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Pedigreed Beauty**

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FROM LOCAL DESIGNERS**

HISTORY

IN

THE

MAKING

*A BRAND-NEW MARTHA'S VINEYARD HOME
NO ONE WOULD GUESS IT HASN'T BEEN*

*MARRIES PAST AND PRESENT SO SUCCESSFULLY,
WELCOMING ITS OCCUPANTS FOR GENERATIONS.*



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Greg Premru / Interior Photography by Sam Gray /
Architecture: Patrick Ahearn, Patrick Ahearn Architect
/ Interior design: Jim Gauthier and Susan Stacy,
Gauthier-Stacy / Builder: Peter Rosbeck, Rosbeck
Builders / Landscape design: Mike and Jeff Donaroma,
Donaroma's Nursery and Landscape Services*

*The welcoming parking court, situated
between the main house and the pool
house, is hidden from the road. Dual
chimneys framing the widow's walk
and colorful window boxes at the dor-
mers further the home's charm.*

Everybody involved held a singular vision: a house that would look like it had sheltered generations. So seemingly filled with history would be this new Martha's Vineyard home, no passersby would guess its tender youth.

And so it came to be. No one really recalls the property's original saltbox or how different this land once looked. The thoughtful owners had the small existing structure relocated and donated it to the community as affordable housing. And the site? Significant choreography by Boston and Edgartown, Massachusetts-based architect Patrick Ahearn took care of that.

To ensure privacy and maximize views, Ahearn, along with Edgartown's Donaroma's Nursery and Landscape Services, skillfully transformed the grade. A sixteen-foot-high concrete wall helped create what Ahearn labels "a table top" on which the new house could rest. With only a two-foot-high stone wall visible from the road (the rest is buried), there's no hint of the dramatic topographical work that ensued. The stone wall separates the manicured lawn from a pretty field brimming with wild flowers and grasses.

Cedar shingles and antique brick on the home's facade are historically accurate. Moss planted between the bluestone along the front path appears to have found its own way. And tour the interior and you'd swear the rooms had been lovingly restored, not newly built. Authentic materials like antique pine floor boards with hand-forged nails combined with builder Peter Rosbeck's high level of craftsmanship help keep the structure's age secret. What the owners had long anticipated—"a gambrel-style home, on a quiet road with beautiful views," says the wife—is now a reality and even better than the couple could have wished.

As true to the past as Ahearn's stellar design might be, it's also contemporary in its openness and functionality. For owners with a full roster of visiting friends and family that was an additional priority.

Jim Gauthier and Susan Stacy, who jumped on board at the very beginning,



LEFT: Comfy seating surrounds an antique chest turned coffee table in the sitting room adjacent to the kitchen. ABOVE: "Generous portals help keep the kitchen and family room area connected," says designer Jim Gauthier. The homeowners' collection of antique blue bottles—along with a painting they commissioned of some of their favorites that hangs over the mantel—adds color to the quiet palette. RIGHT: The dining area's decor incorporates a stalwart lantern by Formations and a pair of antique chests.



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LEFT: The husband's study, where much of his outstanding scrimshaw collection is showcased, is clad in reclaimed pine paneling. An antique portrait of a ship's captain hangs above the fireplace. RIGHT: The pool house mimics the house. The pool includes an attached spill-over spa with a stacked rock veneer. BELOW: The owners bought the striking hall sculpture because, says the wife, "It makes us smile." Shallow Rumford fireplaces like the one in the living room are classic features in old houses.



THE WIFE REQUESTED a palette that would reference the home's location and foster an airy ambience. Fabrics—mostly linen—appear in appealing hues that mimic sea and sand, both of which are only a stone's throw distant.

fell seamlessly into sync with their well-traveled clients. As this was to become their permanent home upon retirement, the owners were looking to incorporate favorite antiques and an impressive amassing of pedigreed clocks. "The collection began sixteen years ago on a London trip when we spied a tall mahogany clock with a moon dial," recalls the husband, obviously delighted with the memory.

