

# New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

## *Enduring Charm*

Timeless elegance meets present-day panache



Everything to the left of the front entrance is new, constructed to blend seamlessly with the old part of the 1904 Shingle-style house. Tree hydrangeas are among the landscape plan's unusual species. **FACING PAGE:** The foyer's existing fireplace was rebuilt with a surround of Calacatta Viola marble. A new staircase in a style that bridges traditional and contemporary connects the home's three stories.



# Sleeping Beauty

It took a special couple to recognize a classic Shingle-style home's past charm and awaken its bright future.

*Text by* PAULA M. BODAH | *Photography by* GREG PREMURU





Sherwin-Williams's moody Still Water paint in semigloss gives the living room a warm, enveloping feel. Designer Erin Gates mixed traditional pieces like the homeowners' own antique chest with more modern details such as the Visual Comfort & Co. chandelier with its milky handblown glass disks. She added shots of chartreuse, in the Kelly Wearstler drapery fabric and a toss pillow, to play off the artwork.



“I like the push-pull of the modern and the traditional. I feel like we struck a perfect balance here.”

—Interior designer Erin Gates

**LEFT:** Drama reigns in the dining room, where the walls wear Schumacher’s Brindille gold-accented wallpaper in a peacock-blue hue and the ceiling glows with Schumacher’s Brushed Plaid in Aged Silver. Chairs covered in sage-colored velvet encourage lingering around the Keith Fritz dining table. **BELOW:** The mudroom holds covered and open cabinetry to keep everything a family of five needs in its place.



We all like to believe we have a soulmate, that one person who sees us for who we really are, appreciates us, and maybe even helps us become a better version of ourselves. Sometimes, it seems, the same holds true for houses and homeowners. It takes the right person to come along and see the inner beauty and magnificent potential in a home.

That’s how it was for this suburban Boston home built back in 1904. Where some prospective buyers might have seen just an old house that needed a fair amount of repair, one couple valued its gracious Victorian past and saw its possibilities as the perfect present-day family dwelling.



**ABOVE:** The light-filled family room is painted in Benjamin Moore's Dove Wing, a luminous white with silvery undertones. Accents of blue and brass add warmth. **RIGHT:** A wet bar and game table sit at one end of the family room. **FACING PAGE:** Gates used the same Calacatta Borghini marble for the kitchen's backsplash and counters. The stainless-steel hood's brass strapping is echoed in the Lawson-Fenning stools. "They're the perfect touch of modern," says Gates about the brass-framed stools with vinyl seats.

All they needed was a team of design professionals who shared their imagination and had the expertise to make it happen. They found it in architect Treff LaFleche, builder Jim Youngblood, and interior designer Erin Gates.

No one would suspect that the house, with its twin gables flanking a cedar-shingled roof, is anything but a well-cared-for early twentieth-century house. In fact, almost the entire left side is brand-new, designed and built to mesh seamlessly with the existing house. The older section underwent extensive renovations. "We dug down, supporting the center and the right-hand gable and put a new foundation under the house," Youngblood explains.

While the footprint of the older side remained basically the same, everything was taken down to the studs and rebuilt. LaFleche appreciated his clients' preference for rebuilding rather than starting over. "So much of our heritage is being torn down because the cost of updating can be





**ABOVE:** Cerused-oak cabinetry sits against the primary bath's wall of Statuario marble. **LEFT:** "The wife fell madly in love with this tub," says Gates about the primary bath's polished nickel tub, which was shipped over from England. **FACING PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM:** A V-groove ceiling, upholstered bed, and a bench of sumptuous blue velvet lend a cozy warmth to the primary bedroom. A to-die-for dressing room organizes clothes, shoes, and accessories along the walls and in the voluminous center island.



too great," he says. "My clients understood the meaning of being good stewards to an old home."

In the older part of the house, rooms maintain the smaller scale of the original spaces, and architectural details, including the living room's handsome leaded-glass windows, were restored or replaced with an eye toward authenticity.

Here, Gates used rich, warm colors and a blend of antiques and transitional pieces to bridge the centuries. "I like the push-pull of the modern and the traditional," the designer says. "I feel like we struck a perfect balance here."

The new side of the house leans a bit more twenty-first century, with an open floor plan and a lighter, neutral palette. Architectural details such as coffered ceilings and moldings that carry through from the other side keep the transition smooth. "We tried to expand the house in a way



**ABOVE:** Rusty tones join neutrals and blues to add character to the study. The coppery velvet sofa and a swivel chair face off across a natural banana-bark coffee table from Made Goods. **RIGHT:** Schumacher's Acanthus Stripe grasscloth makes a bold statement in the powder room. **FACING PAGE:** The pool house, a new addition to the property, was designed to mimic the style of the main house. "The program is more enclosed, more private, more nested in the backyard," landscape architect Craig Halvorson notes.

that reflects how it might have been had it been designed back in the beginning of the twentieth century in anticipation of how a twenty-first-century family might use it," LaFleche says.

