



DESIGNER: CASA SANTI INTERIOR DESIGN | LOCATION: FORT LEE, NEW JERSEY
BY VICTORIA KEENAN

Though styles come and go, traditional design has always stayed true in many people's homes and hearts, including David Santiago, of Casa Santi Interior Design. Santiago explained that the design of this beautiful 1,600-square-foot home speaks volumes of his aesthetic, bringing in some of his favorite elements, from stripes and wall coverings to the blending of color and tone. Both Santiago and the homeowner are traditional at heart, but love contemporary, modern flares, and that is exactly what

went into this home — true traditional design mixed with a little bit of the unexpected.

Aside from the style of the home, Santiago was particularly excited about this space because of his friendship with the homeowner, and the fact that he was re-designing the space from when he first worked on it 10 years ago. Starting with the living room, Santiago designed the home around a few elements that remained, including the floor-to-ceiling fireplace, the lighting, the color of the sofa, and the meerkat artwork, which all inspired the color palette.



Though much of the space is focused around darker features, like the grey ceiling, the deep chocolate floors and the grey and brown pieces throughout each room, like the meerkat artwork above the sofa, it is lightened up by the pale walls and yellow couch. The large area rug has each of the colors blended together, tying the colors of the space together. In the corner, the room proves to be for entertaining with a serving cart and tray bar.

“There’s a nice amalgamation of different colors and aesthetic,” Santiago explained. “I like to be cohesive from point of entry to the whole layout of the house. So, the color scheme was pretty much grounded by the color of the sofa. The meerkat picture was commissioned by a friend of mine, Billy Ehret, because at the time, Meerkat Manor was a big show, so that’s where that came from. That was really to compliment the color palette, the love for the show at the time, and the love of meerkats, if you have watched the show, you know that they are really cool animals.”





In the dining room, the color palette continues, and there is a sense of openness throughout the space. Santiago wanted to bring in color in an unusual way and for him, that meant putting color on the ceiling. Originally, the walls were a dark grey and ceilings were light, so he inverted the colors to give a sense of elevation. The grey and tan rug match the seating covers, and the birch trees and grey wallpaper add indoor, outdoor elements to the room. “The dining room was kept in the existing space, we thought it was still fresh. But it’s wonderful to redesign a space with elements that can stand the test of time and are timeless. That’s one

of the other things I like to do: incorporate selections of furnishings that are timeless, like the sofa and the dining room table, which are investment pieces, always.”

In the corridor, Santiago fused the two spaces together and added some energy with stripes, a transitioning tool he uses in many of his designs. But aside from the design elements throughout the home, Santiago also focused on making it exactly that, a home. “There’s a lifestyle approach to the house — they’re parents and grandparents, so there’s a lot of life and family in the space. I wanted to have a stylized space where everyone could come and hang out.”