

# design **aspire** home

**CELEBRATING  
15 YEARS  
OF SUBLIME  
DESIGN**

**JOYFUL COLOR,  
DISTINCTIVE SHAPES  
AND THE WILD  
IMAGINATION  
OF ITALIAN DESIGN**

**FEASTING ON  
OUR ANNUAL  
BLACK +  
WHITE  
DESIGN  
ISSUE**

**seeking the sublime**

WINTER 2023  
ASPIREDESIGNANDHOME.COM



**DESIGNER:** Alison Giese

**LOCATION:** Great Falls, VA

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Jennifer Hughes

For clients in Great Falls, Virginia, designer Alison Giese created a casual yet refined home that is a study in high contrast, warmed with organic texture and muted color. Giese explains, “They wanted the home to feel welcoming and loved the idea of letting the outdoors and the beautiful property influence the color palette and textures.” A color palette of white and a deep, almost black smokey blue had already been applied to the kitchen cabinetry, so Giese continued that palette into the great room but brought in textures such as a vintage wool rug by Passerine Home, along with wood, leather and metal, to create an organic, richly layered feel. “We used items with clean lines – like the modern crosshatch chairs – to maintain the balance between crisp and cozy. In some areas we used tumbled travertine floors to add an instant warmth.” In contrast to the open-plan kitchen and great room, the dining room called for a warm ambience, which Giese created with a textural wallpaper, linen fabric on the chairs and curtains, and wood furniture and millwork.

Giese’s favorite space in the home is the hearth room. She shares, “The room is so architecturally striking, particularly as you approach it from the dining room. The vaulted ceiling with dark beams allowed us to play with scale on the fixtures. We created a seating arrangement with four chairs – a perfect place for family chats, reading or listening to music. The smokey palette of the wooden walls creates a cocoonlike space with lighter-hued upholstery to balance the darker walls. It’s just the coziest space.”

To add texture and visual interest to a black-and-white interior, Giese shares, “I have a mental checklist to go through: woven/natural weave (like seagrass or jute rugs, baskets or rush seats), leather, linen, velvet, metal (unlacquered brass, black iron) and wood. These textures often lend themselves to a more organic color palette, so I rely heavily on what I refer to as ‘muddy’ colors: greens, yellows, purples, oranges and blues that have a good amount of brown in them, so they are nuanced and complex.”

**SOURCES:** Foyer light, Urban Electric; kitchen, dining room and bar cabinetry, Lobkovich, Inc.; hearth room rug, Merida Studio; great room rug, vintage from Passerine Home; dining room rug, vintage by District Loom.





