

C T C & G

Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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Rich
Chic+



Storied Life The foyer (OPPOSITE PAGE) is furnished with an antique rosewood console through Incollect and an early 19th-century Swedish giltwood mirror through David Neligan Antiques, while a Parisian porcelain vase (THIS PAGE), c. 1810, is set on a living room mantel next to a 1962 abstract painting by Gladys Goldstein through David Bell Antiques. See Resources.



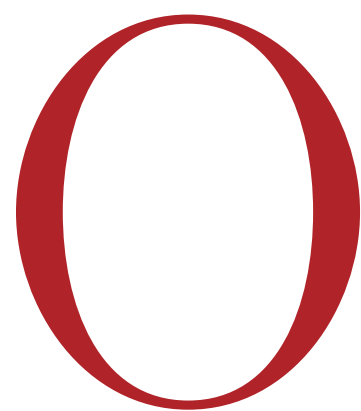
Past Perfect

AS SEEN IN
CTC&G
Connecticut Cottages and Gardens



A YOUNG FAMILY AND
THEIR DESIGNER REAFFIRM
A LOVE OF ANTIQUES

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Ofentimes, a design project teaches a homeowner and the interior designer something about themselves they might never before have known or had forgotten about over time. When the owner of this Litchfield County house began the task of furnishing its interiors with designer Matthew Patrick Smyth, she admits, with reflection, “I learned a lot about myself during this process—that I love color, that I love a varied and layered look, that it’s important not to get mired in one style or time period, that I love the stories behind antiques, and I love relating those stories to people who come here.”

Smyth, too, had an epiphany when shaping the rooms of this 1840 Colonial. “I had time to think about my career before embarking on this project,” he says, “and I remembered the reasons why I came into the industry years ago—because of my love for antiques and having them in a home. It’s how I got into the business in the first place, but I drifted away from that.”

Upon meeting with these young clients—who have two small children—Smyth suddenly became reacquainted with his past design passions. “Both the

The Elements (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM THIS PAGE) In the entry hall, an Irish 19th-century tall case clock hails from Sutter Antiques, while a Regency-era center table through David Neligan Antiques is set with stools from the Antique and Artisan Gallery upholstered in Schumacher velvet. Landscape design around the home is by Michael Trapp. Lee Jofa’s De La Tour curtains animate the living room, where an Irish Neoclassical mantel is through Jamb, and the coffee table is through Avery & Dash. Living room walls are painted in Benjamin Moore’s Plum Royale. See Resources.



husband and wife grew up with antiques," he notes. "Even though she's young, she loves brown furniture, antiques, the history of things, and, so, from the start this was a dream job for me."

While classic farmhouse décor is an appealing and popular aesthetic in Litchfield County, the homeowners wanted something more original and colorful for their home, which is mainly used as a weekend destination from their townhouse in Manhattan. "She's not afraid of color or pattern, which made the process fun," Smyth emphasizes. Among the most emphatic examples of the client's penchant for big, but subtle, effect is in the living room, whose walls and select furnishings are purple.

As she qualifies, though, "This particular purple is unique. Sometimes it might look dark blue or grayish, depending on the light. While the room doesn't

receive a lot of natural light, this color makes the space moody and inviting. It was the right color." Smyth concurs, adding, "By night, the room glows."

In working with colors throughout his career, Smyth offers inspiring and comforting advice on trying out dashing hues in any room. "I said to the client about her choice, it's only paint. If you don't like it, we can change it. It's that simple. It turned out that this is such an appealing, deep shade of purple that it works almost as a neutral."

Meanwhile, the formal dining room assumes a dramatically different feel with its multiple shades of brown, tobaccos and golds, the whole of which is echoed in the patterned Schumacher draperies. A mix of modern art with more classical antiques and furnishings further animates the room. Elsewhere, a powder room's walls "wear" another Schumacher pattern depicting scenic transferware trays,



Color Pops (OPPOSITE PAGE) Artwork by Lizzie Gill through Standard Space hangs over a sideboard through Sutter Antiques in the dining room. Dining chair restoration is by ECR Antiques, and the Keith Fritz table is through John Rosselli & Associates. **Family Settings** (THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) Cabinetry by Signature Custom Cabinetry is through Kitchen Solutions, and the sink is from Waterworks. Schumacher's Plates & Platters wallpaper lines the powder room walls; the sconce is through David Duncan Antiques; and the mirror is from Scully & Scully. A taxidermied crane through Creel and Gow roosts in the family room, where an A. Rudin sectional and a Paul Ferrante chair surround a coffee table from Walker Zabriskie Furniture & Home. See [Resources](#).



Suite Dreams

(THIS PAGE) In the primary bedroom, a custom Boston Federal tall-post bed through Leonards Antiques stands atop an Elizabeth Eakins area rug, while a pair of mirrors from David Neligan Antiques flank a Chesneys mantel and hearth.

Pattern Plays

(OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM) A Pierre Frey fabric wallcovering lines the walls of a guest bedroom, while canopies are dressed with Pierre Frey exterior panels, Cowtan & Tout interior panels, and finished with Samuel & Sons trim. The primary bathroom features a Twigs Wallpaper and Fabric wallpaper through John Rosselli & Associates. See Resources.

each showing a bucolic landscape. “The two rooms in a house where I can have the most fun are the dining and powder rooms,” Smyth emphasizes. “You can be adventurous in those rooms, turn up the volume with colors and patterns.”

But of all the elements that appear throughout this house, it’s the antiques that most define the aesthetic. “I’m originally from South Africa,” says the homeowner, “and I’m still inspired by my upbringing there.” She cites the British and Dutch influences in design from her native country. “I wanted this home to be an homage to my childhood, by incorporating many British and American

antiques. Matthew is really talented, and knows exactly what pieces to bring in.” Among the many elements he and the client assembled include an Irish fireplace mantel for the living room, an etched-glass Victorian lighting fixture for the primary bedroom, and a breakfast-nook cupboard filled with transferware.

“Designing with antiques means that a room is constantly evolving,” Smyth says. “You don’t know exactly where you’re going until you find the next thing.”

When the house was complete, “Everything made sense to me,” says the homeowner, “as if all had been in place for years.” ❁