



When it's not glowing in simple natural light, the family room is warmed by a custom fireplace finished by custom stonemasons. An abstract painting by interior designer Lisa Tracy complements a flat-screen TV when not in use.

COPIOUS USE OF MATERIALS THAT EVOKE THE OUTSIDE WORLD IMBUE A HOME IN CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS, WITH A SENSE OF REFINED SOPHISTICATION AND UNPRETENTIOUS EASE.

Nature's Way

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There are few better places in the world to be on a sunny winter afternoon than Concord, Massachusetts: under a fresh blanket of snow, silent farms and old red barns compete for attention with sun-dappled stone walls as you meander along gently rolling back roads, some of which were trodden by Redcoats and patriots nearly 250 years ago.



PROJECT TEAM

ARCHITECTURE: Dewing Schmid Keams
INTERIOR DESIGN: Lisa Thiers, Lisa Thiers Design
BUILDER: Wey Construction
LANDSCAPE DESIGN: Michelle Crowley Landscape Architects

• An unbranded log grounds the family room's collection of seating arranged for intimate conversation. (Clockwise from top left) A white sofa and a pair of armchairs with a striped ottoman are placed on the stone-tile floor to the left of the wood-burning stove. A wall sculpture of glass citrus peels by artist Sara Bengtsson draws the eye to a corner of the living room, where a window seat, wine-tasting table, and barby seat bring their form a cozy sitting area.



Normally, indoors is the last place you'd want to be on a day like this. But this is no ordinary dwelling: From the moment you step through the front door, you're greeted with a view of the station you've been enjoying all along—sweeping views out of the kitchen and family room windows across a porch, deck, and pool to gently undulating meadows and trees, stark and beautiful in the winter light.

It was not always thus: when the 4,500-square-foot home was built as a spec house, its rear elevation was basically a three-story blank, with small windows, minimal access to the sloping backyard, and little flow between the indoor and outdoor parts of the property. That was anathema to the homeowner, who grew up on a farm in upstate New York and sought to create what she calls a "retreat" in harmony with the

▶ A new wall with pocket French doors frames the view of the dining area from the living room. Designed as a quiet space for reading and relaxing, the room has been chosen for its artful mix. Grasscloth adds texture to both the walls and the paired Barona & Lip tables, mixed with a vintage mid-century cabinet as a contemporary foil for the antique velvet-upholstered chairs and the formal dining table. Painted grasscloth frames the seating area in a statement.

natural world for her family of four. "We wanted it to be more cozy and comforting, relaxed, and kind of unexpected," especially given the unassuming nature of the front of the house, she says.

From a design standpoint, "the key here was overcoming the challenges of a tight and narrow site and a building that didn't really work the way the owners were after," says Justin R. Mills, senior project manager for architecta Drawing Schmidt Keenan. "The house was very inward-looking when we started," he notes.

The first step in the transformation was the addition of a covered, single-style porch and pool deck to the rear, an occasional outdoor yoga space that begins at the level of the kitchen and family room and steps down to a new swimming pool. Underscored/landscaped by Michelle Crowley Landscape Architecture means that the additions, built by Stone Construction, gently fall away from the house with the natural slope of the land, leaving the stone from indoors unobstructed. The porch, designed as



"WE TOOK A BRAND-NEW HOUSE AND GAVE IT A SENSE OF AGE AND PATINA, LIKE IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN THIS GRACIOUS COUNTRY HOME LOOKING OUT AT THE MEADOW," THARP SAYS.



a three-season-plus living space, features a daybed wing ("the best seat in the house," the owner says), with sofa and chairs arranged around a concrete coffee table. A pair of glassers creates a gentle separation from the deck area below. "It's unusual in New England to have such an extensive outdoor living space that's not screened in and is open to the elements," says builder Jonathan Stern. "It's more of a California home."

Inside, interior designer Lisa Thery turned to "honest and natural materials" like concrete countertops, plaster or stone walls, grasscloth wallpaper, and unfinished wood beams. "We took a brand-new house and gave it a sense of age and patina," she explains.

