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### **After Living In Oklahoma, A Connection To The Outdoors Is A Must For A Denver Family**

BY MIKKI BRAMMER / MARCH 2, 2020



A contemporary Denver home embraces nature and makes the most of its Wash Park location.

## HOUSE DETAILS

**Photography:**

Emily Minton Redfield

**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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**F**or 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 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.

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.

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