

Hendricks Churchill

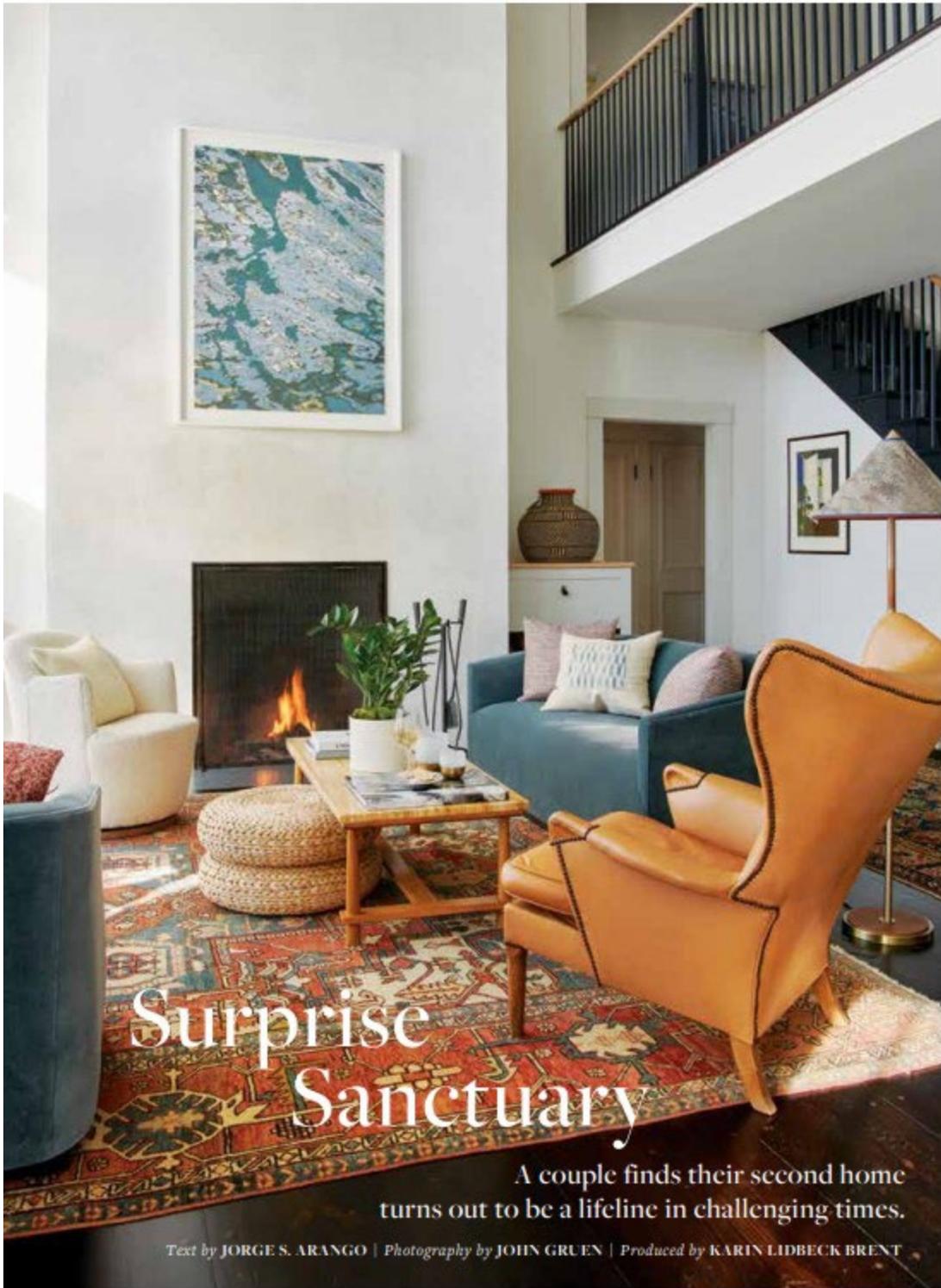
New England HOME

Surprise Sanctuary

A couple finds their second home turns out to be a lifeline in challenging times.

