

New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

Points of
Distinction

Bespoke details add personality

Interior designer Kelli Caldwell's off-white and rust palette grounds and brightens the entry hall. Decorative artist MaryBeth Whalen painted the checkerboard wood floor. **FACING PAGE:** The homeowners' love of animals is reflected throughout the house. In the living room, white walls are a quiet backdrop for the gallery of dog-centric art on the hanging rail; the armed stools have lion heads carved into the handles.



Town Jewel

In Woodstock, Vermont, a long-neglected historic landmark is restored to its former glory.

Text by GAIL RAVGIALA | Photography by TAMARA FLANAGAN | Styled by SEAN WILLIAM DONOVAN



If first impressions were the measure of possibility, this project might not have happened.

"The house was very run down," says the now proud homeowner. "When my husband first showed it to me, I thought it was a joke."

Interior designer Kelli Caldwell recalls that when she first visited the 1873 Second Empire-style manse in the center of Woodstock, Vermont, "my foot went through the floorboards."



ABOVE: Two porches, one on each side, were added "to act as entry points and accommodate things a family needs like a mudroom," says architect Jacob Lilley. **LEFT:** The new stone fireplace separates the living room from the kitchen with hearths in both rooms. **FACING PAGE:** The dining room mural by Whalen depicts local landmarks and images of the family and their beloved rescue dogs.



“This house is a big jewel box with something to look at in every corner.”

—The homeowner

For Jacob Lilley, the Wellesley, Massachusetts, architect who orchestrated the renaissance of the landmark structure, the proverbial red flag was an open window on the upper floor. “The rain had poured in. It was a precursor to what else I would see. The place was in terrible shape,” he says.

Yet, his clients forged ahead. “I love old homes,” says the owner, noting that she and her husband and five children, ages two through twelve, reside in a historic house, a former inn, in Concord, Massachusetts.

“This was a huge, complicated project. Nothing was easy,” says Lilley, who worked closely with builders Colby & Tobiason, the team responsible for the construction. “There were times when the house pushed back. But these clients embraced having a quirky old house. They appreciated it as a kind of whimsy.”

The owner, a ski enthusiast with family ties to the area, had always dreamed of having a house here. “They wanted a generational home,” says Caldwell, “with lots of bed-

The kitchen by the British company deVOL “is an ode to the English cottage,” says Caldwell. The bespoke cabinetry is bottle green; the extended dairy table serves as a work island and is the only seating in the room. Countertops, backsplash, and shelving are all Arabescato marble that “feels old and natural.” The vintage chandeliers were a lucky online find.





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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: In the primary bathroom, a Schumacher wallpaper mural provides a sylvan backdrop for an elegant claw-foot tub. The playroom has the blue plaid carpeting found throughout the third-floor “kid’s kingdom.” The children’s bathroom has a playful tile floor and shop-style double sink. **FACING PAGE:** The bunk room, also on the third floor, reminds the owner of her own childhood visits with family in Vermont. Each built-in bed has a privacy curtain.

The custom bed in the primary suite is “a piece of art in itself,” says the homeowner. It was a collaborative effort among Caldwell, Scott James Furniture & Design, which built the bed, and Makkas Workroom, which crafted the canopy and draperies in Jasper textiles.



rooms and a guest suite on the first floor for parents and other visitors.”

Despite its poor condition, the house is a historic landmark smack in the center of town. “Everybody knows this house,” says Lilley. “It has a presence. Everybody coming into town drives or walks by it.”

“The exterior was so resplendent, the design for the outside was easy,” he says. But while the front maintained its original form, the rear was a hodgepodge of add-ons with a yard that was barely eight feet deep. Because the house faces a busy street, the reconfigured floor plan has the kitchen and living room facing the backyard where landscape architect Jack Rossi created a private oasis thirty feet deep.

Inside, Caldwell, owner and principal designer at Louis & Vail Interiors, worked with the owner to create an interior that feels fresh while respecting the home’s provenance. “She likes vintage and pattern play, and personal touches were really important,” says Caldwell, who delivered on all counts.

“This house is a big jewel box with something to look at in every corner,” says the owner. “Kelli took my vision to reality. She was a great partner.”

The first floor is designed for family interaction. There are no TVs, and the hands-down favorite gathering spot is around the huge stone fireplace that opens to both the living room and kitchen. “The hearth is meant as a place to spend time together,” says the owner. “It’s where

The home office, which doubles as a guest room, has a deliberate ski-house vibe with MINDTHEGAP wallpaper in a ski and snowshoe motif. **FACING PAGE:** The second-floor den has Library wallpaper from Kravet and a rug from The Rug Company depicting a mama tiger and her five cubs.



everyone wants to be.”

“This house feels like a hug,” she continues. “It is so cozy. The fireplace is always going. The lights are always on.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: For details, see Resources.

ARCHITECTURE: Jacob Lilley Architects
INTERIOR DESIGN: Louis & Vail Interiors
BUILDER: Colby & Tobiason
LANDSCAPE DESIGN: Jack Rossi Landscape Architecture

