

Southern Comfort

Custom lattice-style square wainscoting lends the formal dining room contemporary edge. To balance the brightness of the paneling, the Waynes went dark and dramatic on the walls with Benjamin Moore's Twilight. Beth updated her grandmother's dinette set by adding linen upholstery and matching end chairs from Restoration Hardware. A floral wool area rug elegantly ties together the rich color scheme.

A crafty couple teaches an old farmhouse new tricks with pops of pattern, personal touches and a few budget-savvy ideas.

By Danielle Blundell
Photography by Jonny Valiant





Beth Wayne with (from top to bottom) Lily, Mimi and Grace in front of their entry, under an overgrown Carolina jessamine vine.

Beth and John Wayne took a leap of faith when they bought their 1940s Raleigh farmhouse. The home certainly had size going for it, thanks to a recently built addition. But the new rooms didn't quite harmonize with the old, and the kitchen's dated countertops and appliances were near deal-breakers for Beth, an avid cook. So they hired contractor Mark Jones of Sigmon Construction and designer MA Allen, who collaborated with Beth on a highly functional cooking space and helped select just-right finishes, flooring and trim to unify the whole house. Then came the fun part—accenting the neutral palette on the main floor with sophisticated patterns and eye-catching lighting. In contrast, the upstairs is a color lover's dream, with daughters Mimi, 15, Lily, 17, and Grace, 18, all putting their personal stamp on a trio of vibrant bedrooms. To get her DIY fix and save some cash, Beth refreshed family hand-me-down furniture with paint and sewed one-of-a-kind curtains and bedspreads. Now the space looks and feels like the Waynes. "We found the perfect blend of style and function, traditional and modern—and our forever home," says Beth.

Furniture was a no-go in the small foyer, so MA turned up the glamour with geometric wallpaper, an antelope-spotted stair runner and a sunburst flush-mount fixture.



Beth compiled a wish list of features for the kitchen remodel. Her must-haves: classic white cabinets stretching to the ceiling, soapstone counters, a suite of gourmet appliances, a double-wide apron sink and a banquette with hidden storage for baking supplies. "I love the breakfast nook for morning coffee and mealtime. It's pretty and practical, like everything else in the room," says Beth.



There's plenty of seating for family TV watching in the living room, including a pair of houndstooth swivel chairs and a roll-arm skirted sofa. Beth added oomph to the existing built-in by painting the shelf backs lime green, changing the hardware and adding hanging library sconces. The artwork over the couch was purchased on a trip to Thailand.

Each of the girls cashed in on Beth's serious sewing and bargain-shopping skills. For Mimi's lounge area, Beth crafted the cabana-striped canopy over the daybed—known as Mimi's "chill sofa"—to tone down the sweetness of coral walls.



“When it comes to decorating, I’m a hunter-gatherer and very resourceful,” says Beth. “I’ll shop anywhere and love breaking out the spray paint and sewing machine to give store-bought things personality.”



Lily wanted a fun, sleepover-ready room, so MA suggested bold navy walls, twin beds and a retro hanging chair. On a trip to HomeGoods, Beth scored a table lamp with a bright orange shade that matches the chevron flat-weave rug perfectly. As a finishing touch, Beth painted the flea market wicker headboards green so they’d pop.



Oldest daughter Grace lucked out with the biggest bedroom, which MA divided into three zones—working, relaxing and sleeping. The trim on the fabric box cornice made by Beth matches the watermelon-colored canopy bed. An Ikea chandelier provides a touch of whimsy as well as a focal point for the space.

