Lakeside living In Modern Ranch style on the Pell City shoreline

Written by LOYD MCINTOSH Photographed by TUCKER WEBB

Tracey and Wade Cole's stunning home in Mays Bend has been a work in progress for the better part of a decade. The couple purchased the home and moved from Pelham to Pell City in 2014 following several years of owning a weekend home in the area.

The Cole's house began life as a typical brick Ranch built in the early 1980s with some design points left over from the previous decade. The Coles transformed the house bit by bit, while maintaining much of its original character, into a Modern take on the traditional Ranch home.

"It was nothing like this when we bought it," Wade says.

While the previous owner took steps to bring the dated layout to contemporary standards, Tracey acknowledges it was difficult to envision herself living and raising a family in the house. She also says Wade wasn't certain she would find the house groovy either.



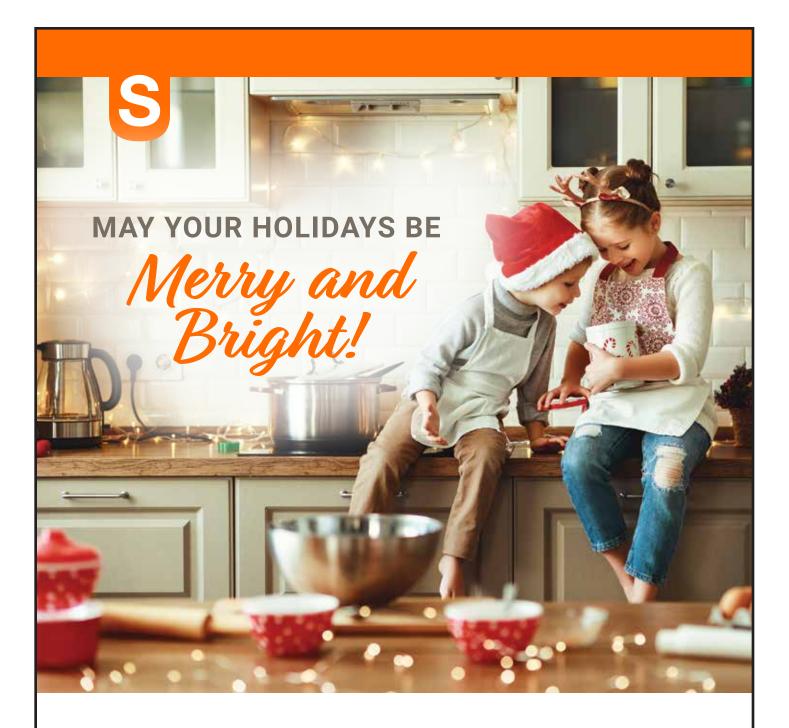




"When we moved in, he says 'You're never going to live in this house,'" Tracey says. "The girl that bought it had a really good taste. It was '70s, but she made it look really good. When she moved out, it was like 'Oh, Lord.' One room was purple, one room was green, this room was yellow. But she made it look good. She pulled it off."

Today, white is the home's dominant color with touches of rustic charm. The Coles painted the brick white, and added black shutters and new custom garage doors with a wood-grain design. Inside, most of the walls are painted white, with the exception of a single wall in the great room painted in navy blue.

Since taking ownership, the Coles have renovated the house twice, first focusing on renovating the bathrooms in 2016, then attacking the kitchen and great room in 2021. The second renovation proved to be the hardest for the Coles, starting when their daughter was a year old. They did much of the demolition on their own and often made important decisions by the seat of their pants, the most challenging item being an off-center



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fireplace that Tracey decided needed to go.

"We really didn't know we were going to tear that out until the day the crew got here," Tracey says. "We were like, 'We think we want to tear that fireplace out' and they were like, 'Okay,' and so they just started tearing it out."

"It wasn't easy tearing that fireplace out. It was a nasty job," adds Wade. "There was all this brick and we had to haul it all out with a wheelbarrow. It was a job."

Other improvements included converting a small bathroom into a pantry, reducing the size of a laundry room, allowing the Coles to enlarge the kitchen, and tearing down a wall with a small walkthrough from the kitchen to the living room, another last-minute decision. The result of the hard work has transformed the boxy interior into an open floor plan with views of the Coosa River from almost every vantage point.

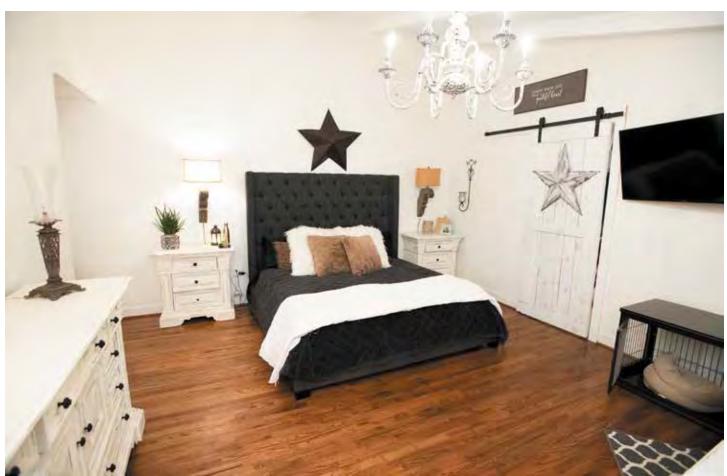
The Coles also expanded the master bedroom closet, adding a custom-made sliding barn door, replaced the 1980s-era carpeting with hardwood floors, and stained the exposed ceiling beams in a natural wood color. The master bath has also been completely updated, including the removal of a huge sunken bathtub that they thought was a safety risk for their young children as well as being











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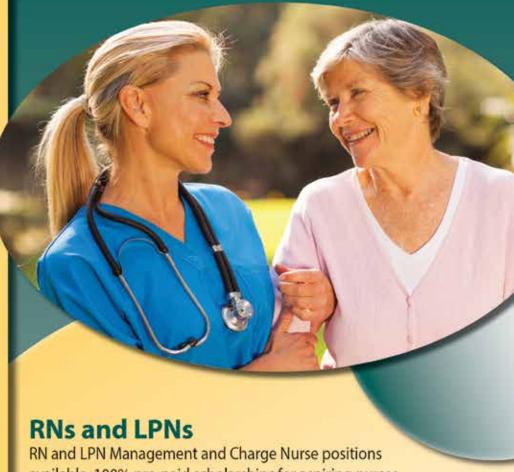
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The Coles' house is decked with holiday decor.







completely out of date.

One Reagan-era design touch that Tracey wanted to remove but survived the renovation is wainscoting running throughout the kitchen, dining area, and great room. The wainscoting is a stylish nod to the home's past while still fitting in perfectly with the Coles' vision.

"I really wanted to rip it out, but by the time they did that second remodel, they just had to go," Tracey said. "I kind of laid off of that and figured maybe it would come back one day."

The Coles put loads of time and effort into outdoor living, building an enormous covered outdoor kitchen and living space, with a stone fireplace, modern cooking station (complete with a Big Green Egg) and ceiling beams matching those on the inside. An athletic family – their children are active in local sports – the Coles also built a basketball court in the backyard for games of one-on-one and HORSE.

With multiple renovations complete, the Coles' Modern Ranch house is poised to outlast design and living trends over the next 40 years.



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