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The study in Theresa Kisser's Clarkston home goes from cavernous to cozy thanks to impeccable attention to detail. A large stone fireplace and high ceilings add drama to the space. Earth tones make the home warm and inviting.



The traditional-style home's hub is the kitchen and family room, which give Kissler the open space she craved.

THE SECOND TIME AROUND

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN DESIGNER AND CLIENT YIELDS WINNING RESULTS

By Jeanine Matlow Photos by Gene Meadows



Homeowner Theresa Kissler (left) and interior designer Terry Ellis.

Theresa Kissler had been down the home-building road before, but this time, she was determined to do things differently.

"When we built our last house, I did it all myself, and nothing ever felt 'just right,'" says the director of marketing and advertising for the Michigan Design Center in Troy. While building her new home in Clarkston, she worked with a designer, which "made all the difference in the world," she says.

A Warm Welcome "I really wanted to make sure that my home felt very welcoming and casually comfortable," says Kissler, who lives with her husband and their two children. "We put a lot of thought and planning into the usage of each room."

Her style might be traditional, but it's far from fussy.

"It is such a family-oriented house," says Terry Ellis, ASID, of Room Service Interior Design in the Michigan Design Center, who was chosen



Durable surfaces abound. Barstool cushions are covered in vinyl that looks like leather, the perfect solution for the family-friendly kitchen, which connects to the family room.



Above: Espresso-colored walls envelop the dining room. Terry Ellis designed the slipcovers, which, along with the drapes, dress up the casual space. Right: Ellis and Kisser wanted to make the formal powder room a special space. Graceful curves appear in the vanity and sconces that accentuate the ceiling height.

for the project. "It's a little more casual than the typical traditional."

With the exception of the dining room, Kisser says every inch of the home is used on a regular basis. And the rich-looking rooms never sacrifice style for comfort. In the study, a stately stone fireplace sets the tone, and leather furnishings provide the perfect contrast to the patterned carpet. The cozy contents can withstand wear and tear.

"My kids don't think twice about jumping from the couch to the ottoman to the leather chair and back," Kisser says.

What the Pros Know Kisser wanted the media room on the main floor so it could be used for TV viewing, too. She had plenty of ideas for the space but remained open to suggestions.

"When Terry and I met to go over her selections based on my ideas, she said she

wouldn't be doing her job if she didn't share what she felt was the 'best' solution for the room," Kisser says. "Her ideas and selections were 100 times better than mine. I instantly fell in love, and never in a million years could I have come up with that solution; the colors, the trim details, the carpet. That is probably one of my favorite rooms in the house."

Happy Ending All of the attention to the design details paid off in the end.

"I poured my heart into planning this house," Kisser says. "There is not one thing I would change. It is more than I think I ever really imagined."

She also learned an important lesson along the way. "Being open to new ideas is a necessity when creating the home of your dreams," she says. □

