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A black Labrador puppy is sitting on a blue and white checkered marble floor in a bright, nautical-themed entryway. The puppy is looking towards a large white door with a glass insert, which is open, letting in natural light. To the left, there are white stairs with dark wood risers. The overall atmosphere is clean, bright, and inviting.

Coming Home to Paradise

BY JODY GARLOCK PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF MACNAMARA PRODUCED BY CYNTHIA BOGART

Ebony-stained risers on white stairs echo the graphic contrast of the polished marble entry floor, detailed with a nautical compass. Dutch doors usher light into the home and allow the family pets, including black Lab Lilly, to catch some fresh air.

F

rom the comfy club chair in the bay window of her view of water, wetlands, and trees.

Some days, she spots deer and geese. Other days, she just sits back and counts her lucky stars to be where she is. The classic shingle-style house in Southold, New York, took just a year to build, but in Kris's mind it was nearly 20 years in the making. "When I would think about my dream house, this is exactly what I envisioned," she says. "I'm at peace here. I just feel at home."

After living in the area briefly in the 1980s and falling in love with its natural beauty and leisurely pace, Kris and her husband, Ron, agreed that they wanted to return someday. From the moment they left, Kris was plotting their comeback—and the waterfront home she hoped they would build. Five



living room, Kris Hermance takes in a



Bleached white-oak flooring and whitewashed pine built-ins (above) are a beach-style contrast to the more formal upholstered furnishings in the living room. Mirrors are an underlying design element; the mirrored French doors in the entry (left) conceal a closet. Kris Hermance researched old homes to come up with ideas for the paneled wall, which incorporates a traditional plate rail.



years ago, when the couple began looking for a lot on Paradise Point at the tip of Long Island's North Fork, Kris organized nearly two decades' worth of ideas and magazine clippings into a detailed notebook that served as the game plan for builders and designers.

The only hitch in their plans to build what would eventually be their retirement home was that the unspoiled setting they'd fallen for was still a bit *too* unspoiled. The property they purchased in early 2003 had just been given the go-ahead for construction after water lines were extended to the tip of the inlet. From a building standpoint, the lot was marginal: sloped, woody, and surrounded by water, including protected wetlands, on three sides. "It was a challenge to get everything they wanted in a restricted building envelope without making the house look like a monster," says architect Tom Samuels.

The Hermances, who live near New York City, envisioned a classic East Coast beach house—intimate, yet roomy enough for their three kids, ages 17 to 25, to spread out with friends and eventually their own families. Authenticity was also important to Kris, who has always lived in older homes. "I wanted modern conveniences, but I wanted the house to look like it's been here for 100 years," she says.

Cedar shake siding, dormered gables, and breezy porches offer a sense of welcome. The sloped roof with wide overhang visually grounds the soaring structure and prevents

The cupola and oval windows detail the shingle-style house (right), named Paradise Found. The Swedish proverb in the kitchen (above) is a favorite of Kris—and advice she hopes kids (from left) Christopher, Alexander, and Emily heed.





The materials we used reflect things
you would have found on
homes built 100 years ago. KRISHERMANCE

I gravitate to furnishings that show signs of use.
They're not perfect, and that fits our
lifestyle just fine. KRISHERNANCE



Bought at auction, the bench in the master bedroom (above) is upholstered in the same fabric as the living room sofa to fill in as extra seating when needed. The modest-size master bath (right) situates the vanity below windows. "It was picked for the location—for the views," designer Lou Nardolillo says. The tub makes efficient use of the sloped roofline.



it from dwarfing the unassuming ranches and bungalows common to the area. The visual downsizing was no small feat considering the basement had to be built above ground because of the watery surroundings. "It's essentially a three-story house, built on kind of a platform," Samuels says.

More volume control plays out in the interior, which Samuels calls a "dichotomy of open and closed." The kitchen, living room, and dining room are one large gathering area, made to feel intimate and traditional with columns and beams. High ceilings and abundant windows impart a spacious air, reined in by weighty moldings and window casings. "I kept saying 'Less is not more. Keep adding on, and I'll know when it's enough,'" recalls Kris, who worked closely with builder John Bertani on the exact proportions.

Kris was satisfied with her dream house, and she knew the effect she sought to create with materials and surfaces. Paneled walls and marble floors and countertops lend formality, yet cottage character shines through in whitewashed pine built-ins, wide-plank floors, and beaded board. "It's an interesting crossover house," Samuels says of the stylistic blend.