By Jorge S. Arango
Produced by Karin Lidbeck Brent
Photographs by John Gruen
January 2022





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Text by JORGE S. ARANGO | *Photography by* JOHN GRUEN | *Produced by* KARIN LIDBECK BRENT

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The double-height living room offers comfortable seating for the view: Le Corbusier's iconic chaise in cowhide, an RH sofa, and a bouclé-clad swivel chair, all atop a circa 1890 Serapi Heriz carpet from Iran. **FACING PAGE:** Architect John Allee replaced an intrusively curved baluster originally on the mezzanine over the living room with a simpler, leaner one. A Barbara Vaughn photo from KMR Arts in Washington Depot hangs above the fireplace.

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It's becoming a common pandemic story: urban family renovates country home as a getaway. Then cities impose lockdowns and deep soul-searching leads to a lifestyle about-face. Country house becomes full-time residence and city apartment becomes pied-à-terre.

"It was always going to be a home where we spent weekends and the bulk of our summers," says the wife of the New York City couple who purchased this late 1990s builder's home near Lakeville. As it neared



ABOVE: The gray grout between Cle Tile's Moroccan zellige backsplash, says designer Heide Hendricks, mimics shadow lines. **BELOW:** The eating nook in the kitchen features a custom oval table and banquette and vintage chairs acquired from Hunter Bee in Millerton, New York. **FACING PAGE:** The dining room is built for entertaining with an antique farm table, woven rush side chairs, a wing chair in Sister Parish fabric, and 1947 Paavo Tynell lighting reissued by GUBI.

