

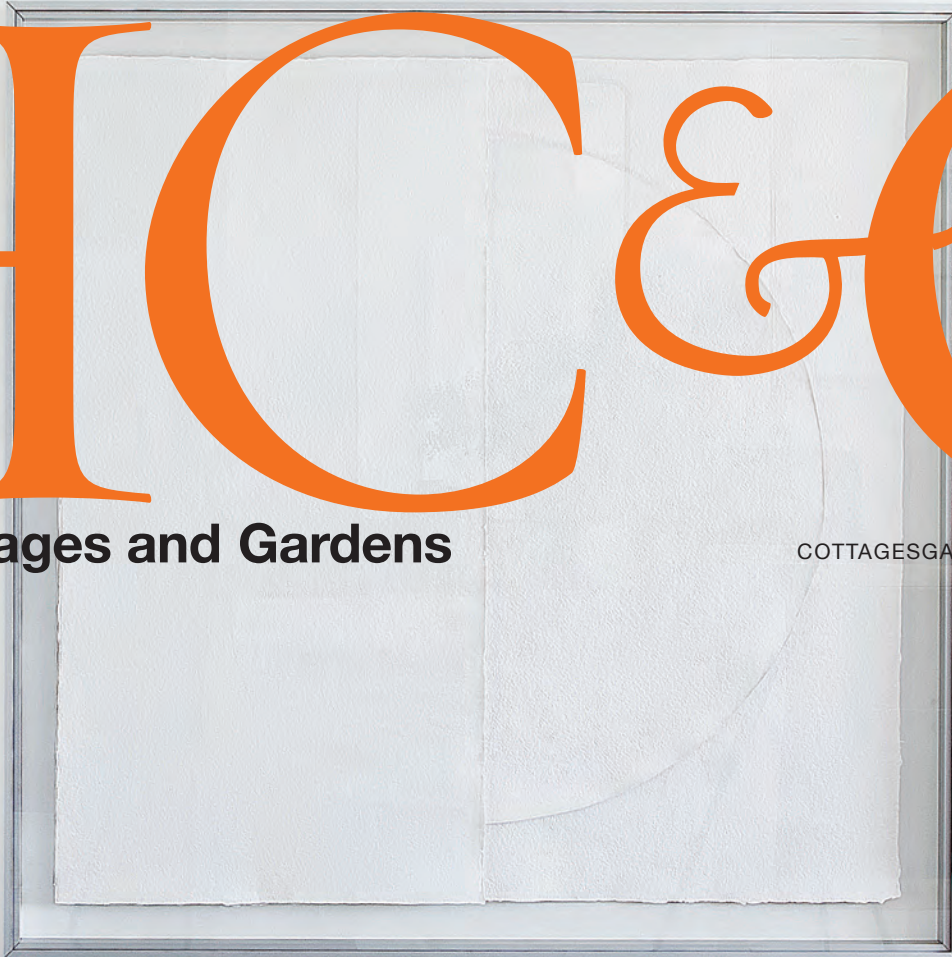
CELEBRATING 20 STYLISH SEASONS!

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FRESH FLAIR



A Fresh Start
 (THIS PAGE) A lantern from Urban Electric hangs above an early-19th-century Scottish table in the foyer. (OPPOSITE) The living room's custom sofa is by Luther Quintana Upholstery. The custom hooked wool rug is from Doris Leslie Blau. See *Resources*.



The Big Reveal

A couple buys a house in Rye online, sight unseen — and now it's quite the place to see

BY DAVID MASELLO | PHOTOGRAPHS BY READ MCKENDREE



New Lease On Life
 (THIS PAGE) Calacatta Gold countertops from Rye Marble, backsplash tile from Waterworks, and Perrin & Rowe fittings add shimmer to the renovated kitchen.
 (OPPOSITE) The circa-1810 French Empire chairs in the dining room are covered in a fabric from John Rosselli & Associates. The chandelier is from Gregorius Pineo. See Resources.



