



Craft work

The owners of this farmhouse wanted a home that embraces the beauty of artisanal craft and where life revolves around simple pleasures

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DINING AREA

A specially commissioned table, designed to show patina, echoes the organic structure of the beams above. Beautiful Shaker-style chairs pick out the rich autumnal tones of the scheme. Table and chairs designed by Connecticut craftsman Ian Ingersoll. Antique grasshopper, Trove Design Studios. Artwork sourced at The Barns by Ali Mahon

A photograph of a rustic living room. The room features a vaulted ceiling with white shiplap and two prominent, thick, weathered wooden beams. Large windows on the left and back walls offer a view of a wooded area with autumn foliage. In the foreground, a grey sofa is adorned with several colorful patterned pillows and a yellow and green throw blanket. To the right, a stone fireplace mantel holds a stack of firewood. A wicker coffee table with a leather strap is in front of the sofa. A small black lamp is mounted on the wall.

“We loved the idea of respecting what was already interesting about the house while slowly giving it a new personality that felt more like us – warm, layered, a little unexpected and never too perfect”

SITTING ROOM

A double-height chimney breast takes centre stage. 'We didn't want to fight with it, so complemented it with soft hues, combined with deep blues and golds,' says designer Gretchen Farrell.

Custom sofa, Pierre Atelier. Lounge chairs, Nickey Kehoe; in fabric by Rogers & Goffigon. Rattan balloon carrier as coffee table, The Barns by Ali Mahon. Jute rug, Ernesta



KITCHEN

'We picked simple Shaker-style cabinetry, designed to stand the test of time,' says Gretchen. 'It's also a great base for mixing in antique finds as well as more contemporary forms.'
Pendant lights, deVOL.
Island cabinetry in Farrow & Ball's Hardwick White

Walking up a simple dirt track across a landscape dotted with farmhouses, among a patchwork of low stone walls and tall maple trees, it's hard to believe that the skyscrapers of Manhattan are only 50 miles away. The sound of horns and screech of cabs feel as though they belong to a different world; instead, the cluck of chickens and the occasional bleat of a goat are the only welcome interruptions to the peace.

Here, in Bedford Corners, New York, a couple with two young children have swapped their city apartment for a wood-built farmhouse with room to grow. 'They wanted their kids to experience the feeling of grass under their toes,' says interior designer Gretchen Farrell, who had, 10 years ago, upped sticks and moved from the city to Westchester County too, and knew what was needed to make the transition. The farmhouse 'presented the perfect opportunity to create a forever home shaped by the family's hands-on sensibility,' she shares. 'They were keen on a space that could withstand the realities of farm life, from muddy floors and climbing children to a growing menagerie of animals.'

To that end, the pair returned to the drawing board and, with Gretchen, embraced the Shaker principles they had grown up with, rooting the renovation in simple, honest materials. 'Our vision was to create a warm, comfortable, inviting home for our family, friends and community,' says one of them. 'We were very much utility first and design second. Nothing could feel too precious and comfort had to come before aesthetics.'

'Architecturally, the house had a bit of an identity crisis when we found it. It's an 80s contemporary but with beautiful post-and-beam elements throughout. There were several directions we could have taken it, but we ultimately leaned toward a richer, more collected mix of vintage, crafted and unique pieces.'

The main house is attached to a distinctive 30-foot silo that serves as the entryway; a dramatic cylindrical structure through which the rest of the property reveals itself. Inside, a double-height sunken sitting room anchors the space, around which a mezzanine gallery

accessed by an internal walkway leads to the bedrooms. Original beams are exposed, referencing the colours of nature, while underlining the unpretentious nature of the interior: here there are no tricks; every join is on show.

'The farmhouse was in good shape,' says Gretchen. 'There was no need for any structural interventions, but the previous owners had gone for a Scandi aesthetic. Instead, we wanted to lean into a deeper toned, mellower feel, building schemes that could introduce age and patina.' A lucky discovery was that the original oak flooring, complete with handmade pegs, was intact under its whitewash. Stripped back to a light, golden hue, it sets the tone for the rest of the interiors, with their blend of antique, custom-built and contemporary pieces.

A double-height, stone-clad chimney breast, which Gretchen describes as a 'natural indoor sculpture' rises proudly out of the centre of the sitting room. 'The space is expansive but you can also bake in the sun there, so we had to think about how to make it comfortable. There are solar blinds for the summer, and in the fall, the fire, which opens on two sides, comes into its own. We had to rationalise access too, especially with young children around, so we reworked the stairs leading to it.'

A blend of objects, including some of the couple's contemporary art, introduce the tension that Gretchen believes is necessary to create a layered home. 'Those Shaker principles can be seen in the kitchen or in the handmade dining table created as an heirloom piece by cabinetmaker Ian Ingersoll,' she says, 'but there's also the rigour of mid-century shapes, the playfulness of the chequered stair runner or the contrast of a 19th-century carved horse in front of a modern, graphic artwork.'

Now, life here revolves around simpler pleasures. 'This is a family who love to relax and host, so the house had to feel comfortable, practical and inviting,' says Gretchen. 'Everything has been thought through but nothing is too precious to use.' The result is a home that feels collected rather than decorated and where an easy connection to the landscape can be celebrated daily. 📸

■ gretchenfarrell.com

"The family has an appreciation for traditional craftsmanship – it shows in every design choice they made"



HALLWAY

An upper walkway leads to the bedrooms. Beyond an entrance sits a mid-century decoupage chair – a favourite of the owners. 'It provides an unexpected artistic moment in an industrial setting,' says Gretchen.

Chair, Audrey Zinman.
Copper **sconce**, Lumfardo.
Woodwork in Ashwood Moss, Benjamin Moore

STAIRCASE

A chequered runner adds a contemporary twist to the simple, sinuous form of this curved staircase. 'It feels playfully modern in the space,' notes Gretchen.

Chequerboard **runner**, Woodard Weave

ENTRANCE HALL

A cylindrical silo serves as the entryway. Gretchen commissioned a curved, copper-topped console to fit within its proportions.

Table and **mirror**, RT Facts.
Ceramic **lamp**, Danny Kaplan Studio. **Basket**, Kathy Sachs of Le Barn Antiques.
Architectural renovation, Craig Intinarelli of Kroeger Intinarelli Architects



GAMES AREA

Gretchen turned this spot into a space for card and board games, anchored by the couple's 19th-century fruitwood table. Wall sconces, PAX Lighting. Buffet cabinet, RT Facts. Linen, wood and leather chairs, Lawson-Fenning. Wooden horse, The Barns by Ali Mahon. Walls in Shadow White, Farrow & Ball. Rug, Elizabeth Eakins Art by Elisabeth Von Wrede



MAIN BEDROOM

The golden tones of autumn converge in this cosy space, thanks to thick linens, plaids and warm wood finishes.

Bed, Lawson-Fenning; upholstered in plaid by de Le Cuona. **Bedspread**, Les Indiennes. **Pendant light**, PAX Lighting