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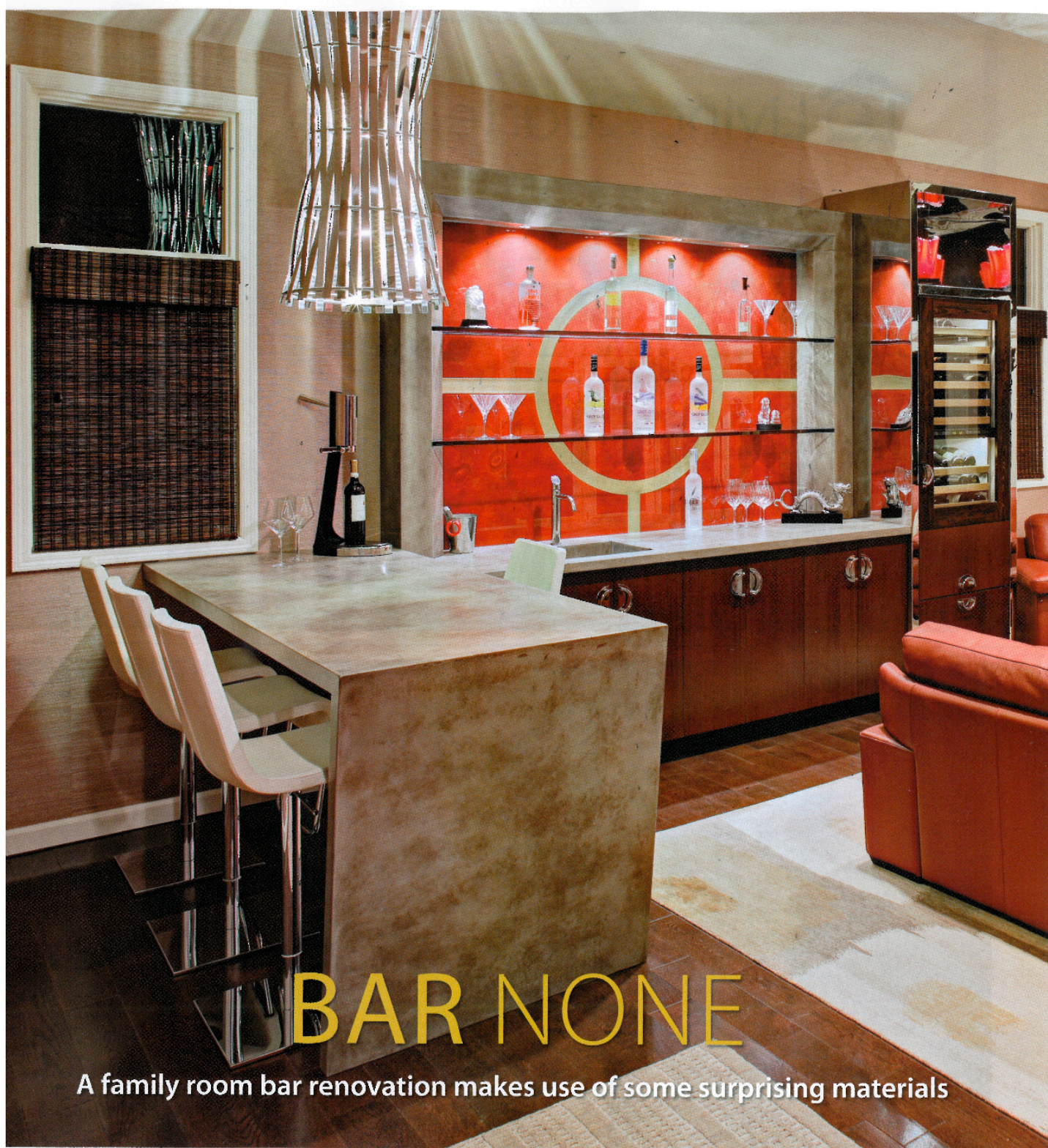
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# BAR NONE

A family room bar renovation makes use of some surprising materials

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**INTERIOR DESIGN** JANE W. PIERSON



before

## THE BAR IN A RIDGEWOOD FAMILY ROOM BECAME A DRAMATIC FOCAL POINT

thanks to designer Anthony Passanante's creativity and his use of some surprising materials.

Passanante was called in to renovate Carla and Chuck Nash's family room after a flood so damaged the space it had to be gutted. Carla Nash says the flood — which happened while the Nashes were away on vacation — proved to be a blessing in disguise.

