

Grace Meets Glamour

Against a bold chinoiserie backdrop, an array of styles and textures mix and mingle in harmony for a dining room that feels at once classic and au courant. BY Elizabeth Bonner Czapski | PHOTOGRAPHY BY Marcy Black Simpson



In vibrant Fort Lauderdale, Florida, designer Tracy Dunn infuses her interiors with a timeless yet comfortable aesthetic that embraces the beauty of her bright, sunny surrounds. For this showstopping dining room, Tracy adeptly blended traditional elements with modish details and unexpected accents that bring in a bit of alfresco whimsy—a layered look she calls “chinoiserie chic.”

“I like to go all out in dining rooms and make them dynamite, because you entertain in there,” Tracy says. “It’s where people have conversations, socialize, and so forth. Most of the time dining rooms are close to the foyer, so when you walk in, you can see them. That was the case for this [one]. It takes center stage.”

Tracy worked with owners Maria and Chris Selwood on their previous home, and Maria’s initial list of priorities for their new residence didn’t include the dining room, as she planned to incorporate many of the same pieces. However, while Tracy was sourcing materials for other spaces, she stumbled across a striking Schumacher chinoiserie wallpaper that changed the course of their project.

“Based on the concept she wanted, I saw that paper, and I just had to show it to her for her dining room,” Tracy says. “She fell in love with it. That’s really how it started—with the paper. I love to design with wallpaper. It can make a statement, and you can build around that.”

The wall covering cloaks the room in an eye-catching peacock blue bearing artful scenes of flora and fauna. To highlight the paper, they opted against window treatments, amplifying the amount of natural light that shines upon it. “If there’s natural light coming in, I like to bring it into the design concept,” Tracy says.

A hand-painted tole pagoda lantern harmonizes with the motif’s Asian influence and adds to the refined open-air feel, along with a sprawling fiddle-leaf fig, a luxe porcelain planter with a bamboo trellis pattern brimming with ivy, and other notes of fresh greenery that mirror the verdant landscape beyond.

These lively features are balanced with classic furniture from the Selwoods’ previous dwelling in crisp, clean whites and varied wood finishes. A dining table from the 1930s serves as the perfect base for heirloom china, crystal, and sterling flatware—all passed down from Chris’s grandmother—while skirted slipcovers for the dining chairs offer contemporary flair with fanciful monograms. Tracy incorporated an Empire-style table, another treasured inheritance, to fill the corner space, covering it with photos in mismatched silver frames.

New additions include a polished sideboard with a mirrored geometric face accompanied by a glitzy assortment of opposites, like a gilt mirror and vintage candlesticks flanked by sleek modern lamps. Across the room, a whitewashed console table with a distressed surface is paired with organic materials like woven baskets and coral. A plush blue chair and throw pillow pull in shades and prints that complement the wallpaper.

“The mix of the different textures, a blend of colors, and adding the accessories yield a tastefully edited, warm, and inviting room,” says Tracy, who started her career in the fashion industry and brings a sense of style to every space with layering—especially rooms that allow for her signature dash of glamour. “We’ve got a lot going on here, but it all blends and makes a comfortable statement. It’s a very evolved look.”