

# New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

## *In Tune*

*WARM NOTES OF SPRING*



# History Reclaimed

Prioritizing sustainability and a connection to the past, one couple realizes their future retirement home in Vermont.

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Interior designer Vanessa Elliott chose low-profile, neutral-colored furnishings, such as leather wingback chairs from Lee Industries, a Loloi area rug, and stonewashed linen curtains that would not conflict with the living room's two-story fieldstone fireplace—or the view.





Visual Comfort & Co. pendants illuminate the kitchen's walnut-butcher-block-topped island. A custom plaster hood blends seamlessly with the surrounding plaster walls and ceilings. **FACING PAGE:** A low-slung Four Hands coffee table anchors a cozy sitting area in front of the living room's freestanding fireplace.



**W**hen Quechee, Vermont-based builder Jamey Ennis got a call from a California couple who wanted his help with what they called “the reconfiguration” of a nearby house they’d just bought as their future retirement home, he didn’t hesitate. “I knew the house so well,” he says. “My uncle had built it several decades ago, then lived in it. I’d even worked on it when I was in college. I jumped at the chance to help.”



**ABOVE:** The exterior features new landscaping, a new walkway, and a new shed roof over the front door. **RIGHT:** Local furniture maker Terrance Kelly's reclaimed-wood vanity is topped with a vintage marble vessel sink in the main-floor powder room. **FACING PAGE:** The dining room also reflects the owners' commitment to sustainability with a table local craftsman John Sherwood made using wood from a decommissioned barn.

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The 6,000-square-foot, four-bedroom home in Hartland, Vermont, comprised of two reclaimed post-and-beam barns and a two-story saltbox, is a testament to the late Dana Ennis's craftsmanship and fondness for history and details. Says the wife, “We fell in love with the home's specialness—its bones, its sense of history—and while we wanted to make some changes to reinvigorate the house, we wanted to keep its essence. We were excited that Jamey would bring a unique combination of connection and continuity to the project.”

Major changes included an expanded primary suite, featuring laundry and sitting areas, in one of the post-and-beam portions of the home, a redesigned living room in the saltbox section, and a





**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Several metal pieces in the home, such as the kitchen table's base, were handmade by artist Jeff Weisheipl from iron found elsewhere in the house. In the kitchen, a cabinet to the left of the farmhouse sink conceals an integrated panel-front Sub-Zero refrigerator. The designers reconfigured what was originally a back staircase into a spacious, much-needed pantry featuring wine racks and shelf brackets made from reclaimed iron.

new kitchen and walk-in pantry in the second barn. Burlington, Vermont, interior designer Vanessa Elliott came onboard and helped the owners realize their vision. "They wanted a strong interconnection between the inside and the outside," she explains. "The goal was to create special interior spaces that don't compete with the picture-postcard views of the exterior grounds."

The homeowners were determined to make the redesign as sustainable as possible. Their plans

called for heat recovery ventilation and new solar panels to warm the home and supply the radiant floor heating system. In the kitchen, they chose a Wolf induction range instead of gas, and they sought out local craftsmen, furniture makers, and ironworkers. "We hope to get off the grid completely one day, and this is a good start," says the wife.

"The owners also asked us to use as many existing and reclaimed materials throughout the house as possible," says Ennis. For example,



**ABOVE:** In one of the home's two timber-framed portions, the owners transformed what had been a large game room into a primary suite. **RIGHT:** The suite's closet includes his-and-hers shelving and drawers and a comfy window seat. **FACING PAGE:** A guest bathroom features a freestanding hammered-copper tub and matching undermount sinks with a quartz countertop. Walls are clad in porcelain tile, and the floor is soapstone.

Sunapee, New Hampshire, metal fabricator Jeff Weisheipl was able to recycle a hand-forged iron ladder from a barn loft into a table base, shelf supports, and a wine rack. And local artisans built a bed and a dining table from reclaimed barn wood.

Instead of replacing the African cherry floors that run throughout much of the home, Elliott had them stripped and restained. She also chose to use cork, another sustainable material, for flooring in the new gym and refinished the concrete floor in the basement instead of replacing it with wood.

One of the owners' favorite transformations is a semicircular sitting area behind the massive freestanding stone fireplace in the living room. "This space used to house a koi pond and now, thanks to our skilled team of designers, artisans, and builders, it's a spectacular spot to sit, relax, and look out at our distant views of the Connecticut River Valley," says the wife. "We love it."

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

**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Elliott | Meyers Design  
**BUILDER:** Ennis Construction

