



HISTORY REFRESHED

A DESIGN OVERHAUL ON A QUIET STREET IN NEW JERSEY IS STURDY ENOUGH FOR FUN-LOVING KIDS YET SOPHISTICATED ENOUGH FOR THEIR PARENTS.

WRITTEN BY **KIMBERLY OLSON** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **PHILLIP ENNIS**

INTERIOR DESIGN Matthew White and Frank Webb, White Webb, LLC
ARCHITECTURE Ernst Hofmann, Hofmann Design Build, Inc. | HOME BUILDER Ernst Hofmann, Hofmann Design Build, Inc.
BEDROOMS 6 | BATHROOMS 7 | SQUARE FEET 7,000



In a leafy community in eastern New Jersey, a couple found a home that would suit their growing family. The 100-year-old East Coast cedar shake house had no shortage of charms, including a steeply pitched roof and gables, generous rooms and lovely architectural details. So, at least initially, the couple could overlook the home's tiny kitchen and decidedly feminine decoration—a collage of pink and mint green chintz and flowered wallpaper. Upon settling in, though, they began renovating the home to suit their taste and modern lifestyle, tackling a few rooms at a time and enlisting the help of interior designer Frank Webb, who had once worked for the husband in finance, and his partner Matthew White. “It was fun, because they were with us in the early days of our design business, and we all kind of grew together,” Webb says.

Webb and White started with the entryway and family room, blending traditional elements with modern flair. “I think one reason that the homeowners were attracted to us—besides knowing and loving



In the living room, a two-seater custom banquette upholstered in Barley Lane fabric by Lee Jofa plays off a patterned rug by Patterson, Flynn & Martin. A tufted scroll-back Brewster side chair from George Smith looks right at home next to a modern Plexiglas side table, a custom piece by designers Matthew White and Frank Webb.

White and Webb custom designed the piece above the fireplace mantel—a silvered iron mirror decorated with a pagoda, bells and ceramic Chinese pots. The chinoiserie-patterned curtains are made of Lee Jofa's Willow motif and were fabricated by Henry B. Urban Inc.



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Frank—was that I'm more the classicist and Frank is a modernist," White says. "They had a big traditional old house built in 1905, and they didn't want to ignore that. What we brought to the table was an understanding of antiques, but with a fresh outlook."

Because the couple and the design duo are good friends, they all survived some light-hearted tussling. "The homeowners had some leather pieces that they were convinced had to stay, and that we were convinced had to go, and we finally won out on that," White quips. Thanks to the designers' expert touch—and the couple's well-behaved kids—the design works for the whole family. "We wanted to have nice things, but we have too much traffic in our house to have a home that's a museum," the husband says. "There aren't any rooms that are off-limits to anybody."

Guests dine at a reproduction George III-style table from Burton-Ching, which is coupled with vintage Baker dining chairs. The table settings include Wedgewood Crown Sapphire plates and vintage bowls. The fireplace is flanked by a pair of Blanc de Chine statues.



Accentuating the refreshed kitchen's new windows are valances in Osborne & Little's Langdale fabric. Bistro chairs from TK Collections pull up to the island, painted in Benjamin Moore's Woodland Hills Green. Hanging from the octagonal ceiling are Garey pendant lights from Circa Lighting. Summer Hill's Arno dining chairs and Vaughan's Colombier chandelier grace the breakfast nook.



In the library, an armchair by Jimmy's Upholstery mimics the look of the ottoman at its base. Lighting is from Circa Lighting, the table lamp by Sandy Chapman and the sconces by Thomas O'Brien. Elegant millwork is centered with a sunburst mirror from Adesso Eclectic Imports.



The library's generous 19th-century French walnut partners desk was purchased at Burrells Antique Desks in England. A custom light pendant hovers above the desk to provide illumination when working, while wool carpeting from Patterson, Flynn & Martin centers the space below.

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Eventually, it was time to revamp the small kitchen. The renovation—coordinated by builder Ernst Hofmann, who marshaled the architecture and contracting services on the project—led to a major expansion of the home across all three floors and the basement, which now features a striking mudroom and a gym. “We removed the entire back wall of the house and extended the kitchen by about 12 feet,” says Hofmann. “We then added several large windows and French doors to the kitchen space.” Hofmann’s team also incorporated custom millwork to artfully blend the addition with the existing home. That millwork includes a striking octagonal coffered ceiling that White and Webb designed. “Ceilings are always a fun way to add visual interest in an underused way,” White says.



The home's soft color palette is translated to a pale blue custom vanity with generous storage space and a marble top. Above the twin mirrors are Dillon double sconces from Restoration Hardware.

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Now flooded with natural light, the kitchen is dressed in cheerful hues of citron and sky blue. "It's bright, open and very functional," the husband says. "There's a flow around the island, and there are a lot of places for people to sit and congregate." And the kitchen wasn't the only place to get a jolt of color. The living room received neutral tones, but elsewhere, the palette got dialed up. "We definitely embraced color," the wife says. "I think it's youthful and fresh, and it brings the whole space alive." The dining room walls, for example, were painted a deep blue that complements the couple's china pattern.

The designers added personal touches throughout the home, from the butler's pantry's leaded-glass window emblazoned with a fleur-de-lis and the homeowners' initial, to an overscale daffodil photo that White took. "We have an arboretum down the street, and they have a huge daffodil bowl," the wife says. "That's one of our first memories of living on this street, so it ties it all together beautifully." **L**



The master bedroom features a cozy seating area complete with reupholstered vintage swivel armchairs from Pat McGann, an Oriental rug from Safavieh and a custom mirror. A canopy bed clad in a Windemere Stripe fabric from Schumacher pairs with triple swing-arm wall lamps from Circa Lighting that allow for bedtime reading.