In the kitchen, upper cabinets were removed and small windows were replaced with glassers that soar from the concrete countertop backplash to the ceiling. A columned half-wall between the dining and living rooms was replaced by pocket French doors that let light stream through to the front of the house. And as addition to the west side connects a new entry, bathroom, and mudroom to the dining room, with doors to both the front and back of the house.

Throughout, Thery chose design elements that blur the lines between indoors and out. In addition, a round window lets the mudroom and bathroom



► **TIP** Stone and natural wood add age and character to the entire space, including the refrigerator and storage. (left) Light from a bank of oversized glasser windows warms the concrete counters and island top. (right) Built-in shelves by Michael Humphreys Woodworking provide storage and display space. (clockwise from top) Custom built-ins frame an eating nook; (opposite) is the family seat.





▲ **SHIRAZI** LEFT: Vintage suitcases mounted on the wall act as an occasional table in the guest bedroom. **SHIRAZI** RIGHT: Khaki-painted floors, genuine Swiss Army blanket furber the room's camp-like appeal. **TRAVIS** NEXT: Natural light floods the east-facing master bedroom, where the warm blue and beige palette keeps things soft.

share light. The bathroom's interior walls are clad in outdoor shingles, while a wall-mounted goose-neck lamp and an essential-oil-scented shower bench bathroom. The floor tiles are actually antique Yareville roof tiles.

An added doorway with arch and walls in the kitchen are removed to stone that matches the cladding on the outside of the pool, with a texture that's "chunky, like an old stone wall," says Tharp. Furniture style built-ins replace the storage bar when the upper cabinets come down and blend harmoniously with the family-room decor in the open-floor plan.

Crosshairs serves as wallpaper in the guest bedroom, is wrapped around a pair of Serena & Lily tables in the living room, and adds texture to the dining room ceiling. An open-framed pendant light in the dining room offers minimal obstruction to the views out the bay windows, which are dressed in Rose Yellow fabrics matching the backs of the

antique dining chairs. A midcentury sideboard acts as a bridge between the formality of the dining table and chairs and the lighter overall design aesthetic. An original painting by Tharp adds a hint of blue in harmony with the color of the neighborhood chairs.

In north-facing rooms, where natural light is less available, Tharp used decorative elements to carry the natural theme through. The living room sports a hide-carpet, gilded citrus poles transformed into wall sculpture by artist Sara Hungaribus, and artwork depicting the rings of a cut-tree trunk. An antique wine-tasting table and roman wing chairs create a warm space Tharp calls "spicy and textured." Guarded from the main entry hall by a massive mahogany rolling door, the room is a cavern-like space where the family can gather to read or play games.

Upstairs, the guest bedroom, dubbed "the cabin room," evokes outdoor adventures with khaki-painted floors, glaid bed linens, a genuine Swiss Army blanket, and wall-mounted suitcases serving as an occasional table.

Across the hall, by contrast, the master bedroom is bathed in light, reflected in the textured tan of the wallpaper, carpet, and bedding and in the soft blue

THE GUEST BEDROOM, DUBBED "THE CABIN ROOM," EVOKES OUTDOOR ADVENTURES, WITH KHAKI-PAINTED FLOORS, PLAID BED LINENS, A GENUINE SWISS ARMY BLANKET, AND WALL-MOUNTED SUITCASES SERVING AS A TABLE.



palette carried through the track-arm lounge chair, slipper chair, and nightstand. Like the kitchen, dining room, and family room downstairs, the master bedroom is built around long views to the meadows. "I love the elevation looking out and waking up to the sun," the owner says.

The feeling throughout the home is the sense of simple luxury—the handsome sleigh, notes Thury. Even in the mudroom, a vintage apothecary chest and black lockers to store coats and boots bespeak attention to detail in the most functional spaces.

■ **rustic-meets-modern:** Antique black lockers stand in for a chest in the mudroom. Function meets with fashion in an adjacent powder room, where colorful strings and flares of wallpaper breathe life into neutral colors and textures. The mudroom gets an additional splash of color from an old apothecary chest sourced from the New Hampshire Antique Co. (p. 162). **MAINTENANCE:** The garage decking ages to a silver-gray tone that complements the limestone patio.

Indoors and out, Thury says, "there's a sophistication in the simplicity of the design." ■

RENOVATION: For more information about this home, see page 170.

