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Architecture and interior design bring together natural colors, textures, and shapes in order to make this spacious living room a beautiful place to sit and relax. This staircase, designed by David Renner, resembles the peaceful and mysterious sweeping lines of a seashell (right).



DOUBLE VISION

A NANTUCKET HOME
REFLECTS THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF
ITS ISLAND SURROUNDING.



by mary grauerholz | photos by jeff allen



"I like to use texture. I like to bring in all the elements—a little bit of stone, glass, metal, and fabrics."

Hay's extravagant use of texture and space blend together perfectly in the second-story living room, the hub of this home in the Jetties Beach area of Nantucket. This colorful second-floor dining area is enhanced by a high ceiling and windows that invite light to fill the room (right).

LIFE'S MOST BEAUTIFUL VISIONS HAVE their roots in the natural world—a flower stem crowned by a blossom reaching skyward, the ebb and flow of water, the slow curve of a sand dune. There is a home in the Jetties Beach area of Nantucket imbued with this kind of captivating form two times over: Architecture and interior design bring together natural colors, textures, and shapes, and then combine the effect with magnificent views from spacious windows. It adds up to a house that is a two-way experience.

Some of the detailing of the two-story shingled house plays on the natural world in breathtaking manner—a front staircase that mimics the shape of a seashell, kitchen cabinets awash in a gorgeous organic blue, high ceilings, exquisite views of the water in the distance.

The home's interior designer, Kathleen Hay of Nantucket, knew upon meeting the owners that the look and feel of the structure should be clean and airy. "They wanted a clean contemporary look," Hay says. "They didn't want a lot of fluff."



But they wanted some tradition as well. That's a reflection of them."

The Connecticut couple had been coming to Nantucket for many years. Now, with children and grandchildren, they wanted a home for the summer, holidays, and other times during the year. The design called for a delicate balance. "It couldn't be too beachy," says Hay.

The house also needed to be big enough to accommodate family and friends, but stay in scale with the neighborhood and within the confines of a small footprint. The family had been enjoying a cottage on the property, but it ultimately didn't suit the family's needs. "As their family grew, they wanted a place where everyone could come and not be on top of each other," Hay says. So the owners—in wise recycling fashion—moved the cottage off site and donated it to a local resident. That move opened up the property to expansive possibilities.



Casual furniture makes this first-floor family room an enjoyable area to sit and socialize with friends and family (above). The beautifully checkered wood floor heightens the charm of this two-story shingled home (right).



In large part, those possibilities involved the view. The couple decided to build an "upside down house," to afford the best views from the main living area. The first floor holds guest bedrooms and the family room. The second floor, with an ocean view, is vaulted and lined with glass, replete with unusual architectural angles. Here, on the second floor, is where the owners and their guests spend most of their time, in an open living room, dining room, and kitchen; master bedroom and bath; sunroom; office; and deck. In many respects, the floor offers self-contained living. "Once the couple climbs that beautiful staircase from the first floor, they do their living upstairs," says Hay.

Ah yes, the staircase. Designed by custom staircase designer David Renner, owner of Renner and Sons, Inc. on Nantucket, it is a handcrafted art piece, with stairs of reclaimed salvage chestnut. Whether looking down from the second floor or up from the first floor, the view has all the mystery and beauty of the sweeping lines of a seashell.

Hay coupled natural light with a gentle color scheme to make this spacious bedroom a cozy and inviting living area (far left). The artwork and bedside adornment complete the summer theme that permeates the bedroom (above). The simple combination of light and flowers fit this Nantucket abode (left).



Kathleen Hay introduces warm colors into the home office. Orange tones are paired with neutral taupes.

licated with a twist.”

Hay's experience as a graphic designer is apparent in the home's design details. The living-dining area is anchored with sofas and easy chairs upholstered in neutral tones. Punches of color, pattern, and texture were added with pillows and accessories. Here and there are splashes of a lovely gray blue, a sophisticated shade that the woman of the house adores.

The materials in the first-floor family room—Ultrasuede, chenille, linen, and others—are textural and soft to the touch. “So,” as Hay says, “if you're sitting in shorts, you can feel it.” Fabric prints add to the mood. For instance, there is a touch of whimsy in the fabric of the upholstered chairs in the second-floor study, a rust-colored tribal-like pattern of llamas. Nearby is a round leather side table, which adds more texture and depth to the room. “I like to use texture,” Hay says. “I like to bring in all the elements—a little bit of stone, glass, metal, and fabrics.”

The second-floor kitchen is low key, with an open plan and a peninsula where the hosts place dishes for company, and guests can fetch them easily, as Hay says, “without being on top of one another.” While it is low key, the kitchen is beautiful too, with marble countertops and custom-built cabinets in a gray-blue shade, by island decorative painter Audrey Sterk.

Personal spaces reflect the desires of the owners as individuals. “The wife loves to read,” Hay says, so she lays claim to a sunroom, off the living-dining area. “It's where she can relax and read in the afternoon,” Hay says. The sunroom, decorated in tranquil shades of seafoam green with touches of peach, has a checkerboard floor, also painted by Sterk. Off the sunroom is an office, the purview of the husband, designed to look and feel like the inside of a ship. The effect of the second floor, says Hay, is “quiet and comfortable,” not easy to achieve in a multi-purpose space.

The home's total effect is gracious and modest, but in a spectacular way. Brown, the project builder, recalls: “The structure was geared toward how the family would live in the house, not how it would look from the outside. Ironically, aesthetically it became a beautiful home.” ■

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From the first, Hay envisioned a staircase that would move gracefully, all soft lines and easy transition. “I felt strongly that it should have a gentle turn, like the inside of a seashell,” she says. “A squared off staircase wouldn't have been as inviting.” Hay worked on the staircase, and other features of the house, with builder Josh Brown, owner of J. Brown Builders Inc., and architect Lisa Botticelli, of Botticelli & Pohl Architects, both on Nantucket. “It was a wonderful project,” Hay reflects. “I worked closely with Lisa to place many things—the crown molding, finish on floors, tiles—it was a great feeling to affect the entire place.”

The area on the first floor surrounding the staircase sets a beautiful mood with generous height, detailed molding, and antique wormy chestnut floors that counterbalance the light-washed walls. The stairway to the second floor is enhanced by wonderful art hung in gold-toned frames.

The spacious open plan of the second floor, enhanced by a grand ceiling where gabled rooflines converge, allows for a variety of activities. “It's the center, the hub,” Hay says. Therefore, she says, it needed to serve many purposes. “It needed a comfortable, elegant sitting area and an area dedicated to dining,” she says. Its clean lines and airiness create a contemporary feel—as Hay says, “sophis-