

New England HOME

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STYLE & GRACE

The Splendor of Spring



Family Style

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A modern, hard-working addition
is the new heart of a multigenerational
haven in Vermont.

The concrete cladding architect Elizabeth Herrmann used for the addition is a modern take on the barn's traditional clapboard siding. The elements of the custom weathervane represent sports that the owners' children played: ice hockey, field hockey, rugby, and lacrosse.





BELOW: To highlight the juxtaposition of the old and new buildings, Herrmann approached the design of the connector with a light touch. The addition includes a stairway and elevator that runs from the basement to the bedrooms on the second floor. "It's a house for every generation," Herrmann says. **FACING PAGE:** Large sliders on the end of the addition spill out to the play lawn. Most of the landscape was in place long before the addition was built.



This Pennsylvania family's love affair with Vermont started nearly thirty years ago, over a pancake breakfast at the Middlebury Inn. "It was the maple syrup that did it," the homeowner jokes, referencing their eldest son's decision to play ice hockey for Middlebury College. It was the community, and their other three kids who also attended the school, that kept them coming back.

CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: "The three trees are reminiscent of the classic trees found in a meadow when a farmer plows around a stone or group of stones and allows the trees to grow. In concert with the walls, they provide a visual cue to the path and destination," says landscape architect H. Keith Wagner. A mowed path through the pasture leads to the pondside firepit. A pared-down connector that runs from the front of the house to the back links the existing barn structure at the left with the addition at the right.



“THEY KEEP BOTH DOORS OPEN IN THE SUMMER, SO PEOPLE CAN GO IN AND OUT DURING THE DAY.”

—Architect Elizabeth Herrmann

By the time their second son was accepted by the college, the couple had purchased eight pastoral acres with views of the Green Mountains and the Adirondacks in Cornwall. Over the years, they built a modest barn-like home. Landscape architect H. Keith Wagner set the stage for the structure, designing a series of terraces built of local Pantown stone along with mowed paths leading to a picture-perfect pond.

A few years ago, in response to their growing family (there are now fifteen grandchildren), the owners hired Elizabeth Herrmann to design a kitchen/dining addition with bedrooms on the second floor.



The craftspeople at Red House Building fabricated the custom ebony-stained dining table. Tall storage cabinets provide privacy from the road, while ribbon windows above draw in natural light. White cabinets adjacent to the island conceal a dumbwaiter to the roof-deck.



Concluding that historic forms that mirror the look of the existing buildings would feel stifling given the family's desire for a big, open space where everyone could cook and eat together, Herrmann fashioned a modern interpretation instead. "A glassy, hardworking building made sense for what they wanted to accomplish," the architect says.

A nine-and-a-half-foot-wide connector links the minimalist addition to the original barn-style dwelling. Large, pivoting doors

allow the family to pass through the connector and travel from the front yard to the back. "They keep both doors open in the summer, so people can go in and out during the day," Herrmann says. On the connector's other two walls, twin seven-by-seven-foot openings, one framed in wood, the other in raw steel, encourage easy passage between the barn's game room and the new family-style kitchen, which comprises the entire ground floor of the addition.



RIGHT: A marble-lined niche under the Wolf cooktop showcases the owners' copper pot collection.
FACING PAGE: There are multiple instances where materials bridge the indoors and out, including the wood ceiling above the kitchen sink.





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Chris Quinn of Red House Building calls the plaster walls in the primary bedroom suite “subtle and sublime” when washed with the changing natural light. The Montclair Danby marble tiles that line the primary bath tie to the stone slabs in the kitchen. The steel stairway’s charred, wire-brushed French-chestnut treads and the matching ceiling planks above speak to the barn doors on the original gable-roof dwelling.



ADDITION ARCHITECTURE:
Elizabeth Herrmann, Elizabeth Herrmann Architecture + Design

ADDITION BUILDER:
Chris Quinn, Red House Building

LANDSCAPE DESIGN:
H. Keith Wagner, Wagner Hodgson Landscape Architecture



The grandkids line up for breakfast at the kitchen’s sixteen-foot-long island, which is clad in Montclair Danby marble. Book-matched slabs of the same hefty stone climb the wall behind the cooktop to the charred, wire-brushed French-chestnut ceiling, while gray metal base cabinets, a white wall of cabinetry, and the concrete floor recede. “It’s a rugged palette with regional flair,” Herrmann remarks.

A linear gas fireplace cut into a massive chimney dominates the opposite wall. Herrmann’s use of locally sourced stone for the chimney informed the material palette for the exterior. “We anchored the addition with the chimney, then wrapped the founda-

tion with the same local stone, taking it up to the top of the first floor,” the architect explains.

The custom dining table stretching parallel to the island was a must-have setup. “The kids eat while the adults prepare their meal and enjoy wine at the island,” the homeowner says. “They tell us about their day, and we discuss tomorrow’s plans.” Sundown is welcomed with s’mores at the firepit on the shore of the pond.

“The house is all about opening up and spilling out,” Herrmann says. “How they live was the inspiration for the design. It’s their story.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: For details, see Resources.

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Wagner and Herrmann collaborated on the design of the roof-deck, which boasts a fireplace, an outdoor kitchen, and a border planted with sedum. “The railing is held back from the edge, so it’s less pronounced from below,” Wagner says.