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## Modern STYLE

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Story by Kate Ancell  
Photos by Landon Collis

# Ranch DRESSING

Dan Meiners and David Brinkerhoff  
transform a dated ranch into  
a spacious 21st-century retreat

*In the living room, white walls and neutral fabrics let the art and flowers pack a visual punch. Flower arrangements here and throughout are from Studio Dan Meiners.*



## TO SAY THAT DAN MEINERS AND DAVID BRINKERHOFF live in a 1950s ranch is a little like saying that George Bush lives in a white house.

It may be true, but it's also a little inaccurate. Meiners, the owner of the eponymous floral and design Studio Dan Meiners, has created a home that is anything but dated on a sprawling 1 1/2 acres. Or predictable. Or, well — ranchy. But it wasn't always this way.

The two bought the house 2 1/2 years ago with one thought — rip it apart. And it took a village — along with patience, vision and astonishing attention to detail — to get the thing done right. Paul Minto, the architect, got the concept right away and started cantilevering, blowing out and knocking through walls to open out, lighten up and modernize the space.

For example, “We knocked out those walls,” Meiners says, pointing to what are now two huge banks of windows in the living room. The windows are framed in African mahogany and overlook the formal gardens on one side, leafy frontage on the other. “And we raised the ceiling to 10 feet here.” All this, plus removing the entryway wall, redoing the banister leading downstairs, staining the floors and adding a floating fireplace with a huge, ceiling-height “surround” of the same mahogany has, shall we say, recast the traditional living room a bit. What was once expected has become refreshing; what was once run-of-the-mill has become extraordinary.

It takes a hugely developed sense of style and form, not to mention an astounding commitment, to create such an environment. No detail escapes Meiners' all-seeing eye, and the results speak to his passion for order, beauty and the cool, sure touch. Take, for example, the dining room walls, where Bertrand Design painted blocks of color (in a nod to the Rich Bowman painting holding down one corner of the living room) with four

*Above: The contemporary house looks deceptively modest from the street. Opposite: Tall, mahogany-trimmed French doors and sidelights frame the view to the formal back garden. Below: Dan Meiners, left, and David Brinkerhoff.*





*Left: The dark finishes of the dining room furniture pop against the deep-red painted walls. Above: In the kitchen, floor to ceiling windows are cantilevered out from the house. Right: One tall wall of unstained American walnut cabinetry contains most of the kitchen appliances.*

coats of paint and three of lacquer. Not quite content with this effect, Meiners added a framed series of Dale Chihuly prints to one glowing wall, making the very good into something great.

These very minimal, very deft touches abound in the home. Case in point: The extractor hood in the kitchen is virtually unnoticeable because it's built into the ceiling directly over the island and mirrors the exact dimensions of the piece beneath it. The island, for that matter, with its six-burner range, is topped with a sublime crema marfil marble and surrounded by clean-lined American-walnut cabinetry. The artists behind all the cabinets (in the bar, the kitchen and the master "closet" of which more later) are designer Bill Poole and Haynes Nichols, who constructed and installed every piece to Meiners and Brinkerhoff's exact specifications. "They did an amazing job," says Meiners. "Bill listened to everything I said and was just so creative in finding solutions. For instance, I didn't want any pulls on any doors. Somehow, he and Haynes made it happen." They certainly did, and in great style.





*Above:* Colorful persimmon Italian swivel chairs and a classic contemporary sofa make for comfortable seating in the family room. *Opposite:* On the screened-in porch, the wood framing mimics other windows of the home – another elegant detail of continuity. The sectional offers Oscar the cat a favorite place to monitor the birds.

## **NO DETAIL ESCAPES MEINERS' ALL-SEEING EYE, and the results speak to his passion for order, beauty and the cool, sure touch.**

The kitchen flows organically into the cozy family room, where a long wall of the same cabinets hides a oversized television, a full bar and a state-of-the-art sound system, which is handy, because “we really do have a lot of parties.”

One step out to the sun porch explains the home’s constant allure to guests. The three-season room houses a huge sofa and bar table made of recycled plastic that looks like rattan but has the durability of Teflon. “I floored this room with a vinyl covering,” Meiners says. “I wanted a room I could just hose down.” Well, he could, but then he’d lose the birdsong (from their nests in any of the 45 trees Meiners had planted, after the yard was leveled) or the Zen splashing of the waterfall. In fact, any detraction from the outdoors seems a shame in this room. The “yard” is part formal garden, part party central — which, actually, could describe

# The Source BOOK

## ARCHITECT

Paul Minto

4436 Fairmount Ave., Kansas City

816-304-7416

## ART (RICH BOWMAN)

Blue Gallery

7 W. 19th St., Kansas City

816-527-0823

## FURNISHINGS

Unique Furniture Options

1014 Westport Rd., Suite B, Kansas City

816-960-0220

## PAINTING

Bertrand Design

15804 W. 148th Tr., Olathe

913-780-2533

## WOODWORK AND CABINETS

Haynes Nichols

TimberLab Furniture Works

3829 Main, 5th floor, Kansas City

816-531-9888

✂ Bill Poole

Driftworks Inc.

1619 Walnut St., Kansas City

816-471-1979

both the whole home and its owners (and which is an extremely fine line to walk, and one which they manage beautifully).

The newly installed weathered-limestone stairs lead to a pool and hot tub where soon "there's going to be an amazing pool house," Meiners enthuses. "It's going to be just great." Some would say it already is. (Note: Until the pool house is built, guests should make sure to step into the super-cool powder room, which has an outstanding textured wall of stainless steel over ceramic tile.)

The master suite looks out on the couple's leafy green haven, and is a testament to the kind of clear, uncluttered space that only the eye of a designer and the maintenance of a perfectionist can create. A fun





*Above: Because the master bath is so secluded, the Duravit tub could be sited in front of the wide swath of windows. Below: Plush carpet, deep chaise longues, walls of windows and cool colors lend serenity to the master bedroom. The figural sculptures on the mantel are by Tom Corbin.*



collection of wall-mounted plates gives bold, three-dimensional color to the space over the bed, and a buff marble fireplace sets off the far wall in fine style, but the star of the show is, undoubtedly, the view of the wild kingdom outside. (There's a reason so many Kansas Citians swear by Meiners' flowers, you know). A workout room-cum office adjoins the space, and a completely

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# Seen & Noted

- 1. Pay attention to sightlines.** *Meiners sited this pear painting by Carmelo Sortino at the entrance to the master bedroom wing. It's definitely a focal point.*
- 2. Private spaces can be as well-designed as public spaces.** *The master bedroom closet repeats the same wall-to-ceiling mahogany-framed windows and custom cabinetry that's used in the rest of the house.*
- 3. Introduce bold color with accessories.** *Against the soothing pale sage walls of the master bedroom, the chartreuse art, linens, vase and flowers stand out.*

