

FEATURE

Local Trendsetter's St. Paul Home Tour

Inside the modern home of Kate Arends Peters through the lens of her popular blog



Kate Arends Peters has a minimalistic aesthetic, a penchant for modern design, and a large audience of devoted followers. You may know her as the authentic and wonderfully talented writer behind the popular lifestyle blog *Wit and Delight* or through her 2014 design collaboration with Target, where she launched a custom collection of home-inspired products for entertaining.

Kate's many talents often lead to collaborations with major companies throughout the world, though her St. Paul roots—and a recent renovation of the house she shares with husband Joe Peters and dog Winnie—keep her grounded at home.



* **Wit &
Delight**

We're excited to show you the inside of Kate and Joe's newly renovated historic Tudor by McDonald Remodeling, as told by the perspective of Kate Arends Peters on her blog *Wit and Delight*.

Story by *Katy Baar* // Blog excerpts from Kate Arends Peters, *Wit and Delight* // Photography by *Meghan Doll Photography*



Let me start from the beginning. Some women dream of their wedding day when they were girls, but not me. I was dreaming about renovating kitchens. And bathrooms. And bedrooms.

Wit and Delight blog excerpt // According to Pinterest: How Inspiration (Almost) Killed My Renovation Dreams



Why We Chose McDonald Remodeling

Finding the Right Remodeler

One could say selecting a general contractor is something akin to looking for a great mate. You spend time dreaming and planning and saving and waiting and pinning (if you're anything like me) until you're ready to hand the keys over to someone you trust.

This is not something that came easy for me. It's a decision with huge financial impact and if you're not careful, things can end badly. I worried about ill advice, inflated rates, our creative vision being compromised, permits— about all of the unknowns. On top of all that, Joe and I watch wayyyyyyy too much HGTV. Ever notice how the general contractor is always the bearer of bad news? Turns out, it's not at all like that in real life... if you find the right GC.

1

They were straightforward and honest about what was possible and what wasn't right from the get go.

2

They listened and took interest in the home's original charm, but didn't let it dictate design decisions that made the house more enjoyable to live in. Old houses can take you back in time, but that doesn't mean you have to live there.

THREE

We shared similar aesthetics. We chatted about some of the furniture pieces I had acquired over the years and riffed off ideas for the kitchen.

four

They suggested spatial improvements that I couldn't have imagined.

five

They appreciated our aesthetic—and improved upon it. If your tastes align, a contractor can offer solutions that you may not have considered.

six

They don't like surprises. Who does when it comes to renovation projects? We've had very little hiccups...in fact, we (the clients) have contributed to most of the surprises by changing our mind re: finishing, fixtures, etc. (Sorry guys!!)

SEVEN

They're great communicators. We have this handy little spreadsheet that McDonald creates for managing their projects. I know exactly what is going on at the house at any given time.

8

They were willing to work with our budget, but still let us dream.

»Wit and Delight blog excerpt // Can't DIY? How We Found the Perfect General Contractor



Improving Flow & Function

Before we get into the nitty gritty, I have to preface this post by saying there was plenty to like about our kitchen as it was before we tore out the cabinets and repurposed them elsewhere. The woodwork was beautiful. We had a cute little breakfast nook in the corner. There was some decent subway tile installed. Yet we didn't buy this house thinking these pros would outweigh the cons: no counter space, awkward layout, outdated appliances. Joe couldn't even sit comfortably in the breakfast nook. After airing our grievances and deciding renovation was the best way forward, Jim McDonald and I sat down one day for a few hours and decided on a layout that would do the following:

1

Increase our workspace in the kitchen. By opening up the wall between the kitchen and dining room, we gained a huge amount of prep space with a peninsula.

2

Improve the overall flow of the house. By closing off entry ways and opening walls to create more defined spaces, [the] house would feel bigger than it actually is.

3

Honor the time period the house was built without compromising on modern living. We kept with traditional cabinetry and finishes so house maintained its character. We injected modern touches through light fixtures, which can easily be updated and swapped out for something more traditional.

