

EAST MEETS WEST

San Francisco designer Kevin Sawyers helps newcomers to DC create a bold, California aesthetic for their Dupont Circle home.

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANSEL OLSON PHOTOGRAPHY





From left: A vibrant California vibe permeates this Dupont Circle rowhouse, especially with primary colors and art from Blek le Rat; the dining area features a daring range of gorgeous styles and materials.

David Starbuck Smith and his wife, Dr. Teresa Williams, loved the work designer Kevin Sawyers did for them to complete a remodel of their San Francisco home. One problem: That was 2015, and the couple, a former tennis pro and scientist, uprooted and bought a new place 3,000 miles away in DC's Dupont Circle neighborhood.

Geography and the pandemic could have been impediments too big to overcome for the couple to achieve the vibe they wanted for their historic (circa 1870) home. But the will to create something special from afar prevailed.

"It wasn't a seamless task, but with the clients' welcoming personalities, they were soon making all sorts of connections in DC that led to an unparalleled team of craftspeople and general contractors," says Sawyers, principal at San Francisco-based Sawyers Design (sawyersdesign.com). "I felt as though we were bringing a bit of the California spirit to the East Coast."

Above all, the homeowners knew they wanted the rowhouse's aesthetic to reflect Northern California chic, including a vibrant palette, while maintaining the integrity of



“I NEVER LIKE TO DO
AWAY WITH BEAUTIFUL
DETAILING THOUGH, SO
WE ALWAYS LEAVE AS
MUCH AS POSSIBLE.”

—KEVIN SAWYERS

The kitchen showcases
the designer's vision of
bringing California spirit
to the East Coast.