



Marika Meyer photographed in the living room of a home she designed in Potomac

MARIKA MEYER

AN ELEGANT APPROACH ATTRACTS CLIENTS WHO APPRECIATE TRADITION, WITH A TWIST

When trying to design a home for a modern family, it helps that Marika Meyer, mother of two small boys, ages four and one, knows her way around crafting functional yet elegant interiors. Most of her projects are for clients who need to be cognizant about practicality, whether they are thinking in terms of sippy cups or spirited teenagers, and she makes every effort to ensure that personal style isn't sacrificed for the sake of parenthood.

"I have very sophisticated clients with sophisticated tastes," Meyer, 38, says. "They tell me they don't want to have to worry about things in their home, and I get it. Figuring out how to live beautifully with young children is so small feat."

Years before launching her own business in 2007, Meyer began her design career after college, working in showrooms at the DC Design Center. After a brief turn in the corporate world, she headed back to school for a second degree in fine arts, then followed her academic studies with a job working with local designer Mike

Johnson at his former Georgetown storefront, SixteenFiftyNine.

"That job was a turning point," she says. "It was my reentry into the field and where I learned everything. It was an invaluable education in design, as well as how to run a small business; it gave me courage to start my own company."

Inspired by classical elements with a traditional feel, Meyer enjoys blending vintage and mid-century pieces into contemporary spaces. Her interiors are tasteful and polished, and punctuated with fine details—but they're also functional and livable. Her design mantra is "practical luxury, functional beauty." In her own Bethesda home, clutter is kept at bay with plenty of custom, built-in storage open and closed, and the furnishings are made to be beautiful but sensible. After all,

Meyer is in search of the same peace of mind as her clients. "I like to keep things simple and clean-lined," she says. "Life is loud enough and busy enough without visual clutter." When her son comes home from an activity, sporting mud head-to-toe, Meyer doesn't flinch. "What he did at soccer to get so dirty I haven't a clue," she says with a laugh. "But my home is designed so that I can focus on the bugs, not on the dirty cleats. It makes life so much easier."

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MARIKA'S DECORATING MUST-HAVES

- 1 Lotus wallpaper** from Farrow & Ball. One of our favorite wallpapers. Depending on the colors, it can be wall and table or hand and table. FARROW-BALL.COM
- 2 The Collie throw** from Nivola. It comes in a great variety of colors, in wall and table. NIVOLA.COM
- 3 Hurricane candleholders** from Simon Pearce. Use these on console tables, mantels, and dining tables. SIMONPEARCE.COM
- 4 Indoor-outdoor rug** for kids' rooms. We use Dink & Violet for kids' bedrooms and nurseries. My favorites are the diamond pattern and the rope pattern. DINKANDVIOLET.COM

5. Worry-free spaces. Four inches with four tables in most sofas and chairs in family spaces, but one spill anything and wipe it right up.

6. Fine Prints of Europe high-gloss black for ceilings and Douglas Moore Baby Face 90C-45 for a great neutral. MKS.COM/900001.COM

7. The Colton from Nivola. It comes in a great variety of colors, in wall and table. NIVOLA.COM

8. Lustrous. A good coat of wax has great options. FARROW-BALL.COM

9. Egyptian. Moss & Company in Georgetown has the best Egyptian items.

10. Swedish antiques or accessories. Tom-on-Tom is one of our favorite stores to find accessories. TOM-ON-TOM.COM

•EASY• DESIGN UPDATES - QUICK FIXES

- 1. Paint.** It's the most obvious option, but try thinking outside of the box. Changing the ceiling color to a soft tint or painting trim and doors something other than a standard white can add energy to a space.
- 2. Add architectural detail** and interest with millwork. It may be adding larger built-ins for storage for toys and electronics or as simple as adding a paneled wainscot.
- 3. Use custom fabric tack boards.** These are fun to use for any desk or workspace.
- 4. Think about curb appeal.** Large planters can ground the entry and plants can get changed out seasonally.
- 5. Frame your children's artwork.** I usually want to a client's home and was blown away by the abstract art. She told me her three-year-old daughter was the artist!
- 6. Wallpaper in a powder room.** It is the easiest way to transform a small space at very little cost.

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