

Lower-Level Luxe

This inviting family and entertaining space exudes warmth with layers of neutral tones and a mix of natural elements.

Photography by MATTEO MORRISON.

By **Megan Swoyer**



HAVE A SEAT!

The spacious room can accommodate several friends and family members.

It was a blank canvas, a white box,” interior designer Anna Versaci recalls, describing a recent makeover on a lower-level space in a Birmingham home. Her main goal was to create a hang-out spot the family would use often. “It’s larger than the upstairs living area,” she says, so the lower level — whose kitchen leads out to a pool and patio/grilling area — can work for entertaining and hosting parties.

Versaci, who had been working with the homeowners on other projects around the house, says the main room felt really big and “kind of disconnected from the kitchen.” Now, a custom dry bar, located opposite the television wall, connects the two areas. “The dry bar connects the kitchen to the living space,” Versaci says, explaining that the bar was built around two pieces of art the homeowners already owned.

Versaci, who’s based in Beverly Hills, worked with Vogue Furniture on the bar and a custom floating credenza on the opposite wall. She also designed built-ins that hold books, photos, and special objects. “The homeowners didn’t want anything about this space to read ‘basement,’” Versaci says. “They wanted this to feel like the main living/entertaining area. The built-ins really accomplish that by elevating it to a custom look.”



RAISING THE BAR!

"The dry bar connects the kitchen to the living space," interior designer Anna Versarci says.

Now, with warm neutrals showcased in a layered look, the space flows with the rest of the home.

"When we first started working together, the homeowners, who have a baby girl, sent me a link to an inspiration home. I remember thinking it was warm and simple, and (there wasn't) a ton of color, but it still didn't feel cold." The designer notes that adding black provides contrast. "I like to get into the minds of my clients to find out what they love. She said I nailed it! That's the fun part about designing — the psychology behind what a client wants. She couldn't articulate what she loves about it, but she does."

Sconces designed by Versaci from The Urban Electric Co. add a nice touch. "We went with brass and matched the countertop wood (a cerused, two-tone oak in a black finish)," the designer says.

The table behind the sofa was created by Bruce Campbell Designs. "We didn't want it to compete, and wanted the space to feel warm. The table is just the right height — not higher than the sofa, and just a touch lower. It also works well with the stools," Versaci says.



TABLE TALK!

A custom wood sofa table (inset) by Bruce Campbell Designs adds instant warmth.

The stools and end tables are from Charleston Forge. "It's important to feature different materials and elements; the end tables combine wood, metal, glass, and a leather sling," Versaci notes.

A Vanguard furniture chair and pillow, both in Pindler fabrics, welcome readers or those who just wish to relax. "I love the exposed wood arms. It feels elegant," Versaci says. The large Lee Industries mohair ottoman contrasts with the chair but still complements the overall look. Wool Stark carpet ensures a cozy feel.

One challenge was working with windows the clients didn't want to emphasize. "That was a bit tricky. We didn't want to draw attention to them; they were off-centered a bit." The result is that a long, low-floating console piece, which anchors the large TV, is meant to draw the eye to center.

As for partnering with Royal Oak-based Vogue, Versaci says working with them is a dream. "Any designer would say that they're the real deal and can do anything you envision."

More Information: annaversacidesign.com
