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DESIGN

NEW ENGLAND



LOCATION, LOCATION

BEACHY KEEN ★ A NEW VACATION HOUSE HONORS NANTUCKET'S HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE—BUT WITHOUT THE OLD-FASHIONED QUIRKS

Written by JACI CONRY • Photographed by MICHAEL J. LEE



FOR THE FAMILY ROOM walls, the designers selected a Benjamin Moore paint color coincidentally named Nantucket Breeze. The tight-back sofa is upholstered in Kravet indoor/outdoor fabric, while the paisley pillows are a Scalamandre fabric. The antique gold mirror and black side chairs are formal, yet simple, and the sisal rug and woven blinds lend a casual appeal. The beadboard ceiling and window bay in the kitchen's dining nook (FACING PAGE) are reminiscent of an old-fashioned porch. A banquette provides seating at the custom trestle table. The sizable lanterns were crafted by Authentic Designs of West Rupert, Vermont.





Charming as they are, the antique houses that make the island of Nantucket, Massachusetts, an architectural treasure also have their quirks. Low ceilings, small rooms, and floor plans designed for another era tend to make them incompatible with the life of a bustling modern family. After renting a few such idiosyncratic houses over the years, a Midwestern couple with three teenage sons knew what they did — and didn't — want when they set about building an island getaway of their own.

"The house had to be traditional," says Jeff Spoelker, the architect whom the owners tapped to design their retreat, "but without the creaks and cracks." The place also had to have what he calls a "beachy functionality." That meant making it durable, comfortable, and suited for entertaining a steady stream of overnight guests. "We wanted the

house to be a place where we could create memories," says the homeowner, who attended college in Boston. Her husband, an avid sailor with great affinity for the ocean, is a New England native.

Located a short stroll from town and afforded with views of the harbor, the gray-shingled four-bay Colonial with ells that look as though they have been added over time has a relaxed ambiance inside and out. Clean sightlines connect rooms and create an open, airy feel. Ceilings are high, and abundant windows bathe the interior with sunlight. The sprawling kitchen, which revolves around a sitting area with cushy furniture centered between the island and a dining nook, is the family gathering place. "Someone can be planted on a chair chatting with someone who is prepping a meal; it's intended for hanging out," says Spoelker, who worked for Lyman Perry Architects of Nantucket and Berwyn, Pennsylvania, when he designed the 4,500-square-foot house but

COMFY CLUB CHAIRS are nestled in a nook in the family room, where a wicker table from Maine Cottage offers a pop of blue. The view from the front entry (FACING PAGE, TOP) is through the house to the kitchen seating area. The antique chest of drawers is from the homeowners' collection; the vintage churning barrel was an estate-sale find. The kitchen island (FACING PAGE, BOTTOM) is finished with beadboard and topped with an extra-thick slab of soapstone.

DESIGN DECISION

Where there is light

Dormers and rooflines were conceived to provide optimum natural ventilation and sunlight. Rooms have windows or doors on at least two walls, and in many cases three. "If you're on Nantucket, you shouldn't be in a dark bedroom," says architect Jeff Spoelker. "You should be able to appreciate those great island breezes — it doesn't take much of an opening to take advantage of them."

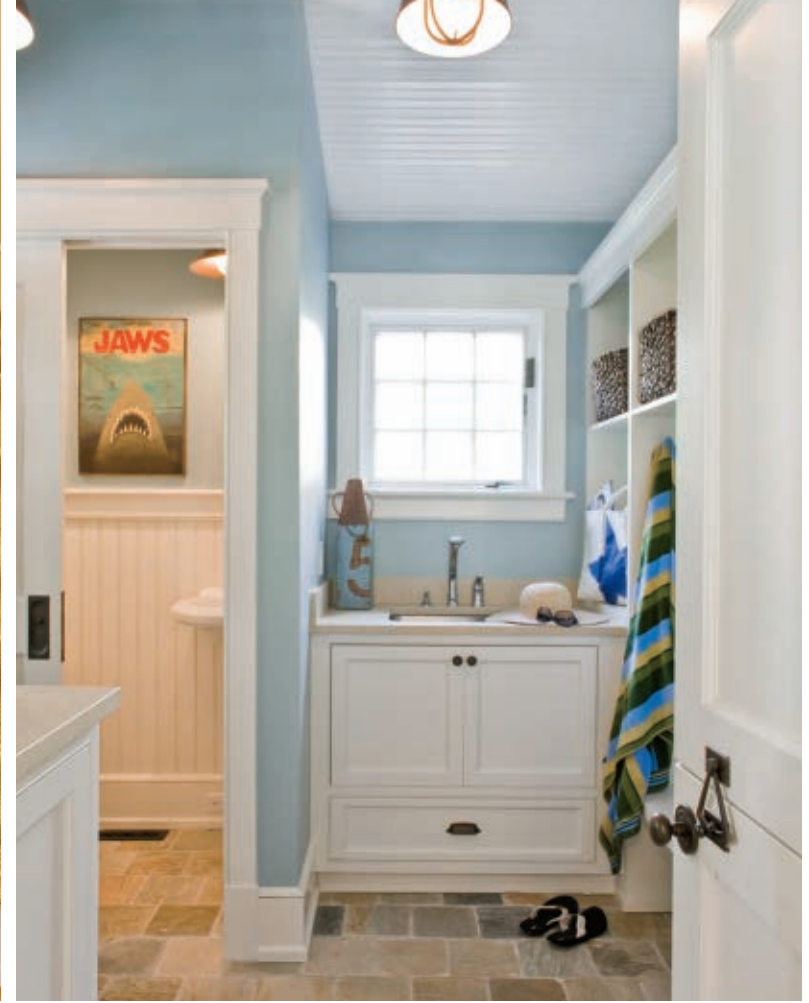
The windows particularly maximize the natural light in the living areas, where several interior transoms spread illumination from room to room. Transoms are a common element in the island's historic houses, says Spoelker. Prior to mechanical ventilation systems, they were typically operable to promote airflow and to let warm summer air at ceiling height escape. "Now I use them pretty liberally to help spread the natural light through the house while maintaining a traditional detail and aesthetic."



