



*DETAILS, DETAILS*  
home sweet home

From top: Interior designer Kerra Michele incorporated lots of natural hues, and chic lighting and seating into every space, including the dining area; a family favorite includes a dining cubby with built-in seating on two sides.



# Chic Retreat

A casual yet elegant vibe permeates the brilliant decor scheme for these Chevy Chase newlyweds.

*By Jennifer Barger*

When Framebridge ([framebridge.com](http://framebridge.com)) executive Jenny Merrill and tech entrepreneur Dhruva Rajendra got married in January 2017, it was a chill yet stylish affair at Jamaica's Blue Hill Hotel and Villas. "We even had a live donkey wearing flowers," says Jenny. A similar relaxed elegance fills the pair's 1935 Chevy Chase, Md., four-bedroom Colonial, which they bought in late 2017 and updated with interior designer Kerra Michele just in time for the arrival of their baby daughter in early 2018.

"We were drawn to the house's good bones and history," says Jenny. "It's a center-hall Colonial with some exposed stone walls, and we hired Kerra because we wanted her to make it fresh, young and family-friendly." Lucky for Michele, the pair was coming from a small condo and didn't have much decor baggage. "When I first met with them, Jenny was pregnant, and

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Clockwise from left: The living room includes a safari-chic sofa and chairs, along with pillows and fabric durable enough to withstand the whirlwind of toddlerhood; interior designer Kerra Michele; the master bedroom includes a newly upholstered bed in royal blue and a sand-hued Oriental rug.



they didn't have much furniture," says Michele.

With a charming blank slate and a recent renovation, Michele set about executing mainly cosmetic improvements. "It was about making it welcoming, warm and a mix of masculine and feminine," says Michele. That meant a palette of desert hues—tans, earthy greens, a bit of dark sky indigo—plus furniture that blends East Coast formality with West Coast cool.

The calm master bedroom got a bed upholstered in deep blue velvet and a sand-colored Oriental rug; the great room off the kitchen holds a daring yet durable acid green sectional. "My daughter spills milk on the thing all the time, but you'd never know it," says Dhruva, who loves reading there or just hanging out with the family watching television. Their daughter's sunny playroom also shines with a wall of chinoiserie étagères for storing toys, an enormous leather beanbag and a punchy rose-colored ceiling.

Michele infused the space with unusual contemporary lighting, including a midcentury-style yarn lantern from Australia's Pop & Scott (popandscott.com) playing off the safari-chic leather sofa and chairs in the living room and Made Goods' (madegoods.com) dramatic white plaster chandelier above the dining table in reclaimed oak. And, of course, since Jenny works for a company known for its crisp, modern framing, art subtly accents each room, like abstract paintings from Brookland's Latela Curatorial (latelacuratorial.com) and family photos. And, yes, in the master bedroom, there are photos of donkeys, including the one who brayed at the duo's wedding. ■

