



BEST
of ALL
WORLDS

IN CHICAGO'S LINCOLN PARK NEIGHBORHOOD,
DESIGNER WENDY LABRUM ADDS
OLD-WORLD ELEGANCE TO A BRAND-NEW,
BUILDER-GRADE HOME.

INTERIOR DESIGN
BY WENDY LABRUM
INTERIORS

STYLING BY
DARWIN FITZ

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
HEATHER TALBERT

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Whether it was intentional or not, designer Wendy Labrum's latest project is a study in opposites. It's a new-construction spec house, but it has an almost historic feel—the walls are coated in a textural waxed finish and there's a custom limestone Louis XIV-style fireplace mantel. Furniture-wise, the space is outfitted with an enviable collection of antiques, but those sit alongside new purchases from accessible retailers. Of course, this translates to a mix of splurge-worthy pieces and budget-friendly finds. And, truthfully, the photos make the home appear quite formal, but it's perfectly tailored for a young family who wanted a space where their kids could be, well, kids.

Wendy's clients—a lovely family with three active kiddos—purchased the property pre-construction as a customizable, semi-spec house with a *fairly* finished plan. "Our job was to jump in and figure out how to transform what would be a good quality but builder-basic home into something unique and special," she says. "We didn't have the flexibility we generally have in most of our projects to develop the floor plan and interior architecture with the architects, so we took the existing plan and incorporated special building materials, finishes, and features to make the home feel entirely custom and special."

Aesthetically, the well-traveled (and, Wendy notes, hysterically funny) family wanted a home that felt comfortable, lived-in, and organic. Nothing too stuffy or precious. "This objective helped us source a collected mix of antique, custom, and retail pieces that together create a cohesive and comfortable home," the designer says. At the end of the day, it's the best of all worlds.



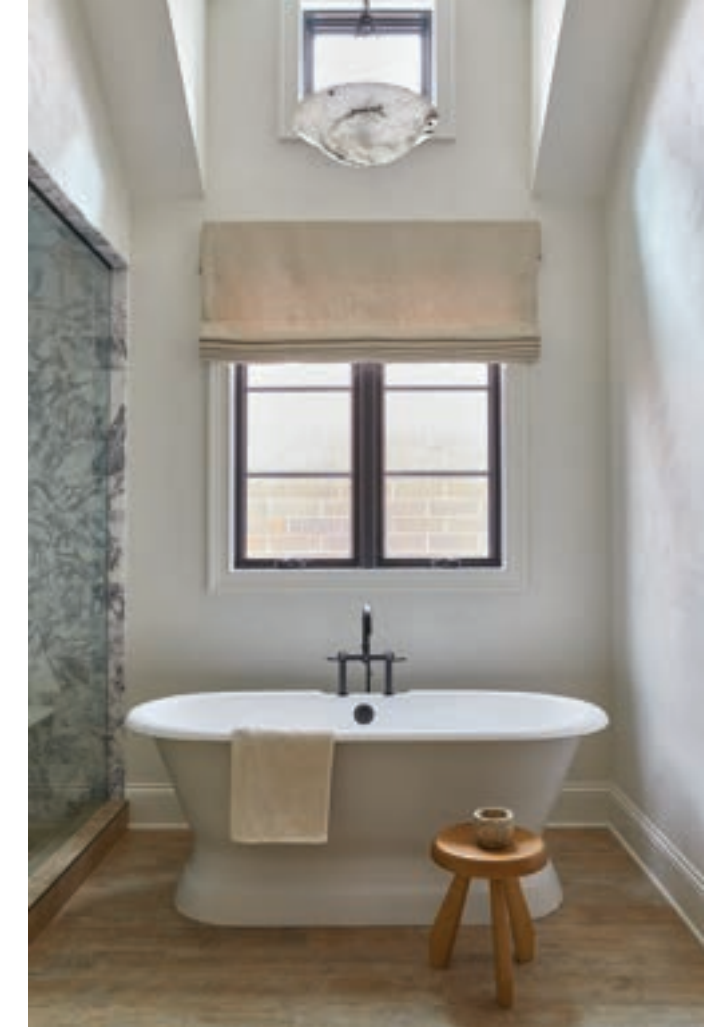
STYLE CUES

The client asked for a strong departure from her previous white kitchen. "So, we set out to do no white cabinetry but still keep the space light and bright," Wendy says. Reclaimed beams and custom cabinetry in a deep, off-black finish anchor the space. A white-oak island, custom plaster hood, and waxed walls help reflect rather than absorb light. "I love the Prouvé Standard Chair paired with the vintage Angelo Lelli globe chandelier," Wendy says. "It's the best combination of French and Italian design!"





COHESIVE DETAILS
“We installed wire-brushed, white-oak herringbone floors throughout and plastered the walls a deep olive green,” Wendy says. Since the formal dining room is adjacent to the living room, it was important that the two spaces feel visually connected. “We created a custom wood dining table, sourced Pierre Jeanneret-style dining chairs and an antique alabaster pendant,” she tells us. “This helped create the appropriate alchemy between antique and new.”



BEAUTY ON A BUDGET

The couple didn't want to allocate a lot of the budget to their bedroom, since only they use the space and it's not of grand scale. Wendy and team kept things minimal—they bumped out the back wall to add a seating nook, installed reclaimed beams to emphasize the ceiling height, and plastered the walls a warm taupe. An RH bed and nightstands, jute rug by Merida, and vintage 1940s Italian lamps live together harmoniously.

PRETTY AND PETITE

The primary bathroom is durable and low maintenance. They sourced porcelain wood floors from Ann Sacks, heavily veined marble for the shower, and Jason Wu for Brizo fittings. A cast iron tub painted gray provides subtle contrast, and the vintage alabaster pendant highlights the double-height ceilings. The powder room is a cohesive color departure. "We lined the walls with a warm grasscloth and sourced an English ceramic washstand with natural brass Waterworks fittings," Wendy shares. "The custom Italian sconces and antique gilt mirror complete the space."