has since established his own firm, JMS Architecture in Ardmore, Pennsylvania.

The dining nook is reminiscent of an old screened porch with windows on three sides — two banks on exterior walls and one overlooking the living room. The cozy space has a U-shaped banquette that wraps around a custom trestle table. Overhead, the blue-painted beadboard ceiling is just one of the traditional details found throughout the house, including crown moulding, ample fireplace mantels, and beadboard wainscot. And yet, says Spoelker, "nothing is too crisp and clean."

The interior design was a collaborative effort by Janet Shensa DeBevoise, Kristyn Meech Brenner, and Megan Baratka Rogaris, who together make up JKM Interior Design in Lexington, Massachusetts. Colors were inspired by hues found along the nearby beach. Blues and





THE RAG RUG in the master bedroom (ABOVE) is by Wolfe Brothers of North Carolina. A ceramic garden stool becomes a side table to the club chair upholstered in blue checked fabric by Pindler & Pindler. Antique canoe paddles (FACING PAGE, TOP LEFT) are displayed on the small third-floor landing. Off the kitchen, the mudroom (FACING PAGE, TOP RIGHT) is adorned with a vintage *Jaws* movie poster. Beds are built in atop storage drawers in the third-floor bunk room (FACING PAGE, BOTTOM).

greens mix with tints ranging from sand to brown. “To create an easy, simple vibe, everything is a little washed out,” says DeBevoise. The weathered antique French oak extension table in the dining room was one of the first purchases made for the new house. “This place is all about the family and how they live,” says DeBevoise, “and we envisioned big lobster dinners around the table.”

Other antiques, inexpensive estate-sale finds, and off-the-shelf accents such as the kitchen stools from Pottery Barn and the schoolhouse light fixtures from RH combine to create the home’s collected aesthetic. Framed artwork made by the boys hangs as prominently as landscapes by notable local artists. Comfort was the prevailing design objective. “Furniture was made for lying down and curling up,” says DeBevoise. Upholstered pieces such as the sand-colored tight-back sofa in the family room are covered with indoor/outdoor fabric. Natural woven blinds add to the dressed-down appeal. Wide-plank heart-pine floors in living areas are

softened with sisal rugs; bedrooms have large rag rugs. “They’re full of color with a hint of nostalgia,” says DeBevoise. “The best thing about them is that they have two lives, because you can flip them over.”

A roof walk accessible from the third-floor bunk room offers a vantage point to take in the harbor view. “It’s not a huge house, but it holds a crowd really well and everyone has their privacy,” says the homeowner, pointing out that her teenagers have the run of the finished basement. Not only is every square inch of living space utilized, Spoelker also created storage by taking advantage of nooks and crannies with built-in shelving and drawers.

While the lot on which the house sits is compact, it is a private enclave beside the wraparound porch off the kitchen. “We spend a lot of time outside. The boys play Wiffle ball in the side yard,” says the homeowner. “On a pretty night, there is nothing more beautiful than to sit up on the roof walk and watch the ferries coming in.” ■

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RESOURCES

letters: Mark Jager Antiques, Newport, RI; *industrial-antiques.com*. Silverware: Fond Memories and Good Buys, North Smithfield, RI; 401-762-1880. Cast-iron cookware: Robertson's Antiques, Carmel, CA; *robertsonsantiquescarmel.com*. Wooden artifact: Pasternak Antiques, Rockland, ME, and Hampton Falls, NH; *pasternakantiques.com*. Glass knobs: Ross Brothers, Florence, MA; *rossbros.com* and Totally Bruce, Brooklyn, NY; *totallybruce.net*. Soapstone sink: Erickson's Antique Stoves, Littleton, MA; *ericksonsantiquestoves.com*.