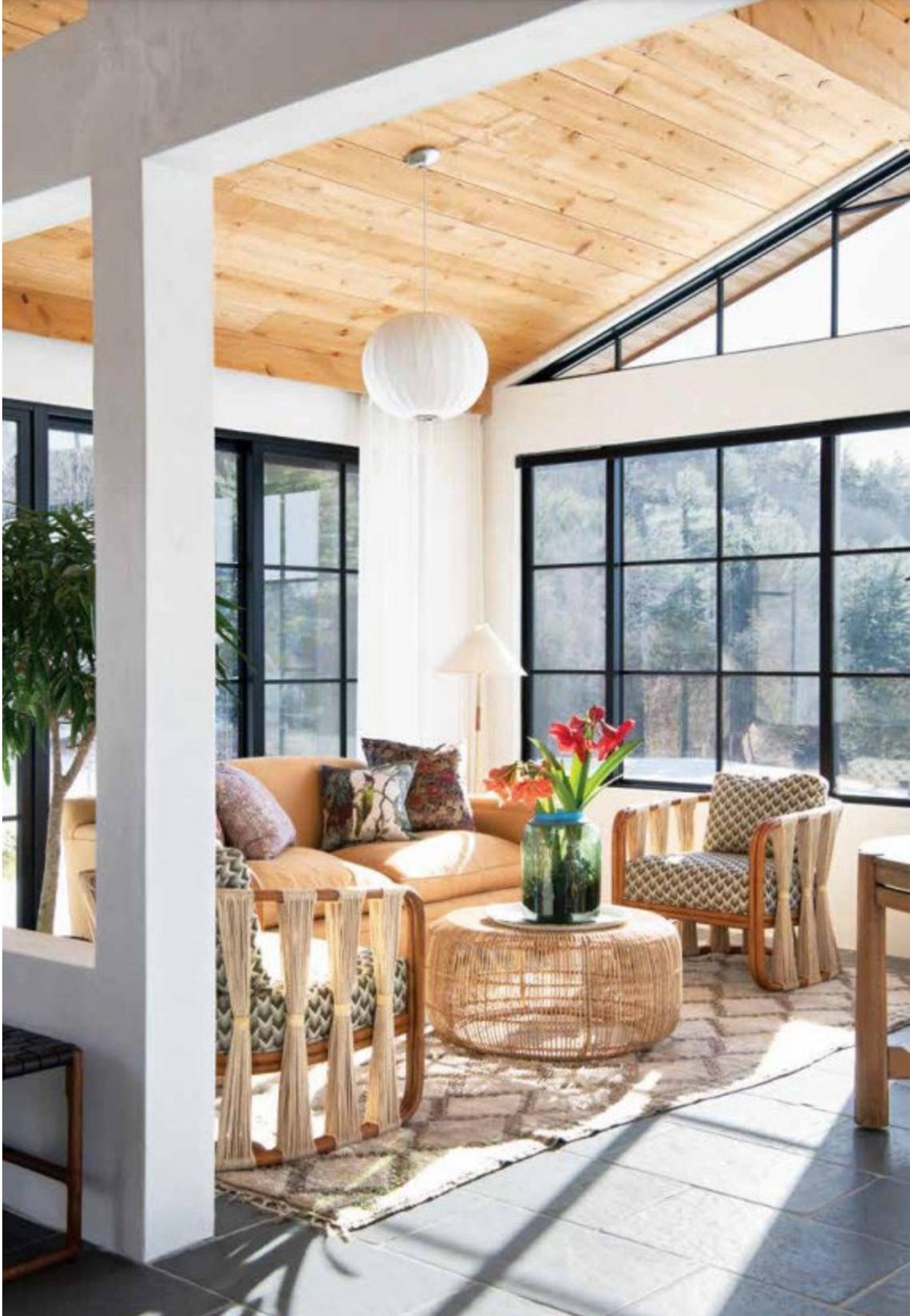


completion in February of 2020, COVID-19 turned the world upside down. "The boys were nine and eleven, and they had been playing hockey up here on weekends since they were five and seven. It's where their social lives were." The choice was clear.

Architect John Allee recalls a 4,800-square-foot main house (there's also a guest house on the property) in fine condition. "But the owners needed better finishes and bigger entertainment spaces," he explains.

Much could be achieved by opening rooms up—eliminating the wall separating kitchen and dining room, removing columns that visually segmented the living room, and replacing and amplifying fenestration. An 800-square-foot addition also accommodated a new walk-out basement, pool house, and game room.

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Color appears mainly through rugs and upholstery, in shades that echo the trees, hayfields, stone outcroppings, and sky outside the windows.

Aesthetically, Allee bridged the couple's tastes. The husband is a modernist who prefers neutral palettes, while the wife loves color and a softer vernacular modernism. "Balancing clean lines and industrial touches with honest materials like plaster, a reclaimed stone floor, and hemlock wood ceilings," explains Allee, "made the house feel purer."

This approach also dovetailed Allee's own modernist leanings with the more rural farm aesthetic of builder Andy Belter. "But Heide was the glue," says the wife, speaking of designer Heide Hendricks.

"Early on I realized it was going to be fun because there wasn't a color she didn't like," recalls Hendricks, "even orange and red, which are usually at the top of people's lists of colors not to use." The key was judiciously deploying that color against a mostly neutral palette, as well as mixing furnishings that straddled traditional and modern eras.

"We favor authentic finishes and materials," observes Hendricks of choices like the mottled, chalky plaster walls, unlacquered brass, honed stone,



On one side of the sunroom, a Moroccan carpet grounds a 1930s reed-and-rattan sofa and chair upholstered in a Sister Parish fern pattern around a weathered Irish pine bench found on the property. **FACING PAGE:** On the other side of the sunroom—formerly a screened porch—a 1940s sofa in butterscotch linen and chairs from Made Goods sit atop another Moroccan carpet.

and natural woods. "Whatever makes the interiors look warm and tactile and responsive to the view. I'd rather not see something faux distressed. I prefer to let it get there over time."

Color appears mainly through rugs and upholstery, in shades that echo the trees, hayfields, stone outcroppings, and sky outside the windows. Furnishings typify the modern-traditional mix for which the firm is known. The dining room, says Hendricks, "blends the humble simplicity of a farm table with

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ARCHITECTURE:
John Allee, Allee
Architecture + Design
INTERIOR DESIGN:
Heide Hendricks,
Hendricks Churchill
BUILDER:
Andy Belter, Belter
Builders
LANDSCAPE DESIGN:
Judy Murphy, Old Farm
Nursery

ABOVE: Hans Wegner sewing tables bearing Simon Pearce lamps flank the custom primary bed by Studioli.se. The ceiling here, as throughout the house, is natural hemlock. **LEFT:** In the powder room, Allee used shiplap siding, which Hendricks paired with a floor of green encaustic tile. **FACING PAGE:** On the exterior, under the standing-seam metal roof, Allee alternated areas of western red cedar shakes with ten-inch shiplap board. He also increased the size and number of windows to take advantage of rolling farmland surrounding the house.

