

A S P I R E  
DESIGN AND HOME

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+ country  
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& INSIDE:  
ON THE MARKET  
CROATIA  
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BROOKLYN & TRIBECA



An airy Elger Esser photograph picks up the soft greens of a contemporary settee and vintage armchair. A standing lamp perforated with miniature stars casts enchanting lights after dark.



A modern color-blocked settee of Mendelson's own design spotlights the home's predominant olive and chartreuse hues, echoed in the brass-and-lacquer Nada Debs cocktail table.



A trio of prints by Tara Donovan flanks a study corner tucked away in the living room.

A designer's getaway home in Sagaponack, NY sparkles with coastal charm, midcentury gems and a family's precious memories

# Wistful Thinking

When New York interior guru Gideon Mendelson set out to find the ideal Hamptons vacation home for his growing family, the first property he viewed, a shiny 5,000-square-foot "spec house," was not what he had in mind.

"It lacked a bit of charm," says Mendelson, who was looking forward to recreating the family summers he spent in the Hamptons as a young adult. "I was hoping to find a smaller home, something with more history and character." However, after looking at over 30 residences, the home's comfortable, airy feel and convenient location in central Sagaponack won him over, and he embarked on coloring the home with the dynamic individuality it was missing.

"The challenge was making this big home feel a little more personal, giving it a little bit of personality," shares Mendelson, who took a couple of years to perfect the decor. "We slept on mattresses for six months, but it was well worth it."

TEXT KATE MISSINE  
PHOTOGRAPHY ERIC PIASECKI INTERIOR DESIGNER GIDEON MENDELSON



“I happen to love caning,”  
Mendelson notes.  
“It feels nostalgic to me.”

A modern light fixture by David Weeks hangs over the rustic farm table set with caned Lorin Marsh chairs.



Subway tile in the kitchen nods to the theme of horizontally throughout the home; a collection of found old stove grates over the cabinets brings a vintage touch.



The breakfast room and kitchen connect in an open sun-splashed space for family meals and gatherings.



Custom-made benches and a vintage table create a cozy library nook.



Shades of soothing blues bring the Hamptons' coastal feel to the family room.



An art-lined hallway leads into the sunny downstairs sitting room.

The result was an effortlessly artful space in which a laid-back coastal feel meets a spin of eclectic whimsy. “When I’m in the Hamptons, I try to draw inspiration from the surroundings – lots of blues and greens, natural materials, and fun, whimsical moments,” comments Mendelson. “Homes in the country are about a sense of calm and escape from our busy New York lives, so the vibe is relaxed and comfortable.”

Conversation-starter details catch the eye throughout: a lamp perforated with miniature stars in the living room; a collection of antique stove grates in the kitchen; and vintage deli signs floated in glass in the breakfast room. The mudroom wall showcases a fun family project of hand-torn, burnt-edge nautical charts plastered on the wall, and in the foyer, hypnotic illustrations of Sagaponack scenes were commissioned from an artist family member. A chartreuse glass chandelier picks up the olive tones, a sophisticated addition to the customary beachy palette.

Mendelson’s love for 20th century design makes a curated statement; this collection mixed with contemporary pieces “with some staying power” makes for a fun twist on the typical Hamptons style. A Herve Van der Straeten branch-encircled mirror takes a focal spot above the living room mantel, opposite a vintage Belgian wooden chair and an Italian side table from the 1950s. “I bought the mirror before der Straeten’s name was as well-known as it is now,” remarks the designer. “To me, it has a Tim Burton, whimsical quality, connecting to the outdoors.”

A vintage reclaimed wood cocktail table is countered with a modern pair of tailored, nubby linen sofas of Mendelson’s own design; across the room, a clean-lined settee meets a 1930s Jean Pascaud chair and a lacquer-and-brass table by Lebanese designer Nada Debs. The modern, vibrant orange light fixture by David Weeks floats above the breakfast room’s solid farm table, set with one of Mendelson’s favorite pieces: the caned Promenade armchair by Lorin Marsh, undoubtedly contemporary, yet tinged with historic charm.

In the bedrooms, four-poster beds lend a sense of playful grandeur, emboldened by vivid prints and impish takes on Old World accents. A circular study boasts a tall, Swarovski-crystal-lit ceiling reminiscent of Grand Central, inspired by a hotel lobby the couple witnessed on holiday. A library centered around a bench-encircled antique table, which once served as a quiet place of inspiration, is now a gathering spot for puzzles, board games and Legos.

“It doesn’t look like the picture anymore, that’s for sure,” states the designer, who enjoys spending quality time there with his three young children. For Mendelson, these departures from photographic perfection only make the home more beautiful.

“Having a family made me think of things in a different way,” he tells us. “It’s a privilege to be surrounded by beautiful things, but what’s more impactful is what design can do. Watching my kids grow up there and spending time together as a family are what I’m really excited about.”



Opposite: To work with the room’s layout, two twin beds were pushed up against the windows, with drapes acting as a play on the curtained four-poster bed. Memorable bamboo print wallpaper lends a quirky retro dimension to the guest bedroom.



Nautical charts torn and burnt by hand add color and personality to the cozy mudroom niche.



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Caned dining chairs give a nostalgic air to al fresco meals.