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The living room of designer Suzanne Kasler's Atlanta house, which she shares with her husband, John Morris, and their daughter, Alexandra; Bernard sofas upholstered in Concord Bone linen velvet flank a pair of Sanford acrylic tables, all by Nancy Corzine. The curtains are of the Silk Trading Co.'s Como silk, the mid-century bronze andirons are from Parc Monceau Antiques, and the Russian stools are from a Paris flea market. See Resources.



ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

IN HER ATLANTA HOME,
SUZANNE KASLER CONJURES A GLAMOROUS,
MONOCHROMATIC SETTING TO
UNIFY HER DIVERSE COLLECTION OF FRENCH FINDS

TEXT BY ALEXANDRA HALL
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When designer Suzanne Kasler moved to Atlanta 12 years ago from Indianapolis, she already had nearly a decade of experience in planning and designing clients' homes from the ground up—and had earned a reputation for maximizing light and color to dramatic yet clean effect. "Most of the work I do is for people either building a new home or doing a complete renovation," she explains. "That way I can be sure the architecture makes sense for how the house will actually be used."

So as she began to think about her own house, which she shares with her husband, John Morris, an executive at Steelcase furniture, and their daughter, Alexandra, she had no doubt that she would easily adapt to the area and to the Southern appreciation of home. "The thing we noticed most when we got here was that people really do spend a lot of time in their houses," she says. "I wanted that. And I wanted a place where my family and I could totally relax." There was just one complicating factor: "I also wanted a place where I could look around and see all of my favorite things."

When those favorite things range from oversize chandeliers and antique architectural tools to Biedermeier chairs and a collection of souvenir replicas of the Eiffel Tower, visual cacophony is a perennial danger. "I can't help it," says Kasler, who makes a point of stopping in the Paris flea markets on every trip to France and rarely leaves empty-handed. "I

just find these things I love, and I bring them back as keepsakes of my trips. Then they find their way into the overall design of my house."

But as Kasler well knows, so much of good design is about editing. "Choosing among the things you love most can be really difficult," she says. "And it's far easier to do it for other people. So I knew I'd need to do strategic layering of color and texture and work with a lot of white—which is my signature—if everything was going to work."

She designed the house, located in the Buckhead neighborhood, in collaboration with Spitzmiller and Norris architects. Windows wrap around virtually the entire first floor, flooding it with light. In the entry, the point from which the rest of the house flows, she placed a pale, gestural painting. "I wanted a simple feeling," she says. "So we gave the walls a faux-stone finish and then started adding pieces." First came an antique light fixture, then a vintage stool she reupholstered in pink leather, followed by a gueridon she stumbled upon in Paris. (It had once graced a guest room in the George V hotel.)

The family room is both more graphic and more relaxed, with an expansive overstuffed sofa. The space is a favorite of John's. "He loves really comfortable pieces," says Kasler. "So we spend most of our time there." A 17th-century tapestry (another flea market score, which she carried back on the plane from Paris) hangs behind a horn-and-zebra-hide console,

Facing page, clockwise from top right: Kasler at home. In a corner of the living room, framed antique intaglios and a Biedermeier chair; the gold-framed works were all found at Paris flea markets. In the entry, *Summer Storm*, a painting by Steve Seiner; a Louis XVI bench from Jerry Pair; and an antique chair upholstered in Old World Weavers's Smarties fabric. This page: A 17th-century tapestry hangs over a 1940s horn-and-zebra-hide console in the family room; the Christopher Spitzmiller lamps are from Belvedere, the Vail end tables are from Bungalow Classic, and the 1960s bronze-and-resin sconces are from Travis & Co. See Resources.



and is flanked by resin-and-bronze sconces in the shape of tortoise shells. "I just started layering everything, and it all began to come together," she says. "I set out pen sets and books from old stalls in London, and had the curtains trimmed in a velvet that works off of the tapestry." In the dining room is a painting of a room in the Musée Nissim de Camondo that the couple bought on the trip to Paris when they first visited the decorative-arts museum.

With a sunny dining area, white marble countertops, and French doors, the kitchen is a heady mix of grandeur and comfort. The ten-foot, whitewashed farm table is outdone only by the equally overscale chandelier suspended above it. "We can just hang out and read the paper," says Kasler, "but we also have our Thanksgiving dinners for 13 in there. The mix of pieces and the contrast of colors and textures let it be both casual or more formal."



In the dining room, Dupuy chairs by Nancy Corzine are upholstered in Manuel Canovas's Rio stripe; the antique crystal chandelier is by Jansen. Facing page, from top: Circa-1900 Louis XVI-style chairs from Jerry Pair surround an antique French whitewashed farm table; the chandelier was found at a Paris flea market. The kitchen cabinets are by Rutt Handcrafted Cabinetry, and the range and hood are by Viking. See Resources.





The master bedroom is predominantly black-and-white, with touches of shocking pink (and some of those Eiffel Tower replicas). In fact, the only room that doesn't employ white as a major dramatic element is the bedroom recently renovated for Alexandra, who is 14. "Teenagers want to put everything up on their wall," Kasler says. "But Alexandra's starting high school this year, and we wanted to make it more grown-up for her." So, as a neutral background to the orange sofa and pink rug, Kasler covered the walls in burlap. Now Alexandra can pin up some of her own treasured things.

"I think one of the reasons I became a designer in the first place," says Kasler, "was because I love collecting and then putting it all together. But when you're designing your own house, one of the hardest things to do is finish it." She laughs. "Because you're always finding and adding your next favorite thing." ■



In the master bedroom, Rose Tarlow-Melrose House's Prince Charles bed is from Ainsworth-Noah & Associates; the Richelieu bench, by Nancy Corzine, is upholstered in Jennifer Robbins's Embroidered Palace silk from Renfro. Facing page, from top: Alexandra in her bedroom; the walls are covered in Brunswick & Fil's Burlap wallpaper, and the bed is upholstered in Zimmer + Rohde's Coco tweed. A vintage French dressing table in the master bath. See Resources.