Ancestral portraits demanded a place of honor and there was also artwork, wonderful scrimshaw and Nantucket baskets to consider. In less capable hands, such belongings may have steered the rooms into a quiet formality. Instead, Gauthier and Stacy's artful marrying of old and new furnishings (a cool Lucite cocktail table and, a breath away, a classic eagle-topped mirror, for example) keep every corner fresh and current.

In accordance with the wife's request for a palette that would reference the home's location and foster an airy ambience, walls are painted Benjamin Moore's Cloud White. Fabrics—mostly linen—appear in appealing hues that mimic sea and sand, both of which are only a stone's throw distant.

The open-plan living/family room is the design's heart. At the living room end, the designers have cultivated a slightly more elegant tone. Here's where grownups might gather before or after dinner. Segue to the space's opposite end where the television resides, and seating centers on a generous ottoman. Brick fireplaces grace both sides. But where one hearth is punctuated with a mirror above, the other is dressed with a charming still life of antique bottles by Steve Mills, a native of Massachusetts who still summers on the Vineyard. The savvy artist has worked the owners' twin sons' birth date into the still life—a subtle addition the owners cherish. Nearby Edwardian-style chairs are upholstered in smoky blue and tan stripes.

For continuity, Gauthier and Stacy cleverly scattered varying shades of blue (a nod to the wife's billowing summer hydrangeas as well as sky and ocean) throughout. The husband's cozy paneled study (the inviting covered porch with fireplace is right outside his door) includes an upholstered cerulean chair for comfortable fireside reading. The blue-patterned ethnic rug that covers the study floor was selected for its appealing muted quality. "Muted ethnic rugs—not worn—provide a sense of age," explains Gauthier.

In the kitchen, bright blue mosaic tiles set off the cooking area. The secondary island, which frequently serves as a bar, is painted a seaworthy azure that might also, upon occasion, conjure congenial thoughts of Bombay Sapphire gin. Rather than a traditional dining room they'd seldom use, the owners opted to merge



The covered porch at the back of the house lets the owners relax outdoors rain or shine. The chairs, the sofa and dining table are from Restoration Hardware, while the coffee table, side table and lamps are antiques store finds. Antique bricks were used to build the fireplace, and the metal ship's model on the mantel is also an antique.

WHAT THE OWNERS had long anticipated—“a grambrel-style home, on a quiet road with beautiful views,” says the wife—is now a reality and even better than the couple could have wished.



the kitchen with the dining area. Gregorius/Pineo rush chairs in a Mojave finish cluster about a Restoration Hardware table. The nearby sitting area sports an antique brick floor, a sly maneuver that leaves visitors with the impression that at some point a porch was reclaimed. An antique chest doubles as a coffee table, while demi-lune tables and Charles Fradin chairs flank the sofa.

Gauthier and Stacy have created a serene equilibrium for the bedrooms as well. The lofty master suite is awash in soft colors. The upholstered bed's dark frame and twin Windsor chairs beside the hearth interject visual interest—not that there's not plenty already. His and her window seats, a private deck and a bath that conjures the elegance of a grand, understated hotel leave little to be desired. "The freestanding tub," Gauthier points out, "is a more modern choice than a traditional claw foot."

Guests? Oh, there are abundant nests for them, including playful quarters above the three-bay garage that hold a king-size bed and a separate bunk room. Across the pebbled courtyard, a ship's ladder in the pool house leads up to yet another bunk room.

Should the day be not quite right to pile everyone into the family's 1979 convertible VW bug (the husband has a penchant for vintage cars) and head to the beach, a pool dip is more than satisfying. But then there's nothing that doesn't satisfy about this very personal house where past and present so happily merge. •

RESOURCES For more information about this home, see page 117.



LEFT: Simple sheers at the windows give the spacious master bath privacy. "There's something about a summer breeze gently moving sheers that says relax and take it easy for me," says Gauthier. **ABOVE:** In the owner's paneled bedroom, an antique bow-front chest serves as a nightstand beside the dark-framed bed. **RIGHT:** The widow's walk and the bedroom decks let the homeowners and their guests enjoy sweeping views across a conservation meadow to blue water beyond.



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