

Beyond the custom-made dining table in this Chilmark home sits the "guest zone," which includes a wine refrigerator, small sink, and coffee station. The door, painted the same shade of Sherwin-Williams Evergreen Fog as the kitchen island, leads to the garage.

# Breathe Easy

A laid-back Martha's Vineyard guesthouse and barn capture the many layers of island life.

Text by ERIKA AYN FINCH | Photography by READ MCKENDREE



**ABOVE:** The home's standing-seam aluminum roof matches the roof on the nearby barn. "It's a nod to a simple agricultural metal roof," says architectural designer Tom Carberry. **BELOW:** In the living room, wainscoting, Designtex grasscloth wallcovering, and a trunk-turned-coffee-table make the home feel older than its two years. **FACING PAGE:** The fireplace mantel was crafted from the same reclaimed yellow pine as the floors. "The mantel was something the homeowner was passionate about," says designer Jesse Carrier.

“Low-maintenance” and “farm” aren’t synonymous. Neither are “barn” and “Martha’s Vineyard.” But a retired Chilmark couple knew what they wanted when they reached out to architectural designers Sherman + Associates and interior designers Carrier and Company, both of whom they had



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—INTERIOR DESIGNER MARA MILLER



The dining table, which seats twelve, is so large it requires two Visual Comfort lanterns hanging above. The iron straps on the backs of the chairs echo the lanterns. **FACING PAGE:** The kitchen includes an island with plenty of space to maneuver. “The homeowner planned to use the island to host casual buffets and wanted to ensure the countertop was generous and uninterrupted without sinks or cooktops,” designer Mara Miller says.

worked with on two previous projects.

In addition to a farmhouse-style guesthouse, the husband longed for an auxiliary barn “à la Bunny Williams,” he says, referencing the famed designer’s Connecticut estate. So a threshing barn estimated to have been built between 1810 and 1820 was disassembled in Vermont, shipped to the Vineyard,

and reassembled on-site while the husband watched from his lawn chair, Diet Coke in hand.

“The barn was the passion of this project,” says architectural designer Tom Carberry. “The guesthouse was a continuation of the barn.”

That continuation translates to a farmhouse aesthetic that jells with the

homeowners' style and the surrounding town of Chilmark, historically more agrarian than maritime. The couple enlisted Jesse Carrier and Mara Miller to convey provenance and ambience in the home's interiors. Because this space serves as a guesthouse, primarily for the couple's two adult children and their growing families, easygoing was key. "We didn't want to have to hold our breath about who was doing what where," says the wife.

A faux sisal carpet covers the living room floor, and the position of the sage-green island in the kitchen makes buffet-style dinners seamless. A "guest zone" between the kitchen and dining room boasts a wine refrigerator, small sink, and coffee station so visitors can help themselves without opening every cupboard in the kitchen, says Carrier.

Though the home was built in 2019, the design team's thoughtful touches detract from its newness. A grasscloth

**BELOW:** The auxiliary barn, built in Norwich, Vermont, in the early 1800s for hay storage, hosts everything from tricycle races to work-from-home sessions. **RIGHT:** The screened porch, which served as the location for the homeowners' daughter's wedding dinner last year, can be quickly reconfigured depending on the occasion.



wallcovering in the living room harkens back to the farm that originally stood on the land, explains Carrier. Reclaimed old-growth yellow-pine floors convey timelessness. Sourced from Cataumet Sawmill, the floors purportedly originated from McLean Hospital in Belmont, Massachusetts, during the time when the hospital treated some of its most famous patients. "Not everyone can say Sylvia Plath and James Taylor walked on their floors," says the wife with a laugh.

The storytelling extends to the furnishings. Chappaquiddick woodworker Collins Heavener fabricated the dining room tabletop from two wood planks

sourced from a sustainable forest in Suriname. RT Facts in Kent, Connecticut, custom designed the table's base.

Most of the dining, however, happens on the screened porch, designed to be reconfigured at a moment's notice depending on the occasion. The porch connects to both the kitchen and an outdoor deck with a barbecue. "It's a very smart house in terms of the floor plan," says Miller. "There's a practicality to it along with some wow moments—it's a modern, open concept that still feels timeless and vintage."

The husband's must-have barn, of course, epitomizes the vintage. It houses



a Ping-Pong table and sitting area and has served as everything from a gender-reveal-party location to a kid's rainy-day roller-skating rink. Making it even more poignant, the barn was the final project of Ken Epworth, owner of now-shuttered Vermont-based The Barn People, who passed away shortly after the rebuild was complete. Epworth sat right next to the husband in his own lawn chair and explained the ins and outs of the entire process during the reconstruction.

"The barn was a crazy, wonderful addition," says the wife. "One look at it, and there's no doubt you're in farm country, not whaling country."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see Resources.

**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** A reproduction of historical wallpaper from Adelphi Paper Hangings makes a statement in the primary bedroom. A grasscloth-wrapped mirror hangs above the secretary. Bathrooms the homeowners encountered while living in Europe inspired the primary bath, with its Calacatta gold marble on the floors and walls in the all-in-one tub/shower area. **FACING PAGE:** "This is my favorite room in the house," says the wife of the upstairs guest bedroom. "Every child wants to sleep here."



**ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:** Tom Carberry, Sam Sherman, Sherman + Associates  
**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Jesse Carrier, Mara Miller, Carrier and Company Interiors  
**BUILDER:** Geoff Kontje, 41 Degrees North Construction  
**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Jennifer Anderson Design & Development

