

# New England HOME

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&  
Islands

SUMMER  
*State of Mind*





Landscape architect Dan Gordon and landscape designer Peter Stephens played off remnants of existing stone walls when organizing the site and developing what Gordon describes as a casual agrarian style. "We're tying into the character of the landscape instead of imposing something different on it," he explains.



# Modern Romance

Hansel and Gretel meet Bauhaus in a Chilmark home designed for a family looking beyond New England norms.

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*Exterior photography by* NEIL LANDINO



Architect Patrick Ahearn is a celebrated classicist known for timeless, coastal-inspired dwellings. But his past tells a different story: he was trained as a modernist under Walter Gropius at the storied Cambridge, Massachusetts-based firm The Architects Collaborative. So when potential clients proposed he design a modern family homestead on ten-plus acres of undeveloped farmland on Martha's Vineyard,



**RIGHT:** In the great room, a New England fieldstone fireplace with a granite surround echoes the stacked stone walls on the property. **BELOW:** An interior glass wall separates the wife's office from the seating area in the great room. The light-filled workspace has a view of the property's party barn across the meadow and features a hanging bench slotted into a square bay.





he replied, “Let’s give it a shot.”

The result is a home that melds story-book-style silhouettes with Machine Age edge.

The central portion of the house is modeled on a cottage one might find in the Black Forest, complete with

steeply pitched roofs. Throughout, black windows with delicate muntins feel reminiscent of industrial metal-work, while chevron shutters are decidedly Old World. The white stucco-like facade and tall chamfered chimneys reference modern homes in Belgium



and France. “My goal was to still create a romantic house, but with indoor-outdoor living and lots of glass to capitalize on distant water views,” Ahearn says.

Gabled roof towers, connected to the central cottage by one-story passageways, each boast a blackened-steel stairway encased in a glass bay. Here, at the ends of the house, is where Ahearn flexes his modernist muscle. “The central portion



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:** Operable windows in the stair bays let cool air come in around the gardens and hot air dissipate out the top. Large bifold doors unite the family room and covered porch, creating an immersive indoor-outdoor experience. The window by the kitchen’s back counter folds away to make alfresco dining easy.







Working with the sloped topography, the team carved out land at the back of the house in order to create a walk-out garden level while still meeting the town's twenty-four-foot height restriction for gabled roofs.

could be an original structure and these flat-roofed connectors with Bauhaus flavor were maybe added later," he says.

Entry is into a voluminous great room with a seventeen-foot-high vaulted ceiling, a two-story fieldstone fireplace, Douglas fir post-and-beam detailing, and dormers that act as clerestory windows, imbuing the space with sunlight. Nature beckons at every turn. "Walls of windows fold away, opening rooms to each other

and the exterior deck for true indoor-outdoor connections," Ahearn says.

For instance, bifold doors and windows unite the great room with the back deck, which overlooks Vineyard Sound. The family room opens to the back deck, too, as well as to a covered porch with motorized drop-down screens. Just beyond, granite stairs descend to a lawn, outdoor shower, and the garden-level patio.

"We spent a lot of time talking with the clients to get a meeting of the minds," Ahearn says. "We dreamed this up together."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see *Resources*.

**ARCHITECTURE:** Patrick Ahearn Architect

**BUILDER:** Rosbeck Builders

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Dan Gordon Landscape Architects