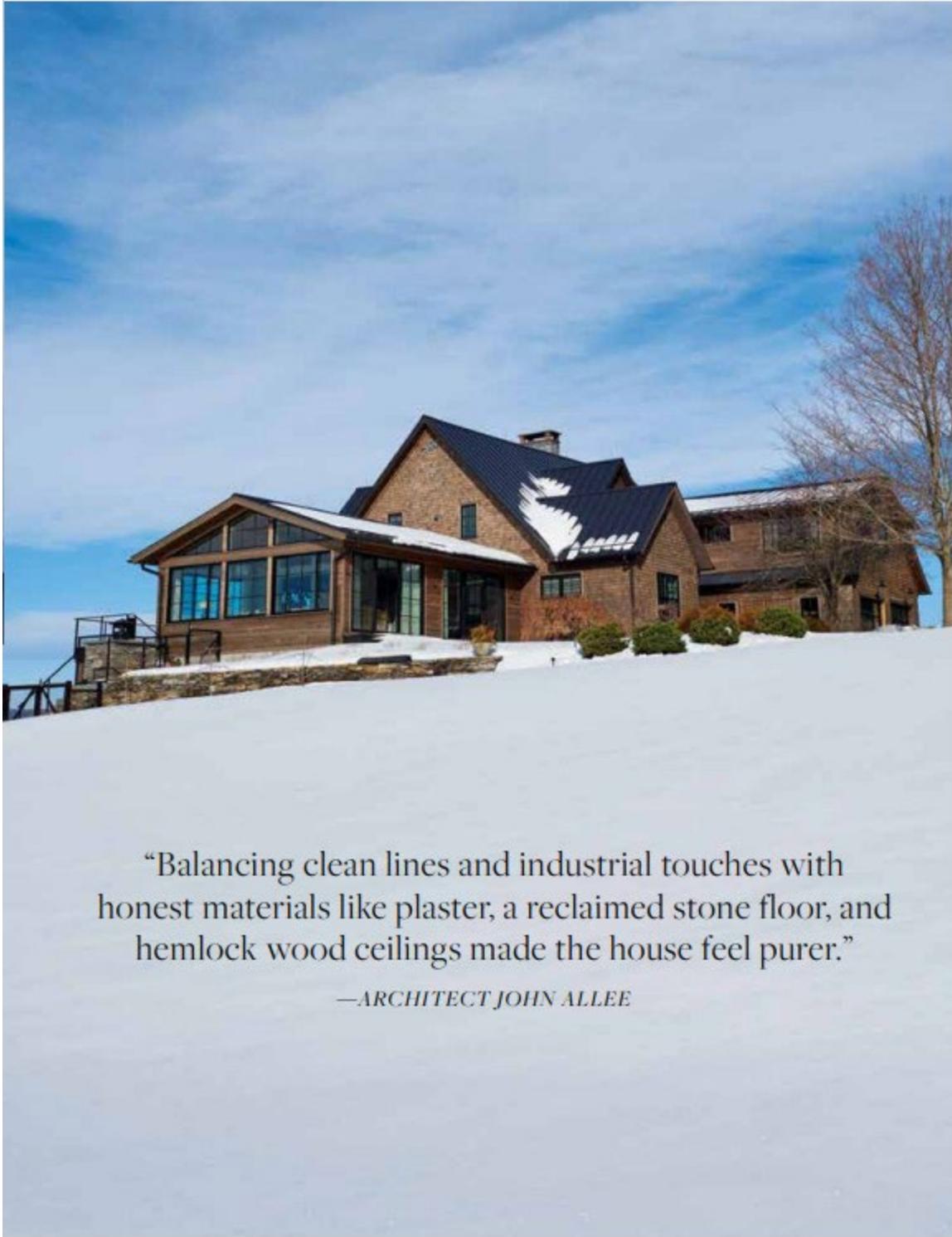


modern lighting by Paavo Tynell.”
The primary bedroom, she says, “is a nod to early American Windsor furniture, but made modern with an extra-high headboard.” These she paired with Hans Wegner sewing tables that double as nightstands.

The comfort and approachability of the aesthetic provided crucial grounding during a difficult time. “It was this home they christened during COVID and couldn’t imagine leaving,” says Hendricks. Who could blame them?

EDITOR’S NOTE: For details, see Resources.