Landscape architects Craig Halvorson and Ricardo Austrich achieved the same balance of traditional and contemporary in the yard. Front plantings have a bit more structure and formality, while the backyard is private, relaxed, and ready for play.

As is so often true in matters of the heart, all this old house needed was to be seen through loving eyes.

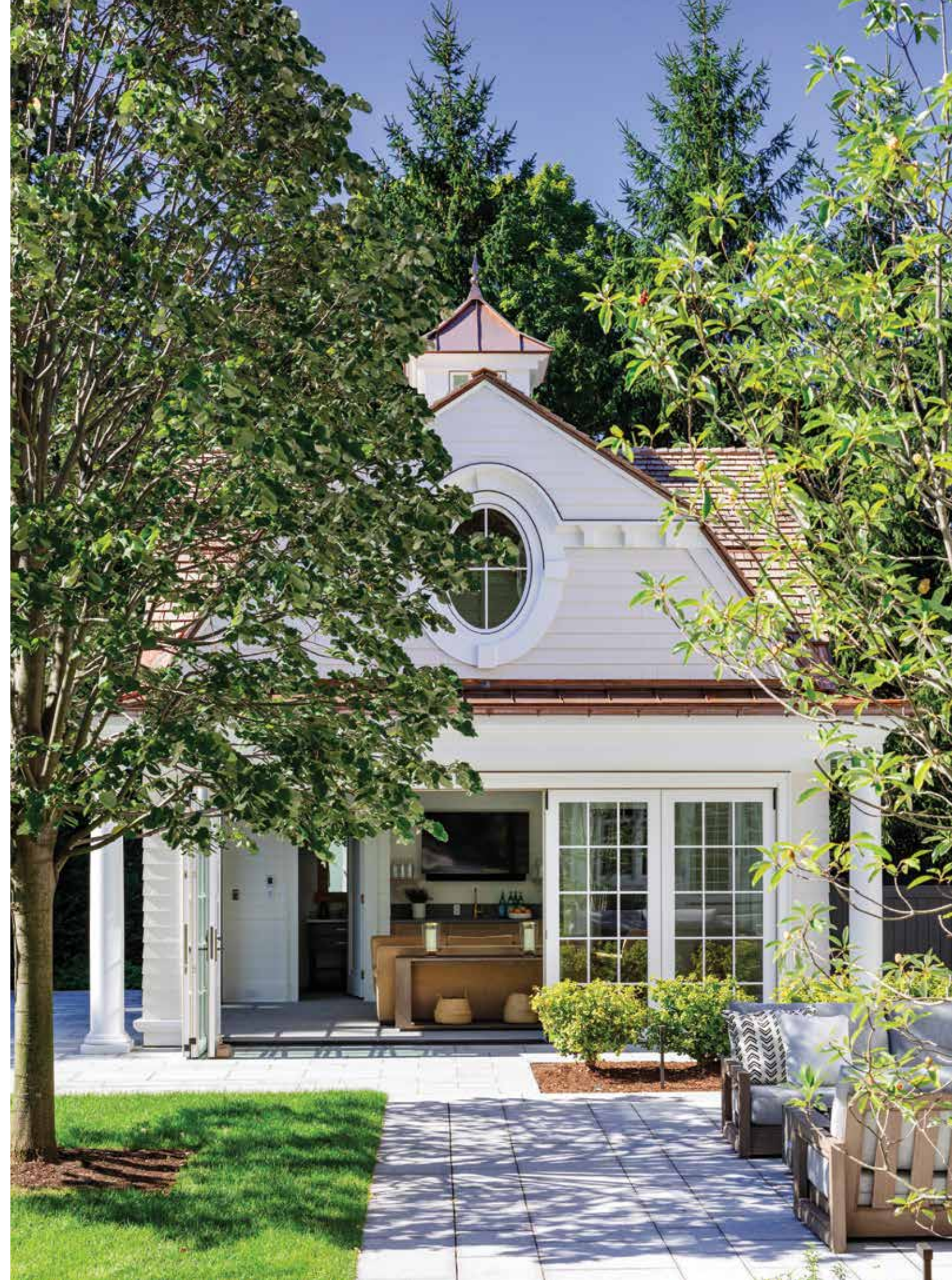
**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see Resources.

**ARCHITECTURE:** LDa Architecture & Interiors

**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Erin Gates Design

**BUILDER:** Youngblood Builders

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Craig Halvorson Inceptions and BSC Group



Front plantings have a bit more structure and formality, while the backyard is private, relaxed, and ready for play.

The family room leads to the covered porch in the backyard, where the landscape plan includes a sizable swath of lawn for the homeowners' three children to play. Low dwarf ginkgo shrubs provide year-round interest without blocking light from the house.

