

IT WAS LOVE  
AT FIRST SIGHT  
IN WELLESLEY FOR  
KATIE ROSENFELD,  
AND SHE'S IN IT FOR  
THE LONG HAUL.

# Tudor Time

Text by  
ERIKA AYN FINCH

Photography by  
READ MCKENDREE

Produced by  
KARIN LIDBECK  
BRENT



Though it may seem unconventional, this sitting area, complete with a Lee Industries sofa, Visual Comfort lamps, a TV, and a bar, is in the kitchen. Trudie, designer Katie Rosenfeld's fifteen-year-old poodle, can hang out and watch Mom cook. **FACING PAGE:** A Cowtan & Tout Jacobean tapestry covers the storage bench in the entry. The round painting that hangs above is a cheeky reference to an evil eye talisman.

What color is a paper bag? Katie Rosenfeld doesn't care—she just knows she's obsessed with it, along with black and brown hues living side by side and Winterfell-esque Tudors. And she traces it all back to April 2020, when she and her husband, Doug, went house hunting at a time when



**ABOVE:** Like all the trim in the house, the bar is painted Farrow & Ball Shaded White. **LEFT:** All the outlets in the home feature unlacquered-brass switch plates with black plugs and switches. **FACING PAGE:** A larder, built by Bespoke of Winchester, to the left of the range contains a microwave and pantry storage. The island is painted Farrow & Ball Studio Green and topped with soapstone.

most of us were hunkered down. They were allowed twenty minutes inside a 1926-built Tudor in Wellesley, Massachusetts. "I didn't even want to see it—I hated Tudors," confesses the interior designer. "But the moment we saw it, it made a huge emotional impact. We walked in and said, 'We'll take it.'"

Months earlier, the couple had sold the 100-year-old cape-style house where they had raised their two children and decamped to the city. But as soon as the doors of their rented Fenway duplex closed behind them, Rosenfeld missed suburban living. "I just wanted to go outside and throw a steak on the grill," she muses. The claustrophobia really set in when pandemic restrictions hit, and the couple's children returned to the nest.





**RIGHT:** Lichen covers the terra-cotta tile roof. Cradock crafted the front door to resemble the original one. **BELOW:** In the dining room, Rosenfeld clad the walls in a historic pattern from Brunshwig & Fils in a colorway that she describes as “paper-bag brown.” **FACING PAGE:** “This is the type of decorating I enjoy the most,” Rosenfeld gleefully declares. “Purposefully, nothing matches.” An Urban Electric chandelier hangs above a David latesta dining table resting on a rug from Landry & Arcari Rugs and Carpeting.



“Entry doors are a preview of what’s inside—the first thing people touch on the house.”—*Builder Kevin Cradock*



Fast-forward to the Tudor purchase. When the ink was dry, Rosenfeld reached out to Kevin Cradock to begin the renovation process. The design team managed to secure building materials before the supply chain broke. “If we had waited six months, we never would have been able to do this—financially or logistically,” says Rosenfeld.

The couple decided *not* to expand the 4,600-square-foot home, and they didn’t alter the floor plan much, either. They opened up a kitchen wall, and reconfigured the cavernous primary bedroom to accommodate his-and-her closets and a larger bathroom, but otherwise the structure remained the same.

The design team did, however, paint the interior’s existing dark-wood millwork Farrow & Ball Shaded White. Reclaimed terra-cotta flooring replaced the original stamped terra-cotta, and the walls were treated to a rough plaster finish—no smooth skim coat. Rosenfeld says the Tudor style—and an HBO series—drove most design decisions.

“I was obsessed with *Game of Thrones* at the time,” she says, laughing, “and that informed the palette. We wanted

“I was obsessed with *Game of Thrones* at the time, and that informed the palette. We wanted everything dark, wintry, cozy, and British.”—Designer Katie Rosenfeld



everything dark, wintry, cozy, and British.”

You can see evidence of that in the unevenly overlapped terra-cotta tile roof (Rosenfeld’s favorite part of the house), the small-but-mighty kitchen with its custom larder, the Gothic-style chandeliers, and the unfitted bathrooms. Even the front door,

which Cradock built by hand, reusing the original door’s strap hinges and knocker, recalls an English fortress. “I love making entry doors,” says Cradock. “It’s a preview of what’s inside—the first thing people touch on the house.”

Design lovers witnessed the rebirth of

**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** Framed vintage Japanese wrapping paper hangs above a desk in the oldest daughter’s bedroom. Rosenfeld wanted all the spaces to feel as if they were lit by candles, thus the Visual Comfort chandelier above the staircase. Rosenfeld’s home office features an eighty-inch desk, leather campaign chairs, and pull-out baskets for storage; Cradock built the window seat to hide HVAC ductwork.





**CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT:** After she had already purchased Schumacher's Pyne Hollyhock wallcovering and fabric, Rosenfeld's husband declared he hated it, so Rosenfeld says she "practiced restraint" by keeping the bed and drapes neutral. Rosenfeld designed the campaign-style vanity in the primary bathroom (take note: her own line of vanities, built by Cradock, will be available for purchase this fall). The bedroom includes his-and-her closets; hers features armoire-style storage.

the space through Rosenfeld's twenty-two-episode YouTube series. Among them was a New Jersey Instagram follower who thought the Tudor looked oddly familiar. Lo and behold, it turned out the home had belonged to her husband's grandmother. The follower shared letters, documents, and photographs with the Rosenfelds, much to their delight.

It was a feel-good moment that capped a feel-good process. "I have lived in seven houses, and I've never been emotionally attached to any of them the way I am to this one," Rosenfeld says. "I will never get rid of this house. My grandchildren will sleep in these rooms."

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

**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Katie Rosenfeld, Katie Rosenfeld & Co.

**INTERIOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN:** Katie Rosenfeld, Jessica Chabot, Katie Rosenfeld & Co.

**BUILDER:** Kevin Cradock, Justin Oates, Kevin Cradock Builders

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Joanna McCoy, a Blade of Grass