Hendricks Churchill



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—ARCHITECT JOHN ALLEE

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New England HOME

Goin' Up The Country

Special Focus: Kitchen & Bath Design

Photographs by Amanda Kirkpatrick
July 2018





SPECIAL FOCUS:
**Kitchen & Bath
Design**

CREDITS
Architectural and interior design:
Rafe Churchill and Heidi Hendricks,
Hendricks Churchill Houses & Interiors
Interior design: Kathryn Fagin, KJ Designs
Builder: R.C. Torre Construction
Photography: Amanda Kirkpatrick

**GOIN' UP
THE COUNTRY**

Architects frequently speak of "volume," but when six-foot-five Rafe Churchill stepped into the kitchen of his client's antique cape, the need for more headroom took on a personal dimension. Dropping the floor eight inches (there were already several level changes in the oft-remodeled house) solved the problem of the kitchen's low ceiling; to increase floor space, Churchill pushed a wall out six feet to accommodate a bank of windows and a row of soapstone-topped base cabinets. The remodeled kitchen's soapstone sink, unlacquered brass hardware,

walnut-topped island, and simple board backsplash are signatures of Churchill's sophisticated farmhouse style. In this project, he collaborated with builder R.C. Torre, who handled the shape-shifting, and interior designer Kathryn Fagin, who weighed in on the kitchen's muted palette and helped guide the clients' input. "They didn't want to get too far away from that farmhouse feel," she explains, but at the same time were looking to introduce a minimalist, almost Scandinavian flavor. The silicone-shade pendants by Munto that hang over the island were found by the client, whose enthusiasms made the project all the more satisfying. "It's nice to design a space someone's really going to live in and love," Fagin says.

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Homing Instinct

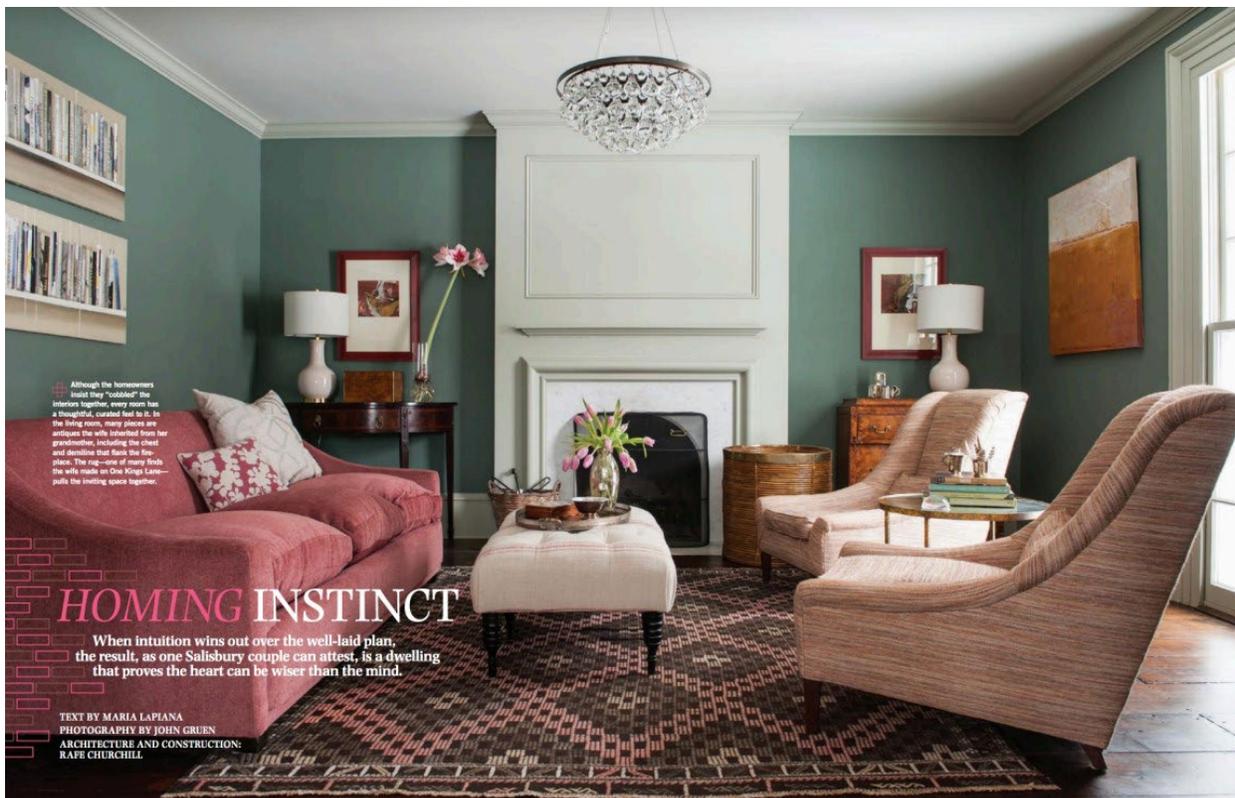
When intuition wins out over the well-laid plan, the result, as one Salisbury couple can attest, is a dwelling that proves the heart can be wiser than the mind.

