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LAKE SIDE CHARMER

TAKING CUES FROM THE SHIMMERING VIEWS OF LAKE WASHINGTON, COLLEEN KNOWLES OF COLLEEN KNOWLES INTERIOR DESIGN UPDATED THIS OFT-USED AREA OF THIS FAMILY HOME WITH A LIGHTNESS OF COLOR, DURABLE, COLOR-FAST FABRICS AND AN EYE TO BRINGING THE OUTSIDE IN.

written by DONNA PIZZI photography by JOHN GRANEN





NOTHING SAYS “FRESHEN UP” BETTER than a host of soft but durable fabrics, a smattering of rich moss greens and sable browns that just make you want to cozy up to a window seat, book in hand, with a million dollar view tantalizingly drawing your focus out to the lake beyond. When the owner of this stately 1990s home asked Colleen Knowles to update the family room with its adjacent dining area and lakeside powder bath, the rooms were filled with reds, greens, blues, florals and plaids, some of which had faded or deteriorated from the sunlight bearing down on them during years of family fun. “This well-built home,” says Knowles, “has such incredible bones that what we were asked to do was give it a gorgeous update.”

The homeowner, with whom Knowles had worked previously, welcomed Knowles’ suggestions to use durable fabrics able to withstand the Western light. “I find many people are more interested in getting things cheaper, whereas this client is the exact opposite! She has a sense of longevity, wants the house to grow along with her and her family. She knows the importance of beautiful design and embraced the idea of crisper, more forward-thinking elements, such as the bold stripe in the washable indoor/outdoor dining area rug by Perennials, on which she often has a baby’s highchair pulled up to the table.”

The homeowner is equally as pleased with Knowles’ versatility. “Colleen,” she says, “used her creative talents and keen sense of design, knowledge of new products, and Rolodex of skilled and trusted professionals to transform the area.” Knowles praises her coterie of reliable professionals, who make her job inspiring. “I love what I do,” she says, “and clients who have started out on their own and gotten nowhere are giddy when they find out I have an incredible team that’s able to see things through to fruition.”

Knowles prides herself on not having a single look, having worked on everything from commercial projects to countless luxury residential homes in the Pacific Northwest.

PREVIOUS LEFT The home’s entrance, contrary to most lakeside homes, faces the water, embraced by a golden-hued garden. PREVIOUS RIGHT Holly Hunt Great Outdoors pillow/cushion stain/fade resistant fabric. OPPOSITE LEFT Colleen arranged accessories to create a welcoming, lived-in feel for the newly updated space. OPPOSITE RIGHT Existing cherry Shaker coffee table updated with dark wood stain. ABOVE Live-edge Urban Hardwoods dining table. Perennials high performance rug from Susan Mills showroom.



PROJECT SOURCES

CONTRACTOR
Granite Mountain Builders

INTERIOR DESIGN
Colleen Knowles Interior Design
www.colleenknowles.com

DINING RUG
Perennials: Susan Mills, SDC
www.susanmills.com

DINING TABLE
Urban Hardwoods
www.urbanhardwoods.com

PLUMBING FIXTURES
Kohler
www.kohler.com

FACING PAGE Schoolhouse Electric sconces feature decorative electrical cords and brass rods. Kohler Purist fixtures tie back to original brass door hardware. Abnormals Anonymous wallpaper; Jura Green Limestone countertop. Ann Sacks tile floor resembles wood. RIGHT Gated white entrance crowned by soaring columns mark alleyway to both kitchen ahead and formal entry at right. BELOW Grassy knoll down to the dock.

“I grew up in Washington,” says the award-winning designer, “and really understand the Pacific Northwest design aesthetic, having frequently collaborated with local architects. For this project, because I was working with someone with amazing taste, I was able to layer the color scheme, working with some of the most beautiful array of lush greens and sable browns. But not gray! The Pacific Northwest is not gray – there is far too much gray used here.”

Located off the kitchen and just inside the “beach” door, the lakeside powder room features an easy-to-clean tile floor and custom Juniper painted potting bench style vanity that reflects the homeowner’s passion for gardening – everything from vegetables to cut flowers. Fanciful blow fish wallpaper echoes the nearby water, while adding a dash of unexpected humor.

“Let’s fly our green flag,” says Knowles, jokingly. “Seattle is the Emerald City. That’s our color!”

The homeowner was particularly pleased with the way Knowles incorporated the family’s lifestyle into her design choices. “And,” she adds, “Colleen is a delight to work with.”

