

DESIGN FOR THE WELL-LIVED LIFE

AUGUST 2006

# HOUSE & GARDEN

**Open  
to the  
Outdoors**  
Decorate to Bring  
Summer Inside

AT HOME WITH  
PAMELA  
ANDERSON  
SHABBY CHIC  
IS COOL AGAIN

Marks of wear soften the lines of the entry hall, this page, where the patina of a 19th-century English refectory table pairs well with the reclaimed pine plank flooring. ■ In the living room, opposite page, cozy custom-upholstered furniture is paired with sculptural pieces, like a mid-century bunch of halfwood and wren eggs.



PRODUCED BY MAYER RUS PHOTOGRAPHED BY THOMAS LOOF  
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# AT EASE

A GRAND HAMPTONS HOUSE TAKES ON A GRACIOUS, LOWKEY AMBIENCE  
THANKS TO THE DEFT TOUCH OF INTERIOR DESIGNER STEVEN GAMBREL

A 19th-century Flemish-style console table sets the scale for the custom furnishings in the living room. Gambrel designed the grid-pattern rug, made by Beauvais. Patterned fabric includes pleated drapes in Chelsea Edition's Jungle Stripe and a slipper chair, front left, in Caspar & Toff's Aston Stripe. Walls are in Benjamin Moore's White Wing.

As you pass through the

arc of mature symmetries that flank the drive and first glimpse this stately, Shingle-style Hampton house, the immediate impression of old-money propriety hints ever so slightly to an incoming visitor that he would probably do well to stand up a little straighter when greeting his hosts. But take one step inside onto the buttered plank floor, and the place's imposing hauteur quickly dissipates. Such is the welcoming ambience of tailored, low-key comfort that comes courtesy of designer Steven Gambrel. Inside the bones of this reconstructed 1910s house, the designer walks a fine line: respecting the home's hushed surroundings and its impressive architecture, while designing for the casual lifestyle of a New York couple and their four children.

The pace of Gambrel's work on the project was anything but casual. He and his associates completed the redesign in just four months. It began on Halloween with his first meeting with his clients, who are in the financial business, and was finished in time for them to move in on March 1. The accelerated schedule meant that one of Gambrel's chief tasks was to orchestrate the coming-and-going multitrade of tradesmen working simultaneously. Upholsters, furniture builders, an audiovisual specialist, cabinetmakers, and a decorative painter all stepped up to the challenge, while Gambrel offered on-site encouragement—and





Where landscape views predominate, as in the dining room, Gambrel used verdant natural hues coupled with strong-lined furnishings.



"Guests are a treasured part of life on the shore," says Gambrel. With bunk beds and a spacious kitchen for informal dining, the house always has room for one more



The shipshape bunk room features custom beds with partial windows and trundle beds tucked below.

By Benjamin Moore: walls in Benjamin Moore's Busy Apple. A hot air balloon flows through French doors into the breakfast room. The pedestal table is by ABC Carpet & Home; the chairs are by Crate & Barrel. See Shopping, last pages.

architectural, punctuate the decor. Dating from the eighteenth century to the 1920s, the pieces Gambrel assembled seem to have been gathered over generations and "pulled from the attics of many relatives," he says. Likewise, a few of the carpets have a timeworn feel, like the hand-knotted dining room rug designed by Gambrel for Beauvais. Treated with an acid-washed process, it appears to have had a long history of use.

"While most spaces in the home are designed for relaxation, the kitchen is poised for action. 'This is really the hub of the home, where all the activity happens,'" Gambrel says. Believing the room needed to be friendly and comfortable rather than extravagant and embellished, Gambrel streamlined the cabinetry, knocking

out existing corbels, and covered the walls in crackle-glass subway tiles from Urban Archaeology. The designer added a side door, giving incoming kids—and parents with groceries—easy access to a mudroom, which includes a small washer and dryer. Most of the time, the life of the room centers around the Carrara-marble-topped island, where beach dips are recapped and family dinners are prepared. Should the children want to play along, Gambrel added a smaller island for shorter sea-chefs.

Playing around is what this big beach house is all about. "This is the kind of place," Gambrel says, "where a little disorder—dogs, bikes, surfboards lying around, and maybe even a little mud—just improves its spirit." □