It gave the couple an opportunity to renovate the family room, and it provided Passanante with an opportunity to exercise his resourcefulness. The Nashes had wanted to update the room, but didn't think of undertaking a renovation until after the flood.

The family room, located four steps down from the formal living room, was an addition constructed 12 years ago. "We basically live in there," Nash says of the room where they watch television, relax and entertain. "It's almost like our studio apartment."

### THE POWER OF RED

Passanante had done an earlier renovation of the Nashes' kitchen and dining room, and they love his work. For the latest project, he acted as general con-

The counter, flanked by leather bar stools, is made of concrete. The top and columns along both sides of the red and gold glass backsplash are concrete also.

The owners' red leather sofas provided a pop of color that gave Anthony Passanante his cue for the design of the new bar. He chose concrete and highly polished stainless steel for the Asian-inspired bar. It's the focal point — and the first thing you see — when you enter the family room.



tractor, overseeing electrical and plumbing work, installing a new floor of prefinished hickory and, of course, designing the new bar.

The original bar, which was not Passanante's work, was "a tight fit and didn't function well" in the space, he says. So he redesigned it as the room's focal point, drawing on Asian design elements found throughout the home. The backsplash is red, a common color in Asian design and also the color of the room's existing leather sofas. The gold circle motif at the center of the backsplash is something he came across in books on Asian design.

#### UNUSUAL MATERIALS

The design of the bar was "a great opportunity to use materials in a way they're not usually used," says Passanante, an allied member of the American Society of Interior Designers, certified kitchen and bath designer, and owner of Anthony Albert Studios in Waldwick.

For the backsplash he used a special paint technique along with goldleafing applied to the back of glass. "Because it's all hand painted on glass, it has a reflective quality," he says.

The backsplash is composed of three sections: bottom, middle and top put together to look like one continuous piece. Two glass shelves span the entire backsplash.

The bar's countertops are concrete with an integrated concrete sink. The beveled-frame surround that holds the glass shelves is also concrete—an unusual use of the material, Passanante says. He embedded LED lights at the top of the surround to wash the backsplash in light.

Another unusual touch: The wine cooler's custom surround is high-polished stainless steel that's buffed to a high sheen for "a glamorous mirrored finish," Passanante says.

A seating counter—perpendicular to the bar and fronted by cream-colored leather bar stools—is also



**Far left:** A carved metal dragon on the counter is one of the Asian-inspired touches found throughout the home.

**Left:** The bar's concrete counter incorporates a concrete sink. The gold circle on the red backsplash is an Asian-inspired motif.

concrete. The cabinetry for the bar is wenge, an exotic wood. Above the counter, a hanging fixture, custom designed for the space, is high-polished aluminum with LED lighting that casts a wonderful light on the ceiling as well as on the bar.

#### ASIAN CONTEMPORARY

Interior designer Jane Pierson of Ho-Ho-Kus-based Jane W. Pierson Interior Design, redesigned the Nashome 12 years ago and returned to collaborate with Massanante on the new family room.

"The other rooms have a combination of Asian antiques and contemporary furnishings that blend together beautifully," Pierson says. The renovated family room now features "clean, contemporary lines evident in the concrete bar, leather bar stools and cocktail table with an arched base," she adds.

Grass cloth on the walls and a handmade wool-silk area rug help foster a calm motif while the stunning red sofas, purchased for Pierson's design of

the former family room and retained for the renovation, join with the red glass backsplash and smaller red accent pieces for added interest. "The intent was to maintain a quiet color palette overall while using bold red accents," Pierson says. ■

*Robin Amster, a frequent contributor to Design NJ, is a Madison-based writer and editor.*

**SOURCES** bar design, custom cabinetry, pendant light design and general contractor, Anthony Albert Studios in Waldwick; interior design (sofas, cocktail table, rug, bar stools, accessories), Jane W. Pierson Interior Design in Ho-Ho-Kus; glass backsplash, crafted by Artique Glass Studio in Glen Rock; pendant light and stainless steel wine cooler surround, crafted by Craft-Fabricators in Hackettstown; concrete countertops and surround, designed by Anthony Albert Studios and crafted by Trueform Concrete in Denville; custom hardware and faucet, Hardware Designs in Fairfield; cocktail table, Dennis Miller Associates in New York City; bar stools, Atelier New York in New York City; wall covering, Zoffany in Teterboro; rug, Rug Importers in Paramus.

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