



DESIGNER KATIE CONWAY
MONKHOUSE LIKENS THIS SAN
FRANCISCO RENOVATION—WHICH
BEGAN IN FEBRUARY 2020—TO A
COMEDY OF ERRORS. LIKE ALL GOOD
THINGS, IT WAS WORTH THE WAIT.

WAITING GAME

INTERIOR DESIGN BY KATIE MONKHOUSE INTERIORS
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spective, all things considered. The family stitched together short-term rentals and moved with their newborn every few months, as construction started and then stopped again. “It was so inconsistent,” Katie recalls. “Pandemic building regulations only allowed limited teams on-site and slowed the process way down. Then came the supply-chain breakdown and material cost increases—we experienced it all in real-time. Even when they finally got to move in, they lived with no refrigerator for four months and no oven for two months. It was a mess! By the time this project was truly finished, my family and I were permanently living here in California and the clients were expecting their second child!”

Though she never could have predicted the roller-coaster of events, she could have easily guessed the family would be fairly easygoing. “These clients were truly the best,” she smiles. “In our first conversation, they said ‘we have no style, do whatever you want,’ which was hilarious. They actually do have great style, they just needed someone to create a direction and a vision.” The vision, specifically, was that the house would be handsome. “It felt like we were skewing a little masculine, monochromatic, and sophisticated. Very urban and still family-friendly,” Katie explains. “Relaxed but elevated.”

WARM WELCOME

The floors in the entry are a warm gray marble herringbone, custom cut to create the pattern. An oversize mirror from Croft House helps to open up the space, reflecting light from the stairwell into the dimly lit room.

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he world looked a lot different for the residents of this San Francisco home when they called up designer Katie Conway Monkhouse. How different? “Where do I even start,” she laughs. “The crazy thing about this project is that I signed on in early February 2020. The house had already been taken down to the studs. The couple was newly pregnant with their first child. They had lived in the house in

its pre-renovation state for years, saving up for this remodel. The goal was really to have a beautiful, functional home, that would last them a good few years as a young family.”

Katie was across the pond, living in England with her family and working on projects remotely. “When they announced that travel was being shut down between the U.S. and the U.K., my family and I decided to make a run for it and ‘wait it out’ stateside with the intention of flying back after Easter. Three days after we landed, residential construction was shut down and shortly after that the clients welcomed their first child, so we were really in a holding pattern.”

Fortunately, both designer and client had a healthy sense of per-

LUXE LAYERS

Katie ensured all the materials and furnishings would complement each other and nothing would compete for your attention. “One of my favorite elements is the wall-to-wall ceiling mount drapery. It’s double-layered, a sheer for daytime and a heavier printed linen so the neighbors can’t see in at night,” she says. “It just creates this amazing softness, like an entire wall of flowing fabric—by Susan Connor New York, no less—a dream!”





DESIGN FOR (REAL) LIFE
 The original house had lots of small closed-off spaces, so the clients wanted an open plan. A cozy sectional sits off of the dining area, with room for the family to curl up by the fireplace, with room for the family to curl up by the fireplace, or enjoy a movie after the little ones have gone to bed.

SMALL SPACE, BIG IMPACT
 The designer admits this powder room is probably one of the smallest spaces she's ever designed but she used it as an opportunity to craft a "wow" moment. "We layered wainscoting and wallpaper (Susan Connor New York, again) and played with proportions and placement." Here, a tiny sink with a very tall mirror and an off-center pendant adds some unexpected quirk.

“THEY HAVE GREAT STYLE, THEY JUST NEEDED SOMEONE TO CREATE A DIRECTION AND A VISION.”



KNOW YOUR ANGLES

Architect Christian Dauer designed the house so that the kitchen would overlook the stairwell. "We needed to make it beautiful," Katie states. "The oversize art was sourced by our clients on a trip to Santa Barbara during construction and it fits so well with the vibe of the house. The chandelier is handmade blown glass and hangs from a white-oak ceiling."

MARBLE MOMENT

The primary bathroom is all about the natural stone. They skipped the linen closet in favor of a makeup vanity—the ultimate luxury for a new mom. In the primary bedroom (right), Katie embraced the lack of square footage. "Instead of trying to make it feel bigger, we decided to lean into the cozy feeling. We painted everything dark—the ceiling, walls, doors, trim, everything. This really set the space apart from the rest of the house and created the perfect sleep retreat." Millwork was added to the wall behind the bed for texture.

