

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2001

CLASSIC *American* HOME

Romantic Rooms

PRETTY PATTERNS,
CAPTIVATING COLORS
UNDERSTANDING
ANTIQUES

AN IDEAL KITCHEN

Display until March 5, 2001



USA \$3.95 Canada/Foreign \$4.50



BRILLIANT ENTERTAINING

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE BOWMAN BY AUDRA SHANLEY

THIS PAGE: In the entrance foyer, a circular Niermann Weeks table with a faux stone finish is used to spotlight floral arrangements or sculptures. The reproduction light fixture is from Mrs. MacDougall in New York; ottoman fabric is from Nancy Corzine in New York.

OPPOSITE: In the back of the house, two stone walls create tiers of gardens accessible from the patio. Blue-green retractable awnings match the shutters.

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While this home's classic exterior reflects the rich history of its Bucks County, Pennsylvania, neighborhood, the owners weren't afraid of adding a splash of color indoors. Interior designer Gregg Kiesel had a green light for a palette featuring brilliant yellow, cobalt blue, and periwinkle and the goal of tailoring the 10-year-old home

for entertaining. "It had to be designed to be used," says Kiesel, who is based in New Hope. "Not only does this family entertain—a sit-down dinner for 50 as well as a wedding have been held here—but the house is home to a parrot, two dogs, and cats. It had to be user friendly, but we didn't want it to look that way."

The setting is idyllic: 10 acres with a circular drive leading up to the house surrounded by a pond with swans, gardens, and a natural stone pool. For the living areas, Kiesel set about creating a space that flowed by uniting colors of the main-level family room, kitchen, dining room, living room, and master bedroom suite. "We have a wonderful party home here because we wanted an open floor plan. There is no red room, no blue. The concept was to keep it uniform so that guests were guided from place to place and it was never a limiting space."

Once yellow was chosen for the walls, the challenge was to keep the color uniform without being boring. "In the main living areas we went with a blotted look, while in the kitchen and dining area is a strié—different yet united." Kiesel estimates it took about three months to find the perfect shades and treatments for the walls. "Once that was determined, the rest easily came into play." The basement level of the house supports the entertaining and includes a professional-style prep kitchen and 5,000-bottle wine cellar, as well as an office and entertainment/exercise area. In addition to the master suite on the main level, there are four guest bedrooms on the second floor.

As Kiesel balanced the need for the home to be a showplace, he frequently



refocused on its need to be serene. "This is the place of complete solitude for them, too," he says of the 50ish couple, both corporate executives, who have several homes. "It is their meditation and their retreat away from everyone."

An important element of the peaceful orientation of the home was opening it to the surrounding scenery. While a previous homeowner opted for no window treatments, Kiesel found that too severe and opted for minimal, silk swags or, in some places, drapes and swags. "The last thing we wanted to do was take away from the lovely view," he adds.

In the living room, interior and exterior scenery are blended with a landscape painting of a cloud-filled blue sky flanked by French doors. The arrangement "gave the homeowners the illusion of going straight out to the yard—both the real landscape and the painting are soothing, despite the bright colors," Kiesel says.

Throughout the main level, custom-made furnishings are modifications of the homeowners' classical preferences. Another favorite of the homeowners was both pattern and tone-on-tone fabrics, so the designer indulged in striped fabrics and a trellis-design carpet, as well as elaborate damasks. Notable pieces in the house are sketches by Matisse and a wall niche bronze statue entitled "The Maiden," that originally belonged to the Carnegie family. Surveying the project, the designer notes, "it is serene and peaceful because everything is in its place. It is pristine, despite being a well-used home." 🌿

In the living room, the focal point is a landscape painting, artist unknown, selected to provide a sense of openness to complement views from the French doors flanking the fireplace mantel. The designer adorned the mantel with a set of antique candlesticks. The colors of a yellow Brunschwig & Fils fabric on the tufted lounge chairs and a cobalt blue damask are married in the Jab stripe on the chair at left. The coffee table is from Serban. Following the room's color scheme, the white silk swags are accented with trim blending cobalt blue and gold.





THIS PAGE: The dining room's Baker chairs are covered in the same Jab stripe seen on the living room chairs. The lighting fixture is made from antique crystals purchased from a shop in Lambertville, New Jersey.

The living and dining rooms' carpet is Rosecore. **OPPOSITE ABOVE LEFT:** A hall leading to the dining room features a pair of console tables divided by a tufted yellow settee.

OPPOSITE ABOVE RIGHT: Most of the kitchen—including appliances, tiles, and butcher block surfaces—is original to the house. Kiesel added accessories, including Pierre Frey seat covers with Rogers Textiles tassel trim.

OPPOSITE BELOW: A "strictly periwinkle" bedroom includes the cherub-design print on the bed hangings by Manuel Canovas and the solid-tone periwinkle stripe on the chair and bench.



