

# GRACIOUS LIVING

QUIET PASTELS, SOFT FABRICS AND LUSH LANDSCAPE ARE THE PERFECT ANTIDOTE TO A NEW YORK FAMILY'S CITY LIFE.

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INTERIOR DESIGN / BRITTANY BROMLEY, BRITTANY BROMLEY INTERIORS  
BUILDER / JOHN RIINA, GREENWICH MILLBANK GROUP



Just inside the front parlor of a home in Bedford, New York, floral pillows made with Bennison Fabrics' Banyan in Pink textile rest on a custom armless sofa cloaked in luxurious Claremont silk. The mirror above is from Dovecote, while the nesting table and French reading light are antiques.



The first item designer Brittany Bromley purchased for the makeover of an 1860s farmhouse in Bedford, New York, was a pair of chandeliers by renowned Swedish designer Lars Bolander. Made of clusters of hand-blown glass balls, they cast an aqua glow reminiscent of water. "They were so beautiful and unusual, I knew we had to make them the centerpiece of the kitchen," she says. "They are also the first thing you see when you enter the room, so they had to have a sense of graciousness."

It is this sensibility Bromley carried throughout the design of the weekend home for a young New York City couple with three small children. "We wanted the house to be a casual offset to the Upper East Side apartment where we live year-round," the wife explains. "We come here to

decompress and enjoy the outdoors, not to polish silver." Thanks to a palette of powder blues, quiet creams and muted raspberries on furnishings outfitted in a symphony of stripes, solids and florals, there's a feeling of summer ease that permeates each room—even the dinner plates feature a bucolic scene.

The whimsical interior matches the exterior of the charming farmhouse-style residence. On first sighting, the clapboard building, with its quintessential front porch, called to couple. "We wanted an older house, and this one had everything—including a pool and a place for our children to run around," the wife says. "It had already undergone an impeccable renovation, so we just had to personalize it." Bromley initiated that process by redoing the Venetian plaster walls in the stairwell and lower-level hallway in a



In the dining room, nature moves indoors thanks to Sandberg's pastel tree wallpaper. Chairs slipcovered in pale blue Elizabeth Eakins linen surround a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Gustavian Swedish table found on 1stdibs. The Merida jute rug reinforces the room's casual-elegant theme.



In the living room, French chairs clothed in Claremont silk and cashmere flank a fireplace topped with a gilt etched mirror from the Antique & Artisan Center. The English armchairs wear Robert Kime fabric, and the white Holland & Sherry sofa touts indoor-outdoor chenille. The antique Maison Baguès coffee table is from 1st dibs; the late-19<sup>th</sup>-century inlaid Syrian chest and marble-urn pilaster lamps are auction finds.

soothing pale green. To offset high ceilings, she covered the remaining main-floor walls with a variety of wallpapers. "I added texture and pattern so you would feel enveloped by the rooms, rather than marooned in these large spaces," the designer explains. The front parlor and dining room are lined with a pattern of blue pastel trees, while a metallic woven Japanese paper shimmers in the living room.

Below foot, the task of updating the original wide-plank hardwood floors fell to builder John Riina and his team. "We sanded and stained them for a richer, darker color," he says. From there, they helped reshape the kitchen for a modern update: "We reduced the size of the peninsula to create a place for seating and added an island," he says.

For her part, Bromley embraced the original spirit of the home, featuring a cross section of antiques in sync with the historic architecture. "Everything contributes to the collected, curated feel," she says. She selected a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Gustavian Swedish table as the dining room centerpiece and refreshed the living room's antique French wood-frame chairs with silk and cashmere. As added interest, that space harbors a late-19<sup>th</sup>-century mother-of-pearl Syrian wedding chest, which the designer likens to a piece of jewelry.

Bromley also embraced symmetry, and that sense of order is particularly evident where matching chairs face off across coffee tables and twin lamps sit equidistant on tabletops. "But too many pairs can feel a bit like Noah's ark, so I try and introduce something that throws off the balance," she adds. As such, the sofa in the master bedroom's sitting area features a tortoise-shell table on one side and a Lucite one on the other, while a round metal-and-glass side table tips the scale in the living room.

As part of her design, Bromley juxtaposed dominant traditional leanings with contemporary interjections. In the entry, for example, empire chairs flanking a demilune offset the Jeff Nares abstract at the end of the hall and the playful blue-white-and-gray pattern on the stair runner.

A pair of Lars Bolander blown-glass light fixtures are the centerpieces in the kitchen, where a new island by woodworker Yvonne Schettino is topped with Jerusalem marble from Alise, Inc. The Roman shade is made of Christopher Farr Cloth.



**Below, left:** One portion of the parlor is reserved for games, and the Lucite table from Mecox Gardens is ready with its chess set. Elizabeth Eakins fabrics were used for the twill draperies and the custom armchairs swathed in blue linen.

**Below, right:** "For weekends in the country, everything should feel light and airy," says designer Brittany Bromley, who extended that concept right down to the dishes. The Juliska dinnerware is among the accessories she sourced to achieve a collected feel.



A whisper of celadon in the Phillip Jeffries wallpaper injects a sense of calm into the master suite. Similarly soothing is the F. Schumacher chenille bed dressed in bedding by Schweitzer Linens. Robert Kime draperies offset an antique French chaise covered in Claremont fabric; a custom sisal-and-wool-blend Merida rug grounds the space.



**Above:** A George Smith sofa cloaked in Décor de Paris velveteen with an embroidered Samuel & Sons border provides comfy seating in the master bedroom sitting area. In front, a set of Maison Baguès nickel-and-brass cocktail tables from 1stdibs form a coffee table. The Lucite side table is from CB2, and the other table is an antique purchased at auction.

**Left:** Bromley invokes Mother Nature whenever possible and added a touch of greenery in an antique silver crew trophy on the tub deck in the master bathroom. The room's quiet palette includes a Kohler tub, a white linen Rogers & Goffigon shade and pale blue Venetian plaster walls.

"The runner serves as a graphic punch while uniting the color scheme," Bromley says. "It's youthful, fun and sophisticated—just like the inhabitants." Likewise, heavily textured sisal rugs match the refined tone of the antique furnishings but are tough enough to stand up to barefoot children scampering across after a dip in the pool.

Outside, Bromley enlivened the front yard's rhododendrons with white Rose of Sharon and added cottage roses next to the arbor in the side yard, where she filled planters with topiaries and overflowing greenery. "Mother Nature is the world's finest designer, and I adore including her work wherever I can," she says. It's the ideal scene for these Manhattanites: When the family arrives for a weekend visit, they throw open the French doors and spend as much time outdoors as possible. "It's a luxury we don't have in the city," the wife says. "Everything is more formal in Manhattan. But here, we sink into cozy chairs. Each room has its own personality, and everything is calm and relaxing." **L**

**Right:** The designer, who also worked on the landscape, established an outdoor dining room amid the flowerbeds in the sunken garden. A trestle pedestal table and wood chairs, all from RH, are the perfect complement to the bucolic surroundings. The clamshell planter is from RT Facts in Kent, Connecticut.

**Opposite:** The outdoor living spaces are composed of various moments, including (clockwise from top left) a zinc chair and sofa from the RH Klismos collection—featuring pillows made of Peter Dunham Textiles made of Peter Dunham Textiles fabrics—facing a teak Kingsley Bate coffee table; an existing arbor enlivened with cottage roses; an antique sculpture that makes a visual statement; and an RH planter hosting a topiary on the back porch.

