

# SNEAK PEEK: JOHN & VIVIAN OF SQUARE FEET STUDIO

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When Grace and I were in Atlanta for [Lavish](#), Wendy Hanson and [Lucy Allen Gillis](#) took us to [Star Provisions](#) for lunch (yummy!), and then insisted we check out [Sid Mashburn](#). I've seen a lot of stores, but I seriously wanted to move right into this one! (I'm determined to find someone to paint a huge horse for me like [the one in the shop!](#)) We were so taken with the store that we had to find out who was responsible for its Southern-gentleman look, so we tracked down architects [John and Vivian Bencich](#) to see if we could get a peek into their personal home. When John and Vivian

purchased their house, it had barely been touched for 70 years and was in desperate need of a refresh. So the couple worked to bring in more light, add smart storage and workspaces and open up the kitchen and den to create a spot for family gathering. It's now a bright, modern and welcoming home! *Thanks, John & Vivian! And thanks to Jeff Herr Photography for the images.*  
— Amy A.

*We'd been looking for a small home for our family of three. We found it within four miles of our office and walking distance to our daughter's school. And close to other things we love about in-town Atlanta: museums, parks, bike trails, restaurants and shopping. The home was designed in 1939 by architect Clement Ford, was built as a one-story brick cottage and with the exception of one modest interior renovation, it remained unchanged until our purchase in 2008.*



*Image above: In our daughter's room, we took off the closet doors and had bright and sturdy drapes made by Drape 98 Express with Hable Construction's Magenta Beads canvas. The big bolster pillow on the bed is from John Robshaw.*



*Image to the left: The niche in the dining room was existing, and it was exactly the right width for the Oly Studio Elizabeth buffet that I'd been considering for years; it works well for stylish storage in a small space. We painted the dining chairs white and recovered them; they're hand-me-downs from my parents.*

*Image to the right: My favorite new piece in the living room is the Maguire Laura Kirar chair; it's really comfortable. We roll over the oval ottoman from the fireplace (it's on casters), and it's even more comfortable. The chair's covered in a Perennials dark brown outdoor fabric. It was a floor model — a great find. And it complements the traditional camel-back sofa, which belonged to my grandmother. We recovered it in a Dogwood Fabric cotton velvet.*

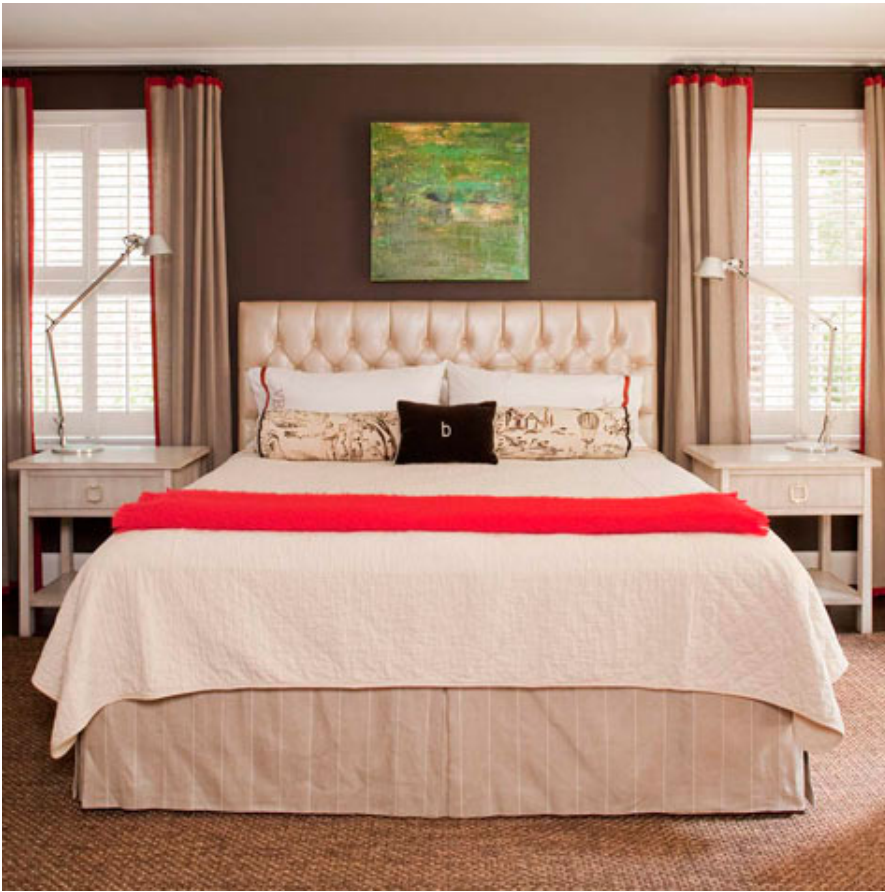




*Image to the left: We designed the master bath to include the same white oak cabinets as the kitchen and an Ann Saks bronze penny-round floor tile, but I was feeling it was a bit blah. I was showing a sample of the bold Osborne & Little chinoiserie wallpaper to a friend when I realized it could work as an accent wall in our bathroom.*

*Image to the right: The master bath shower has a little square opening that allows for a view of the back yard.*





*Image to the left: Master bedroom where classic Artemide Tolomeo adjustable table lamps sit on Thomas O'Brien nightstands from Bungalow Classic. The painting is by Su Abbott, an Atlanta artist.*

*Image to the right: We replaced old rotted-wood French doors with new custom steel doors (they were made in Smyrna, Georgia, by Rod Gibson) that open up the den to the back porch and turn it into one big room when the weather's nice.*





*Image to the left: View of the kitchen. Georgia Cherokee marble countertops quarried in N. Georgia.*





*Image to the left: Late afternoon sun coming through the steel doors into the den and kitchen while kids play chess with handmade wood pieces that belonged to my dad.*

*Image to the right: Up close view of the kitchen cabinets with the wax finish that our friend Skylar Morgan helped us with.*





*Image above: We love our “cement pond” and so do our daughter and her friends! The pool area needs a good bit of renovating, but in the meantime, we really enjoy it during the summer.*