



# Peaceful, Easy Feeling

A NEW HOME IN THE WILLOWS, A RUSSELL LANDS ON LAKE MARTIN COMMUNITY, OFFERS A BUSY FAMILY RESPITE FROM THEIR DAY-TO-DAY LIVES IN BIRMINGHAM.

Text by CATHY STILL MCGOWIN / Photography by JEAN ALLSOPP / Exterior Photography by JUSTIN CLAYTON

**K**ee it simple. That was one family's request for their second home getaway on Lake Martin. Built for entertaining family and friends, the Tom Adams-designed house is well suited for easy, waterfront living—without a lot of fuss or maintenance. The family wanted a place to retreat on the weekends. After all, who wants to work on vacation? Top of their list was something uncomplicated that capitalized on views and fun.

Tom designed a two-story home that offered plenty of both. A one-room-deep, gracious, open living space takes in sweeping views of the lake even before you step inside the front door. Upon approach, the double-height floating staircase gives a clear picture of the panoramic views on the lake side. There, a wall of windows opens to the outdoor patio and pool set on a rise above the lake. "We kept the color palette neutral with shades of ivory, beige, and grey to let the views out of the large floor-to-ceiling windows be the focus," says interior designer Catherine Pringle.

Stepping in to outfit the interior furnishings, Catherine worked with the owners to continue their wishes for more fun, less fuss. Essentials included comfortable furniture for relaxing, durable fabrics and materials, and room for entertaining. "We selected performance fabrics, indoor/outdoor rugs, and the acrylic kitchen barstools all with wet bathing suits and children in mind," she says. "And the multiple seatings areas in the living room, along with the porches,

**Poised for sunset views, the home sits just above lake level. The siting provided the perfect opportunity for a pool. "It's a nice luxury to enjoy when you come in off the lake," says the homeowner. An electric cover keeps children safe and animals out.**



**ABOVE:** The living room comprises four distinct areas thanks to the carefully arranged furniture selections. Sofas cozy up the TV and fireplace, club chairs gather to create a conversation area, a pair of chairs is positioned for sunset views, and a game table nestles beneath the staircase for family fun.

**RIGHT:** Open to the dining room, the kitchen enjoys lake views. Task areas such as the laundry, mudroom, and garage are situated inland to keep clutter to a minimum.

**BELOW:** The powder room is punched up with wallpaper. The gold accent is a continued theme throughout the house.



allow for easy gatherings for large groups.”

Most impressive of all, Catherine turned the job around in only six weeks—just in time to capture the last days of summer and the beginning of Auburn’s football season. “To find what we needed quickly, we sourced a lot of the pieces in Birmingham,” Catherine says. “It was great to be able to select furnishings locally.”

The living spaces and main bedroom comprise the first floor, and upstairs, there’s an abundance of beds and baths

for the kids and guests. “We like to be able to host more than one family at a time,” says the homeowner. “And, with two young kids, we wanted space for them to be able to invite guests as well.”

Settled in for just over a year now, the family finds themselves at the lake almost every weekend. “It’s nice to have a place to enjoy in all the seasons,” says the homeowner. “In the summers, we’re boating, biking, and enjoying the pool. During the fall and winter, it’s our home base for Auburn games.”



*“Everything here is replaceable. It’s nice, but it’s not too fancy for lake living. Everything can stand up to kids and wet swimsuits.”*

—The Homeowner

Hidden behind paneled doors in the living room (on the right side of the fireplace), the main bedroom enjoys seclusion and privacy. A soaring ceiling offers an airy, spacious feel. For simple housekeeping, the owner specified that all of the beds in the house would be king or twin size. "That way, we don't have to worry about mixing up a lot of sheets in varying sizes," she says. Her less-is-more philosophy applied to throw pillows as well. "I didn't want them to end up all over the floor."



**RESOURCES: Residential design and finishes:** Tom Adams, Defining Home **Interior furnishings:** Catherine Pringle **Builder:** TCC Contractor **Landscape architect:** Lawrence Bates 256.749.0714 **Landscape installation:** Tim Price, Price Landscaping 256.234.3970 **Select furnishings:** Richard Tubb Interiors, Gabby Home, At Home, Stock & Trade, Argent, and Scott Antique Markets, Atlanta, Georgia. **Flooring:** Billy Brown Flooring

The inland side of the house shows a glimpse of the lake through the dramatic floating staircase.

BELOW: An upstairs bath features a freestanding tub situated between vanities. Mirrors were hung in front of the windows to maintain the view.



**Get to Know**  
*Catherine Pringle*

A University of Alabama graduate, Catherine worked with a large regional commercial architecture firm for eight years before opening her interior design business in 2014. "My time in the commercial design world laid an important foundation, but my heart has always been with my childhood love of creating beautiful, livable homes," she says. "I enjoy getting to know my clients, learning how they live, and designing spaces specific to their needs. Whether my clients are building a new house, tackling a renovation, or simply redecorating, my goal is always to make a house a home."

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