➤ Wit and Delight blog
excerpt // W&D Renovates:
Our Plan for the Kitchen

Kate's Style Inspiration: Old Meets New



Traditional Design

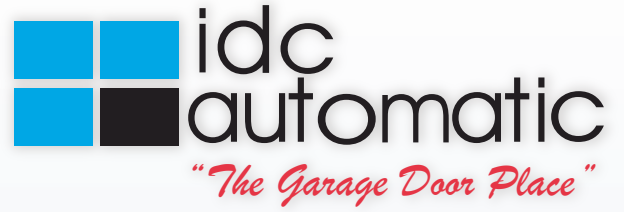


Modern Accents

Kate's Style Board

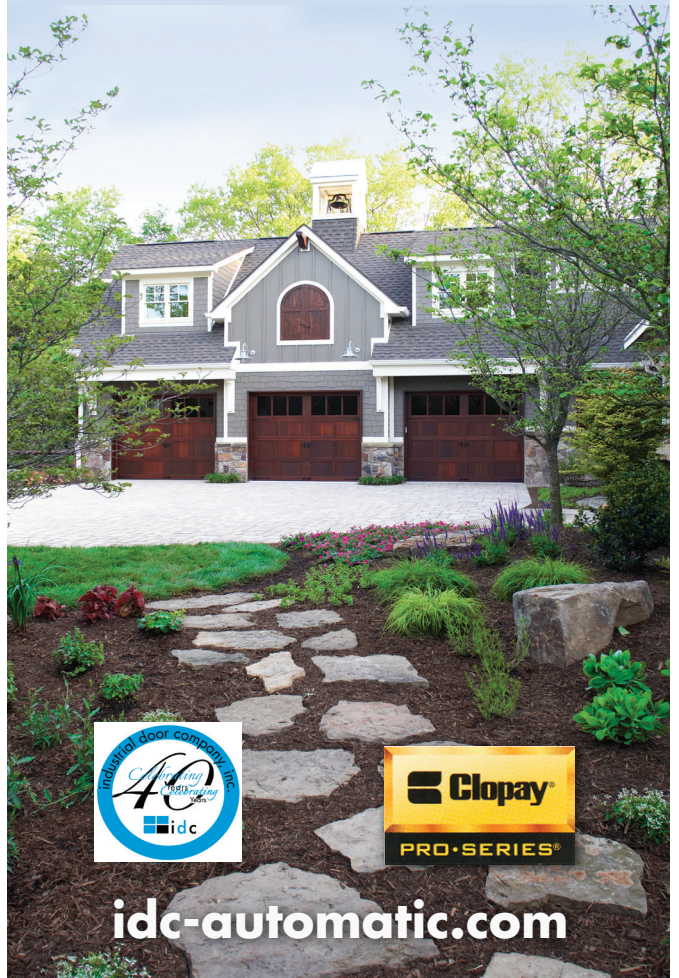


*** Wit & Delight**



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Choosing a Color Scheme & Making Selections:

We liked white because it's universally classic, but doesn't bring a whole lot of personality to the space. Color is more fun, but because the house is so small, we were hesitant to choose a color that would define the look of the entire first floor. Then there was the idea of going all black. It seemed like the best of both worlds – the boldness of color with the neutrality of white. Our biggest concern was if it would make the space feel way too dark. So we pulled some images of small kitchens that used black in a big way for inspiration.

I love how sharp and moody these spaces feel, but I was still missing a little bit of color and the warmth of wood. To further aid in preparation, I collected some pieces we knew we wanted in the kitchen and started pulling swatches that complemented these focal points.



➤ Wit and Delight blog excerpt // W&D
Renovates: DIY Kitchen Upgrade with BEHR

Products from: cambriausa.com // riflepaperco.com // deltafaucet.com // frenchranges.com // celementileshop.com



Cambria Counters provide solid, durable working space throughout the kitchen.



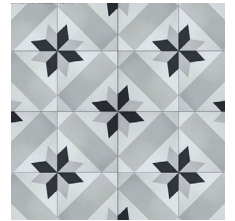
Peonie Wallpaper with mint background adds a pop of color to the kitchen dinnette.



Gold Delta Faucet adds modern shine and minimalist flare when paired with black & white.



Lacanche Range is a standout piece in the kitchen and features charming gold knobs.



Cement Tile Flooring is unexpected, yet looks perfect in the new and novel space.



*** Wit & Delight**

See the rest of Kate and Joe's St. Paul remodel on our Parade of Homes Blog and visit WitandDelight.com to keep up with Kate Arends Peters.