By Maria LaPiana

Photographs by John Gruen

January 2017



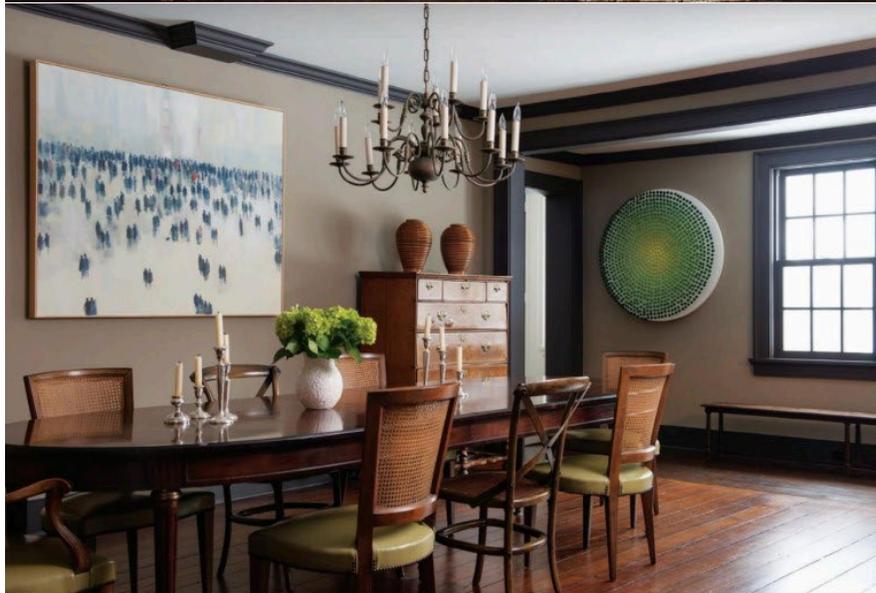


Although the homeowners insist they "cobbled" the interior together, every room has a thoughtful, curated feel to it. In the living room, many pieces are heirlooms the wife inherited from her grandmother, including the chest and ottoman that flank the fireplace. The rug—one of many finds the wife made on One Kings Lane—pulls the seating space together.

HOMING INSTINCT

When intuition wins out over the well-laid plan, the result, as one Salisbury couple can attest, is a dwelling that proves the heart can be wiser than the mind.

TEXT BY MARIA LAPIANA
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN GRUEN
ARCHITECTURE AND CONSTRUCTION:
RAFE CHURCHILL



LEFT: The dining room's furniture and accessories were chosen to honor the architectural details of the space. An antique chandelier illuminates a vintage table surrounded by not-quite-matching chairs. RIGHT: The dining room's highboy is a cherished antique.



As the couple contemplated a move to the country from New York City in 2011, northwest Connecticut was not even on a long list. And this house, well, it couldn't have been more wrong. For starters, the mere idea of renovating—even a little—was flat out of the question. And with young children, a move-in-ready house made more sense. And yet, although "it went against all our plans," says the wife, the decision to buy a neglected 1840s farmhouse in a place they'd never been just felt like the thing to do.

They did love the home's trappings. It sits on three and a half acres (heaven to the wife, an avid gardener) with a venerable, old barn (intriguing to the husband), within walking distance to the quintessentially charming town of Salisbury (a joy to all). But the house needed a major renovation to suit the family's needs. It had been divided into a two-family home years ago; the owner lived on one side while the other side had been the site of "at least five DIY projects," says the wife. "We didn't know initially what we'd do, but we knew we had to put the house back to how it originally was. We wanted to turn back the clock." They were referred to Rafe Churchill, an architect

and third-generation master builder known in the Litchfield area for his traditional house designs and the "farmhouse simple" philosophy seen in much of his work. He gave the prospective homeowners a slew of good ideas—but mostly, confidence. "The biggest challenge was converting the house from a two-family back to a single family, figuring out how to connect the two sections of the house," says Churchill. "It wasn't a gut, exactly, but it was a pretty thorough renovation. We eliminated a few walls, opened others up a bit, but most of the work was done to the kitchen and bathrooms." They actually took out some of the baths. "We're from England," the wife explains, "and we've never

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