120-129 • Ocean/From Moonscape to Eden

Architecture and interior design: Foster Associates, Portsmouth, RI; *mfosterassociates.com*. **Landscape architecture:** Stephen Stimson Associates, Cambridge, MA; *stephenstimson.com*. **Builder:** Kistler & Knapp Builders, Acton, MA; *kistlerandknapp.com*. **Living room:** Console: M-Geough; *m-geough.com*. Floor lamp: Baker Furniture; *bakerfurniture.com*. Table lamps and nesting tables: Studio 534; *s5boston.com*. **Dining room:** Chairs: Dakota Jackson, Webster & Company; *webstercompany.com*. **Kitchen:** Backsplash tile: Chris Gustin, South Dartmouth, MA; *gustinceramics.com*. **Master bedroom:** Chaise lounge: Emma, Chaise. Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams; *mgbwhome.com*. Chaise lounge fabric: Smart, Kravet; *kravet.com*. **Outside:** Chaise lounges and side table: Janus et Cie; *janusetcie.com*. Steel firebowl: Colombo Construction Corp., Brooklyn, NY; *firefeatures.com*.

130-135 • Island/Beachy Keen

Architecture: Jeff Spoelker, JMS Architecture, Ardmore, PA; *jmsarchitecture.com* and Lyman Perry Architects, Nantucket, MA and Berwyn, PA; *lparchitects.com*. **Interior design:** JKM Interior Design Inc., Lexington, MA; 781-402-0910. **Foyer:** Wall color: Standish White, Benjamin Moore; *benjaminmoore.com*. Sisal rug and striped wool runner on stairs: Stark Carpet, *starkcarpet.com*. **Family room:** Wall color: Nantucket Breeze, Benjamin Moore; *benjaminmoore.com*. Table: Wicker Bistro Table, Maine Cottage; *mainecottage.com*. Sisal rug, Stark Carpet, *starkcarpet.com*. **Kitchen:** Wall color: Standish White, Benjamin Moore; *benjaminmoore.com*. Banquette: Safari, B. Berger Fabric, Duralee; *duralee.com*. Stools: Napoleon® Backless Barstool, Pottery Barn; *potterybarn.com*. Kitchen lighting: RH; *restorationhardware.com*. Banquette lanterns: Authentic Designs, West Rupert, VT; *authenticdesigns.com*. **Master bedroom:** Wall color: Barely Beige, Benjamin Moore; *benjaminmoore.com*. Antique chest: The Pink Door, Greensboro, NC; 336-373-9398. Rug: Wolfe Brothers, State Road, NC; 336-874-2612. Linens: Léron, New York; *leron.com*. Lighting: Circa Lighting; *circalighting.com*. **Bunk room:** Wall color: Colony Green, Benjamin Moore; *benjaminmoore.com*. Rug: Wolfe Brothers, State Road, NC; 336-874-2612. Linens: Serena & Lily; *serenaandlily.com* and Léron, New York; *leron.com*. Lighting: Circa Lighting; *circalighting.com*.

136-141 • City/Glass Divide

Design: Studio Verticale, Boston; *studioverticale.com*. **Architecture:** Alistair Lucks, Boston; *alistairlucks.com*. **Glass panels:** Structure, Casali; *casaligroup.com* and available at Studio Verticale. **Kitchen:** Salvarani; *salvaranicucine.it* and available at Studio Verticale. **Chandelier:** Cellula Chandelier, Design Within Reach, Boston; *dwr.com*. **Dining table, dining chairs, and barstools:** Italian Design, Watertown, MA; *italian-design.net*. **Art:** In kitchen: *Life is a Bowl of Cherries*, Michael Whitlow, Mexico; *michaelwhitlow.com*.

142-147 • Country/A Landscape Casts a Spell

Garden design: Grant Larkin, Richmond, MA; *grantlarkin.com*.

148-155 • Lake/Lake Effect

Design: Birdseye Building Company, Richmond, VT; *birdseyebuilding.com*. **Builder:** Roundtree Construction, New Haven, VT; *roundtreeconstruction.com*. **Landscape architecture:** Wagner Hodgson, Burlington, VT; *wagnerhodgson.com*. **Marble, granite, tiles, and counters:** Gawet Marble & Granite Inc., Center Rutland, VT; *gawetmarble.com*. **Cabinet knobs:** Close to Home, South Burlington, VT; *closetohomevt.com* and Ralff & Sons, South Portland, ME; *ralffandsons.com*.

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