Repetition gives the home comfortable rhythm. The white-painted cabinetry and Carrara marble in the kitchen reappear in the bathrooms. Mirrors detail French doors in the entry hall as well as kitchen cabinetry. "Kris liked the light feeling of glass but the mirrors don't restrict what she can have behind the doors," says kitchen designer Lou Nardolillo.

The blue-and-white palette, with occasional shifts to green or yellow, suggests water views. "When you walk in the front door, you look straight through the living room to Peconic Bay," Kris says. "With a blue home, blue water, and blue sky, things seem to float."





A foray to High Point, North Carolina, the furniture mecca known for great discounts, yielded most of the furnishings. With blueprints in hand, Kris carefully planned the placement of sofas, chairs, and case goods, all traditional and able to mix with her antiques. "Nearly every piece of furniture can be worked into any room," she says.

The Hermances will move to the home full time when Ron retires from banking; for now, it's the ultimate family retreat. Daughter Emily hosted a bridal shower

here; son Christopher and 14 friends stayed a week to celebrate their college graduation; and son Alexander enjoys weekends boating along the shoreline.

"Ron always said that if we built it they will come, and they're definitely coming," Kris jokes. Indeed, the adjectives that describe Paradise Point—friendly, relaxed, accommodating—apply to the Hermances' home. For Kris, though, the biggest satisfaction is that the new house has an old soul. "When people see it, they smile and say it looks like it's been here forever," she says. ☺



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The main-level guest bedroom (above), which has an attached bath and access to Ron's office, was designed as a potential master suite. Classic bluestone lends continuity between the screened porch and swimming pool (left).

macrophylla 'Nikko Blue', 'Ayesha', 'Blue Wave'; *H. arborescens* 'Annabelle'; *H. paniculata* 'Grandiflora', 'Tardiva'; *H. quercifolia*—Hydrangeas Plus; 866/433-7896; hydrangeasplus.com. *H. macrophylla* 'Endless Summer', 'Penny Mac'; *H. quercifolia*—Roslyn Nursery, 211 Burrs Lane, Dix Hills, NY 11746; 631/643-9347; roslynnursery.com. The American Hydrangea Society—P.O. Box 11645, Atlanta, GA 30355; americanhydrangeasociety.org.

COMING HOME TO PARADISE

Pages 213–220: architects—Tom Samuels, Samuels and Steelman Architects, 25235 Main Rd., Cutchogue, NY 11933; 631/734-6405. **Builder**—John Bertani, Bertani Builders; 631/765-1594. **Kitchen designer**—Lou Nardolillo, Cabinets Plus; 631/727-8062; cabinetsplusny.com. **Interior design**—Kris Hermance, homeowner.

Pages 214–215: sofa, chairs and ottomans—Rose Furniture Co.; 336/886-6050; rosefurniture.com. **Silver lamps**—George Birlant & Co.; 888/2475268; birlant.com. **Coffee table**—Jenko's; 707/375-9240. **Rug**—The Dash & Albert Rug Co. (to the trade); 800/557-2035; dashandalbert.com. **All other items**—antique, discontinued or a personal belonging.

Pages 216–217: print over kitchen table—Detail Details, Jessica Trapasso; 585/798-1019. **Garden design and work**—Gardens by the Sea, Peter and Shawn Sterling; 631/734-5696.

Pages 218–219: bath designer—Cabinets Plus, Lou Nardolillo; 631/727-8062; cabinetsplusny.com. **Cabinetry**, "Chester" (Antique White)—Homestead Custom Cabinetry, Inc.; 717/859-8788; homesteadcustomcabinetry.com. **Tile, marble**—Artistic Tile; 201/670-6100; artistictile.com. **All other items**—antique, discontinued or a personal belonging.

Page 220: beds—White Flower Farm House; 631/765-2353. **Wallpaper**—Jane Churchill through Cowtan & Tout; 877/235-7871; janechurchill.com. **Chest**—The Plantation Shop of Amelia Island; 904/261-2030; theplantationshop.com. **Dust ruffles; quilts**—Orient Linen Co.; 631/477-8353; e-mail: orientlinenco@aol.com. **Rugs**—The Dash & Albert Rug Co. (see previous). **All other items**—antique, discontinued or a personal belonging.

FEASTING ON SUMMER

Pages 223–232: all items—antique, discontinued, or personal belonging. 🏠