Among the considerable fallout from the pandemic vis-à-vis the real estate world was the deeper meaning of the phrase “caveat emptor.” Buyer beware—never more so than when purchasing real estate sight unseen. Yet that was a familiar practice in the frenetic early months of COVID-19, when homeowners desperate to get out of cities and otherwise tight spaces snapped up properties simply by viewing them online, or even after just hearing about them over the phone. The competition was that intense.

Jessica Verrochi was among that group of risk-takers. “It was the middle of the pandemic, our kids were in school, and we needed to relocate to the East Coast from San Francisco,” she recalls of the lightning-fast run-up to the

purchase of her 1920s neo-Colonial in Rye. “The market was moving quickly, and we found ourselves in a bidding war. But even from afar, my husband and I knew that Suzanne and Lauren would be able to take care of everything.”

Suzanne and Lauren McGrath happen to be the mother-daughter team who run McGrath II, the design firm the Verrochis hired on the advice of friends. Straightaway, they announced that they had some news for their new clients. Nothing dire, but still not the kind of information anyone would want to share with people who were moving across the country to live in a house they had never stepped foot in before. Upon walking through the home’s graciously scaled rooms, the McGraths realized that it “had become dated over time,” Suzanne recounts. “But we knew that this was an exceptional

“I learned quickly that antiques stand out most in a house,” homeowner Jessica Verrochi says. “People want to make their homes feel bespoke and one-of-a-kind”



property and we wanted to bring it back—to make it feel like the lovely house it had started out as.”

“The call we got wasn’t one of those ‘Are you sitting down?’ ones,” Verrochi remembers. “After all, we liked the bones of the house, its layout, and location. But Lauren and Suzanne very diplomatically told us that many of the floors had been torn apart by the prior owners’ dogs, the stair-

case banister was falling down, and the fireplaces needed to be replaced.”

With plenty of work needing to be done, the Verrochis decamped with their young children, leaving behind their stucco house in Presidio Heights and the majority of its furnishings. Fortunately, Jessica Verrochi and the design team found common ground in a passion for antiques. “She really appreciates beautiful American and European antiques,” Lauren McGrath

Family Affair
 (THIS PAGE) McGrath II designed the table in the breakfast nook. The ceiling fixture is from Ann-Morris and the antique French caned chairs are from Rose Uniacke. (OPPOSITE) The sofa and tufted bench in the family room are covered in fabrics from John Rosselli & Associates. See Resources.





Home Sweet Home

(GRID, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) Light blue paint from Farrow & Ball softens a dressing room. The walnut and rush table in the primary bedroom is from Rooms & Gardens. Custom vanities by McGrath II anchor the boys' bathroom. The wall covering in the daughter's bedroom is from Bennisson. (ABOVE) The wallpaper in a guest room is from Peter Fasano and the matchstick blind is from the Shade Store. The coverlet is from Chelsea Textiles. See Resources.

says of their client, recounting the many treasures they found for the home, including a circa-1820 Irish wake table for the dining room and a hexagonal Scottish table of the same vintage for the foyer. The designers even sourced a 19th-century dresser from the region of Virginia where Verrochi grew up. "I learned quickly that antiques stand out most in a house," says Verrochi. "I didn't have a ton of experience shopping for them, but given supply-chain delays and the fact that people want to make their homes feel bespoke and one-of-a-kind, they've become popular again." Among the few items the couple did bring with them from the West Coast was a collection of copper cookpots once used by husband Matt's mother. "After gutting the kitchen, we started the re-do with those pots in mind," says Lauren. But the prevailing design scheme for the house hinges on the custom floor covering in the liv-

ing room, its graphic pattern replicating a classic American hooked rug and inspiring "the patterns and colors found in all the rooms." As the work was being done, Verrochi and her family were living in a nearby rental house, although she couldn't resist stopping by daily to see the progress. But as the "big reveal" neared, the McGraths diplomatically asked her to stay away for four days. "We always make sure we aren't present for that initial moment when everything's finally in place," Suzanne says. "It's a private moment, an emotional one. The clients deserve privacy." So, on a Friday night, Verrochi and her husband got the green light and went over. "When we walked through the door, music was playing, and glasses of wine were waiting for us," Verrochi says. "Very slowly, we went room by room through our new home, taking it all in. It was the perfect big reveal." ✨