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From her Sandoval Street showroom, Emily Mingenbach-Henry (left, with clients Wendy Lewis and Peter Brill) aims to “show people the possibilities and how we can do something a little off the beaten path.”

First imagine everything you could possibly want in a remodel. Then pare it all down to what makes sense, discovering in the process what you really want. That’s how Emily Mingenbach-Henry approached what a couple envisioned as a major renovation to their aging Stamm house. The designer suggested the clients make a detailed list of all their dream changes, which included adding a second floor with master suite, a new entrance, and a more open, functional home office and living room downstairs.

Mingenbach-Henry had an architect draw the existing floor plan, then overlaid it with the clients’ ideas. “We had a master plan of everything wonderful,” she says. Then came the hard questions. Would this be the couple’s forever home? If not, would an extensive (and expensive) remodel price them out of the market for their neighborhood? How would they feel about living with construction for as long as a year?

“That’s an important part of my job, to be really pragmatic,” says Mingenbach-Henry, who established Emily Henry Interiors in downtown Santa Fe in 2002. “It’s wonderful when clients have the patience and ability to think it all the way

through.”

Together they scaled down the plan: no second floor. Then they scaled down again, removing most of a downstairs wall and installing frosted-glass pocket doors between the living room and an unused bedroom, which became a beautiful, functional home office. Open or closed, the glass doors expand the feeling of space, light, and harmonious proportions, Mingenbach-Henry says. Other changes included furniture and custom cabinetry by the designer’s Santa Fe-based company Millicent, which crafts clean-lined, hand-carved and finished wood furniture featuring low-relief imagery in her own elegant designs.

Raised on actor Dennis Hopper’s commune at the Mabel Dodge Luhan compound in Taos, Mingenbach-Henry grew up surrounded by creativity and art. Today her brothers produce handcrafted bronze and aluminum accessories for Emily Henry Interiors, while other Northern New Mexico artisans contribute upholstery and ceramic ware. Each design project is directed by her client’s specific needs, desires, and practical considerations. “Getting to know people to find those things out—that’s the most fun, delightful part of my work,” she says. emilyhenryinteriors.com



Samuel Design Group



Annie O’Carroll



Jennifer Ashton Interiors



Emily Henry Interiors



Among the work by Northern New Mexico artisans at Emily Henry Interiors is handcrafted wooden furniture (cabinet in front) designed by Emily Mingenbach-Henry and produced by her Santa Fe-based furniture company, Millicent. Moving from a tiny workspace to a 1,900-square-foot Sandoval Street showroom two years ago allowed Mingenbach-Henry to expand her design offerings while providing more room for working with clients in a bright, welcoming space that, she says, “keeps evolving and always will.”