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# Home

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**ABOVE** The kitchen's coffered ceiling, with mitered beadboard insets, adds textural contrast to the gleaming stainless steel appliances and honed Absolute Black granite countertops. White-painted wood cabinetry provides more visual interest by mixing glass-front and raised-panel doors with open shelves. The butler's pantry and mudroom can be glimpsed through the kitchen's doorways.

**OPPOSITE** The breakfast nook occupies a windowed bay overlooking the rear patio and a rock wall beyond the pool. Plaid valance fabric in shades of ivory, green, and brown harmonizes with the view and the furniture—a cherry pedestal table and chairs.

IT MAY NOT BE IN SUNNY CALIFORNIA, but the Colonial-style house that a recently transplanted couple built in Chappaqua, New York, is designed to capture the casual, indoor-outdoor style they loved in their former home in San Francisco. Susan, a physician, and David, an attorney, hadn't intended to construct a new residence, knowing how much time and decisionmaking it would entail. But when they saw the hilly, tree-covered acre by a lake and nature preserve, they were smitten. "With big dogs—and an athletic mindset—we like to spend as much time outside as possible," says Susan.

The couple envisioned a generous yard, a large patio, and a lap pool—features conducive to outdoor entertaining and reminiscent of their previous property. They wanted the new dwelling to resemble a traditional East Coast farmhouse with wainscoted walls, beadboard detailing, and lots of fireplaces. Local architect Carol J.W. Kurth, who had designed a nearby residence Susan and David admired, responded

ceilings throughout and conceal drapery rods in the living room, dining room, and master bedroom. And a mitered-beadboard coffered ceiling in the kitchen lends cozy appeal to the over-300-square-foot space. "Adding architectural interest to a ceiling makes even the largest rooms feel inviting," says Kurth.

In the close collaboration with their architect, David and Susan offered suggestions inspired by clips they collected from magazines, including an elegant arched entry flanked by art niches and a spectacular tray ceiling that rises to 10 feet in the master bedroom; a corner desk arrangement in the home office; and the old-style, country details in the kitchen.

"The design is based on photos of a Connecticut farmhouse kitchen that we loved," says Susan. A 3-by-5-foot center island anchors the room, in which honed Absolute Black granite counters and dark java-stained oak floors contrast dramatically with the painted-white, recessed-panel wood cabinetry. David, the family chef, selected the professional-style stainless steel appliances, including the six-burner range plus griddle. The kitchen opens to a windowed breakfast bay overlooking the backyard pool, while a butler's pantry and a mudroom, complete with hand-spray equipped dog shower, occupy adjacent spaces.

TRUE TO SUSAN AND DAVID'S wishes, light flows through generous windows and glass-paned doors that connect the interiors with the surrounding landscape. And for the ex-Californians, the most striking feature of all may be the sweeping flagstone patio at the rear of the house. At 70 feet long, and punctuated by five built-in fieldstone planters, the alfresco area provides ample space for relaxing and dining and makes a pleasing transition between the house, the lawn, and the 60-by-8-foot lap pool. Beyond the pool, a rock wall—built from stones cleared from the site—frames the backyard and enhances the sense of privacy created by thick stands of surrounding trees.

Although Susan and David miss the milder California climate, today they see themselves as a couple of happy San Francisco transplants. "When it's too cool to swim, we just head inside to our home gym and steam room in the finished basement," says Susan. "We think our customized farmhouse combines the best of both coasts. We're here to stay." ■

## design details

1. A big magnetic chalkboard is just one of the lures for Michael, age 3, in the lower-level playroom. Built-in window-seat storage holds toys. And flanking decorative columns serve as a transition to the connecting family room (one shown far right).
2. The second-floor office is fitted with built-in shelves and file drawers that match the kitchen cabinets. His-and-hers computers are each tucked into a corner desk, and the printer and fax are housed in a cabinet, freeing valuable work space. A length of PVC pipe behind the desktop corrals wires and cords.
3. The home theater on the lower level is simply furnished with Ultrasuede-covered club chairs and cube ottomans for holding popcorn and the remote. "We didn't want it to feel like a theme room," says Susan about this ultimate indulgence for parents who don't get to the movies as often as they'd like.
4. Floor-to-ceiling pantry cabinets line one wall of the kitchen. Bracket feet and glass-fronted upper compartments give them the feel of furniture. And the brushed nickel hardware links to the hanging schoolhouse light fixture and the wall clock behind.
5. Inspired by an idea she saw in a magazine, Susan had drawers built into the side of the basement staircase, where she files photos and papers.





**LEFT** The 18-foot-high foyer is distinguished by paneling that creates a rhythm of squares and rectangles, picked up in the glass-paned transoms that crown the living and dining room doorways and replayed throughout the house. **ABOVE** In the living room, matching deep-tufted sofas upholstered in creamy Ultrasuede flank the fireplace. Luminous beige silk drapes that draw all the way across each doorway (stopping just shy of the mantel) are hung from a drapery rod hidden under the crown molding. The two glass doors lead to a porch.

with a plan that pairs airy, open interiors and a light, summery palette characteristic of California living with a New England-style clapboard-and-shingle exterior. "It's an updated version of the center-hall Colonial, tweaked to the way families live today," says Kurth. The home's modern features include a spacious kitchen, large master bedroom suite, his-and-hers offices, and a basement level comprising informal living areas including a family room, a home theater, an exercise room, a steam room, and son Michael's playroom.

**THOUGH TOTALING 6,472 SQUARE FEET**, the new structure has an intimate feel thanks to the warm, classical touches that grace every room. Once you cross the threshold, the foyer invites with its painted-white, recessed-paneled walls, whose rectilinear motif is echoed in the glass-paned transoms that top the doorways to the connecting living and dining rooms. Five-and-a-half-inch-high crown moldings set off



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