Ashley Johnson and Gregory Abbott, that's exactly what they have.

From the outside, the home's bold horizontal lines, broad windows and mix of dark stucco, basalt-style tile and concrete planters satisfy the Wards' appetite for modern design that feels "at home" in its desert setting. The structure wraps around a spacious pool and patio area, providing inviting views from most every room in the home. "It creates the big indoor-outdoor feel that was the main thing that we wanted," Dustin says.

Once inside the home's metal-lined, pivoting entry door, visitors enter a spacious, streamlined hall. There an asymmetrical lighted ceiling runs the length of the hall, glowing above art

mounted on a white wall. "Rather than a centered ceiling cloud that would be backlit, we designed it so light washes over only one wall," says designer Ashley Johnson. "You don't really see the effect, but you feel it." The opposite wall, clad in dark ceramic tile resembling basalt, provides a bold contrast and dramatic backdrop for spot-lit framed art. "It is a truly unique gallery hall," says Greg who, along with Ashley, staged a sculpture in front of a large window at the hall's end for theatrical effect.

A flair for the fantastic continues further in the home where, in the great room, a wide retracting wall of windows opens to patios and a pool seamlessly linking indoors and out. "This is our favorite feature in the home," Dustin says. In the living area, a gleaming fireplace clad in cream, back-painted glass fronts a feature wall dressed in dark basalt-style ceramic tile. A thick, wedge-shaped hearth of Raven Caesarstone juts from the fireplace, mimicking the unique angles of the butterfly-trussed ceiling above. The mid-century inspired ceiling lowers to 15 feet



TOP LEFT: Cream, back-painted glass accented with horizontal channels adorns the great room's fireplace. A wall dressed in dark basalt-style ceramic tile backs the feature and extends to the outdoor patio area.



TOP RIGHT: The home's bold horizontal lines, broad windows and orientation to the outdoors reflects architect Shawn Patten's nod to mid-century modern design.



BOTTOM RIGHT: A trio of Visual Comfort lights hang above the a chamcha wood table. Tall metal host chairs by Global Views add surprising forms to the dining space.



The island's walnut base and the butterfly-trussed fir ceiling visually warm the open kitchen. A stainless steel range hood extends from the room's open wall to the ceiling above.



Cream Polylac cabinets were customized to match the kitchen's cream glass wall and backsplash.

in the center of the fireplace and rises to 18 feet on each end of the great room. Straight-grain fir slats, stained and installed with narrow gaps over a black-painted surface beneath, cover the spectacular ceiling. The designers integrated inconspicuous LED linear light fixtures among the slats to illuminate the room and put them on drama-inducing dimmers. "They give off the most wonderful light," Ashley explains.

The fir-clad ceiling extends over the dining area where a wood-slab table makes a bold statement of organic beauty echoed by the living room area's stump coffee table. "Natural elements balance the hard surfaces and warm the spaces," Abbott explains. A water-patterned area rug drenches the area in deep blue while a chrome table base and pendant lights starkly contrast with rusted oil barrel lids performing as art on the nearby wall. "You want to add the unexpected, but you don't want to overdo it," Ashley says.

The designers dialed down the drama in the clean-lined kitchen. "We wanted the kitchen area to be beautiful and comfortable but not stand out," Ashley explains. To accomplish this, the duo customized perimeter Polylac cabinetry to match and meld into the room's sparkling backsplash and 18-foot back wall, both covered in cream back-painted glass. Raven Caesars-stone, repeated from the hearth to the kitchen's countertops, grounds the space with planes of black while the island's raised glass countertop echoes the hearth's angular shape. "Repetition creates a sense of continuity," Abbott says. The island's stained



A metal-lined, pivoting entry door opens to a light-filled gallery hall. Paintings by Gregory Abbott, photography by Gene Butera and a sculpture by Matt Clark animate the compelling passageway.



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DESIGN DRIVEN

1. The mid-century-inspired, butterfly-trussed ceiling lowers at the center of the fireplace and rises to each end of the great room.
2. Designers Gregory Abbott and Ashley Johnson.
3. Purple and plum hexagon floor tiles appear to run up the wall where identically shaped mirrors and hand-painted decals give the playroom its lively design.
4. A backlit "cloud" performing as a broad headboard runs up the wall and across the master bedroom's ceiling above. Painting "Nestings" by Gregory Abbott.
5. Asymmetry defines the design of the entry's metal-clad door and sidelights as well as the lighted ceiling above.



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In the master bathroom, wall-hung Polylac cabinets are beautifully under-lit.

BELOW: A free-standing Bianca bathtub by Jacuzzi sits beneath a bejeweled chrome chandelier.

walnut base visually warms the kitchen and links to wood furnishings in the adjoining living and dining areas. The entire space opens to views of the great room and outdoor living areas. “I love that I can be in the kitchen, have the doors open and see the kids playing in the pool,” Sabrina says.

Memorable design details work their magic in the home’s more private areas as well. Ceiling treatments, unique materials and seductive colors delight the eye at every turn. A playroom linking the children’s vibrantly colored bedrooms is cloaked in shades of lavender and purple. Multi-colored hexagon floor tiles, mirrors and hand-painted wall decals animate its playful décor. At the opposite end of the home, the master suite features a bedroom designed with a backlit ceiling and headboard structure that resembles a similar architectural treatment in the master bath. There floating vanities and broad windows expand the luxurious space and celebrate the natural light that fills the room and rest of the home.

“The house is so open that it carries the volume of light beautifully during the day. In the evening, light bounces off the swimming pool and creates a soft blue that glows throughout,” Abbott explains. Day or night, the house is everything the Wards hoped for. “This is our forever house,” says Sabrina, who loves the new home, its neighborhood and St. George. Dustin agrees. “It doesn’t get better than this.” ■

