

FROM HOUSE TO HOME - EDITION  
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## Contemporary Meets Cozy

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**When his son**, Noah, was born, Lee Calisti made a decision. He would no longer do what all the other architects in his area did: commute to Pittsburgh to work in the large firms there. He could no longer spend 11 to 12 hours a day away from his wife, Amy, and their new son. Lee's own father had died when he was young, and he understood profoundly how important it was for a boy to have his father around.

And so Lee opened his own architectural firm in his hometown of Greensburg. It wasn't easy at first; Lee worked hard to establish the business out of the basement of the Calistis' cramped 1960s ranch house.

But all along, Amy and Lee had a vision. A proponent of the "not-so-big-house" movement, Lee had long been building prototypes of wonderful-looking, mid-level homes that weren't ostentatious or huge. The Calisti home, he and Amy imagined, would represent the culmination of his years of independent research.

Fast forward a few years, and the Calistis' vision has become brick, glass, and galvanized-sheet-metal-clad reality. It is located on a lot very close to where Lee grew up; even today, the neighborhood is safe, family friendly, and filled with mature trees.

The home itself is everything Lee and Amy, who is a high-school math teacher, wanted it to be: meticulously planned, simultaneously modern and warm, responsibly built, and sans a single square foot of wasted space. The two-story, 3,000-square-foot structure is built partially into a gentle hill, creating a basement-level double garage/workshop that's not visible from the street (homes dominated by garages are one of Lee's pet peeves). The house offers many attractive amenities: walk-out Juliet balconies, many large corner windows, and a great-room configuration that allows

family members to hang out together, whether they're in the dining area, living room, or kitchen.

Most importantly, there's a window-lined home office, so Lee can see clients at home--in between breakfasts and father-son time with Noah, of course. "The first few years of the business were rotten financially," Lee admits. "But it doesn't matter. It was all worth it. He's not going to be 6 ever again in his life."

Although Lee's expertise was an obvious asset in designing the home, he believes Amy's contributions were essential. In fact, after 16 years of marriage, the two made an ideal design team. "We knew each other well. We knew our patterns of life. We knew how we entertained and what types of things were important to us."

One area where Lee flexed his architectural muscle was on the home's exterior. Among his contributions were a flat rubber membrane roof, red ironspot brick with matching mortar, and Galvalume cladding, a flat-seamed, galvanized sheet metal. "It's a little edgy for some people, but I wanted to contrast the brick with something totally opposite," he says.

Lee admits the house's unconventional façade has attracted its share of attention in a neighborhood where Colonials and brick four-squares reign. "People constantly come by and look at it," he says. "Some people don't know it's a house because it doesn't have a pitched roof. I've always wanted to challenge people's notions of why things are the way they are."

But inside, the home seamlessly melds Lee's clean, tailored lines with Amy's softer sensibility. That's largely because of the toasty-warm color palette. Both Lee and Amy deemed white walls as being "too anonymous and not comfortable."

After much research, they settled on Hubbard Squash--a golden shade from Sherwin Williams' preservation palette--for the home's main living areas. Interior walls received a cinammon-spiked accent color--[Sherwin Williams' Rookwood Terra Cotta](#).

Lee and Amy also put a lot of thought into the kitchen, especially after "making do" with a renovated kitchen in their previous home. They settled on an L-shaped floor plan with an island, which allows people to enter and exit from two different locations. And, because guests are always drawn to the heart of the home, Lee installed a "friendly barrier"--a bar top along the island. The bar top invites people to sit down and visit with the cook without wandering into the kitchen and getting underfoot.

But perhaps the ultimate testimony to their home-planning skills came during the holidays, when the place was filled with guests. While Lee went about his usual ritual of cooking the holiday turkey, activities buzzed all around him. "There was a very natural flow," he says. "We had a houseful of people, and there were multiple activities happening simultaneously, yet everyone was still together, and they weren't sitting on top of each other. It passed the test."