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\$ 9.95 A SANDOW MEDIA PUBLICATION

24 >



VOLUME 10, ISSUE 4 | DISPLAY UNTIL 1/14/13



french twist.

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TRUST IS A DELICATE THING. MOST PEOPLE MAKE THEIR LEAPS OF FAITH ONLY AFTER CONSIDERABLE DELIBERATION AND OFTEN WITH MORE THAN A SOUPÇON OF ANXIETY. But in the end, observed Ernest Hemingway wryly, “The best way you can find out if you trust somebody is to trust them.” When it came to hiring designer Francine Gardner, the owner of this Shingle-style home in the Hamptons followed Hemingway’s dictum. As it turned out, there was absolutely no need for trepidation.

The women met years ago when the client wandered into Intérieurs, Gardner’s home furnishings store, which was then in Tribeca and now occupies a town house on the Upper East Side. Their relationship was instantly symbiotic, and the client, at that time unmarried, engaged Gardner to design her apartment. It was the first of five projects that the two would undertake together. “Our tastes are so similar,”

INTERIOR DESIGN Francine Gardner, Intérieurs Design Studio		
ARCHITECTURE Todd Nagy, Todd Nagy Architect, PLLC		
BEDROOMS 6	BATHROOMS 9	SQUARE FEET 6,000







RARE ENTRY

A Robin console by La Forge Française greets visitors just inside the door. Hanging above is a painting the owners acquired at a Christie's auction and overhead, an iron and glass Milan lantern from Bobo Intriguing Objects in Atlanta.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 216

concedes the client, who spends weekends and summers at her new Hamptons retreat with her husband and their two young children. Even in separate conversations the two intone the same adjectives to describe aspects of the design.

Gardner was called in for the Hamptons endeavor after architect Todd Nagy tore down an existing ranch house on the property—in one of the quaint villages along Long Island's South Fork—and drew up new plans. "The concept was to have its design fit into the fabric of the historic district of the village," explains Nagy. "By showing a





PERFECT SETTING

A Wolf Kahn landscape painting presides over a custom table surrounded by Artistic Frame chairs upholstered in Mokum fabrics. Hovering above is a Jose Esteves Globe chandelier from Intérieurs [his Mi-ro floor lamp sits in the corner]. Donghia's Debutante curtains in Birdie complement Benjamin Moore's Sag Harbor gray walls.



WELL WATERED

Lush gardens designed by The Bayberry Garden House & Landscaping colorfully frame a green lawn and a pool installed by Casual Water Pool & Spa Professionals. The woven furniture is the Deauville collection from Janus et Cie.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 218

greater proportion of shingled roof and adding elements such as doghouse dormers, ridge flares and brackets supporting pent roofs, the house speaks of the rich English history brought to the Hamptons by its earliest settlers.”

For the interiors, Gardner conjured a kind of Franco-Hamptons hybrid style. “I was born in southwest France,” she says, “and I’m very inspired by my years there in terms of texture and material.” Gardner is also an avid fan of French architect Jacqueline Morabito’s rustic minimalism, and she loves the arid palette of desert climes, where she often vacations. Gardner and her project manager, Estera Pawelec Alvarado, blended uncluttered arrangements of furniture—many pieces custom made and featuring classic French silhouettes—with natural textures and a sun-bleached array of off-whites, beiges and light-toned wood. Occasional accents of stronger color or pattern inject lively surprises throughout.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 221

Because of their long-standing relationship, storyboards and tear sheets were unnecessary in the conceptualization process. “We just looked at floor plans and fabrics and talked about a general mood,” says the homeowner, describing the latter as “relaxed, airy and light, but with a South of France feel that was slightly different from the usual Hamptons aesthetic.” Preciousness was verboten: There were young children to consider, after all. Instead, the home’s open plan imparts a laid-back essence, and durable, easy-care linens and chenille ground the design in the basics.

Though modern in their sparseness and lighting choices—almost all from Intérieurs—the rooms are hardly austere. “I’m not fond of super modern interiors that are stark,” says the client. “This is why





ORANGE POP

Francine Gardner designed the custom oak kitchen, which boasts a Provence hood from Francois & Co. Janus et Cie's Edward stools pull up to a Jerusalem blue marble counter from DC Marble & Granite.



BLUE FOR YOU

In a guest room, the palette changes to gray-blues, visible in the deep pile rug from Intérieurs. The Armande four-poster is flanked by Silver table lamps from Pouenat Ferronnier, both through Intérieurs. Across from the bed is a Meri table from Oly and two antique armchairs. Roman shades sport Creation Baumann's Ultra 116.



HOT TUB

Nido sinks from AF Supply sit atop travertine marble counters fabricated by DC Marble & Granite, which also supplied the onyx mosaic tile on the walls. The tub was a custom design by Francine Gardner.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 222

we're drawn to Francine. She's not committed to any one style. She's very eclectic and knows how to pick pieces from different eras and styles to create a relaxing, comfortable environment. She can make a place feel modern without being obvious. Our home now is cozy, yet uncluttered. It's traditional, but modern."

And the way it defies easy categorization is precisely what Gardner likes about the home. "It has its own strong personality," she says. "It's very discreet, elegant and understated." **L**