



WRITING SAMPLE

Suburban Paradise: Vintage Meets Modern in Large Home

By Gretchen Heber

Crossing the threshold into the soaring foyer of this large suburban home, one can almost hear the shouts and laughter of the children who may occupy the four upstairs bedrooms of this suburban beauty.

With an exterior crafted to mimic Austin's famed Hyde Park neighborhood, and an interior that blends touches of art deco with a thoroughly modern outlook, this 3400-square-foot stunner appeals to all tastes.

To the right of the entry beckons a library lined with custom-made, built-in shelves laden with books from Melville, Michener and more. Plush chairs and adjustable lighting invite a bibliophile to while away the hours, immersed in a world of words.

To the left, a cozy yet spacious dining room is anchored by a Mexican-crafted rectangular table that's large enough to seat a large gathering of friends and family. Lighting the gorgeous wood table is a one-of-a-kind, rectangular steel light fixture, a touch of the contemporary in a room that's graced by an etched transom window typical of the home's deco heritage.

Slide the hand-built barn door to the side and enter the updated kitchen, with its bold black countertops, grey Shaker cupboards, and thoroughly modern stainless steel appliances, including a gas cooktop. A white farmhouse sink is large enough to hold all the pots and pans you've used to cook your luscious dinner; the dishes can wait, however, as you drift into the large living room where a two-story ceiling adds to the expansive feel of the space.

A large, red, L-shaped couch and two leather chairs offer plenty of sprawl space as you prop your feet up on the square gray ottoman and reach for the remote.

Or perhaps time spent outdoors is called for, with three outdoor living spaces to choose from — all suited for enjoying this home's spectacular landscaping. Meander the crushed-granite paths

that crisscross the property, enjoying the Texas-native shrubs, flowers and succulents. Play a game of horse on the driveway basketball court or toss a football in the yard.

If you're lucky, a red tomato or two will be ripe and warm from the sun's rays, and you'll want to gather some chilies, too, for tomorrow's meals, which might be taken in the sunny breakfast room, where a round table seats plenty of hungry souls.

When eyelids grow heavy, settle the children in the bedrooms upstairs, where two full bathrooms will accommodate the youngsters' needs. Don't be surprised, however, if the wee ones insist on a game or two of ping pong in the upstairs game room before bedtime.

The adults can head back downstairs to the expansive master bedroom with its beautiful accent wall and its blue-cushioned window seat. Prepare for bedtime in the thoroughly modern en suite bathroom offering his and hers countertops, and a private commode room.

This home is a short drive to downtown, though with dozens of shops and restaurants within walking distance, why get in the car at all? Invite friends and family, and enjoy this bit of suburban paradise.