



TAKING IT TO HART

LEADING INTERIOR DESIGNER LILI HART TURNS A SHINGLE-STYLE HOME ON MARTHA'S VINEYARD INTO A SOFT, FRESH AND LIGHT-FILLED SPACE

words by **Mary Grauerholz**
photographs by **Carter Berg**

Martha's Vineyard is a jewel that shines with natural beauty, history and culture – so much so, in fact, that its other fine attributes are often hidden behind the bright patina of a coveted summer community.

Interior designer Lili Hart made her own special discovery when she undertook a recent project on the Massachusetts island: a treasure trove of talented and dedicated carpenters, woodworkers and tradesmen who help transform Vineyard homes into unique and beautiful gems.

Working with island experts was one of the many pleasures Hart experienced when she created a new interior for a formerly humdrum Shingle-style gambrel, built in the 1990s and tucked away in a peaceful thicket of woods in Edgartown.

"These Vineyard craftsmen really know their trades," says Hart, principal of Liliane Hart Interiors based in Manhattan. "The woodworkers respect history and the past."

It was a perfect pairing for the husband-and-wife homeowners, who both grew up summering in rambling



old houses on the island. "They love the historical aspects – the wainscot, hand-painted floors, hand-blocked wallpaper," Hart says.

While the couple's home has exquisite hand detailing, it has none of the musty darkness that's typical of old New England summerhouses. Here, the mood is light, fresh and casual, with sun-filled rooms decorated in soft beige and white, and natural materials such as woven straw and wicker.

"My clients had a fairly clear vision," Hart explains. "They wanted to update a classic aesthetic in a minimalist kind of way."

Light and easy
The owners of this gorgeous Martha's Vineyard residence wanted the design to be soft and light, as well as beach-y and casual, using white and beige in most rooms except for the den (above).



Hart helped the couple hone their dreams for the new design and, in the process, created a reflection of the wife's Scandinavian roots.

The emphasis on sunny simplicity and ease is perfect for the family, which includes two school-age children. "They wanted it soft and light, beach-y and casual," Hart says.

Sun pours in through generous windows on the home's ocean side, spilling over light wood floors and furniture of bleached oak and driftwood, with touches of color inspired by nature. Furniture is largely minimal and sculptural. "We let the coastal view play the starring role," Hart says.

The house is the third project Hart has completed for the homeowners. "These are dream clients," she says. "They love design."

Through the highly collaborative process, Hart and the owners demonstrated that a soft and serene interior can carry spectacular weight.

Conover Restorations, a long-time Edgartown business, updated the 4,600-square-foot family home. The living room serves as the main congregation area, with three pairs of French doors leading to the lawn and patio, while other glass-paned doors lead to the den and guestroom.

"One of the first things we did in the living room was

to lighten the floor color to a softer, more casual light brown," Hart says.

The walls here, and throughout the first-floor public rooms, are White Heron by Benjamin Moore, with a cast that changes subtly through the day.

Light-toned English furniture is complemented by upholstery in a de Le Cuona ticking fabric. A shell armoire, intricate yet simple, is the single item brought from the couple's New York City loft apartment.

Spiraling off one side of the living room are the dining area, kitchen and a screened porch outfitted in wicker for outdoor dining and relaxation.

The first floor also includes a den in darkest blue, a fervent wish of the wife who works in entertainment and wanted a prime place to watch movies.

The owners' young son's upstairs bedroom gave Hart a chance to accomplish a long-held wish: to create a burlap wall. The homeowners, she says, "loved it."

His parents' bedroom, painted in a Farrow & Ball green, has a sweet nook, a seating area with a chaise next to a wall of windows delivering an inspiring view across the patio to a saltwater pond and the ocean beyond. The pool and guest cottage are tucked nearby in a quiet part of the property.

Artisanal touches give the interior a unique identity. In the first-floor powder room, hand-blocked wallpaper

From the Hart

"My goal is always to listen carefully to my clients, and to deliver a beautiful home that reflects their tastes and lifestyles," says Lili Hart (above).



in a soft floral pattern has the distinction of a mural. Created by English artist Marthe Armitage, the paper is a stunning sea of birds, cobwebs and trees.

In the foyer, a sculptural Dutch commode and ebonized teak-and-bone mirror, sourced from the renowned design firm John Rosselli & Associates, add texture and form.

The artful kitchen backsplash is another pleasant surprise, covered with wallpaper from the Swedish company Lim & Handtryck and delivering a totally wipeable surface.

Liliane Hart Interiors is housed in the beautiful Townsend Building overlooking New York City's Madison Square Park.

Working in a landmark building is an integral part of Hart's backstory; for her, design is a lifelong passion, instilled by parents who love to restore and decorate old houses.

After obtaining a fine arts degree, a stint at the New York School of Interior Design and a historic renovation of her own, Hart went on to a position and mentorship with esteemed designer Jeffrey Bilhuber.

Hart's own firm – now with a staff of five – is intentionally kept small, she says, to maintain close client relationships, just as she did with the Martha's Vineyard homeowners.

THE DETAILS
For more information, visit lilianehart.com.

"My goal is always to listen to my clients and to deliver a beautiful home that reflects their tastes and lifestyle," Hart says. "I want them to love what we've designed together." **OH**



Bed and bath
Patterns, colors and textures play a major role in Hart's interior designs as do natural materials, including wood, woven straw and wicker.

For additional images, check out our digital edition