

# Midcentury Design Meets Modern Comfort In This Greenwich Summer Home

BY ALYSSA BIRD / AUGUST 15, 2023



The dining room features walls covered in Holly Hunt grass cloth and ornamented with Fisher Weisman sconces. A striped Fayette Studio flat weave grounds the expandable table by Matthew Fairbank ringed by Craft Associates Furniture chairs.

## HOUSE DETAILS

**Photography:**

Kirsten Francis

**Styling:**

Katja Greeff

**Architecture:**

Sean Taylor, [Mockler Taylor Architects, LLC](#)

**Interior Design:**

Rachel Sherman, [Rachel Sloane Interiors](#)

**Home Builder:**

Jerry Radice, [Jarman LLC](#)

A pair of empty nesters decides to downsize—or so the story often goes. But not for the owners of this Greenwich residence, who instead opted for an even grander home to comfortably accommodate extended visits from their adult children and their spouses, along with an ever-expanding gaggle of grandbabies. “When we first saw this house, we loved the layout and the fact that there is plenty of room for everyone,” says the Florida-based client, who raised her family in nearby Pleasantville and now summers in Connecticut.

The challenge? Despite its beautiful craftsmanship, the sprawling, shingled structure felt a bit dark and heavy for this couple’s taste. Enter designer Rachel Sherman, whom they tapped to “brighten and modernize things while staying true to the traditional architecture and its Arts & Crafts references,” Sherman shares.

While the designer stuck to the overall floor plan and retained many of the existing elements—“the bones and the scale and flow of the rooms were incredible,” she notes—there were plentiful cosmetic tweaks to be made, as well as several areas that required more extensive renovations. In the kitchen, for example, Sherman worked with architect Sean Taylor and general contractor Jerry Radice to completely overhaul the space. A serene palette of creamy-gray across the new shaker-style cabinetry is popped by the addition of double islands painted a deep blue-black. “The wife loves to host and the two islands work well for entertaining,” Sherman says. “There’s one for serving and a second for eating at.”

In the nearby dining room, French doors leading to the backyard similarly allow for breezy entertaining flow. “Given that this is primarily a summer home, I was heavily influenced by the outdoors,” Sherman shares of the design. “There is a grass-cloth wallcovering, natural-rattan sconces and a green-marble fireplace surround that references the grass outdoors.” For this room, the client specifically requested a convivial, round-shaped centerpiece and the designer responded in turn, sourcing a sleek extension table that expands into an oval with seating for 14 guests.

Another space that sees heavy traffic is the family room, which is off the kitchen. “This is a cozy area where the homeowners’ grandchildren play,” says Sherman. “The sofas are stain resistant and the window seat and coffee table are vinyl. The clients pretty much gave me carte blanche, but they wanted comfortable seating and practical choices.” Indeed, the grandkids were always top of mind. Even the games area near the living room, which was inspired by the husband’s love of bridge, doubles as a place for them hang out and while away an afternoon with board games and crafts. In addition to a cards table and comfy banquette, the nook features a kooky wallpaper with a playing cards motif.

And that’s not the only spot where wallpaper steals the show. A number depicting leaves and vases and resembling individual tiles serves as an unexpected backsplash in the newly defined baby changing space (formerly a second laundry room dedicated to table linens). In the wife’s bath, a silver-toned wisteria pattern lends opulent drama. And in the serene primary bedroom, Sherman, in homage to the wife’s love of neutrals, wrapped the walls in a muted, small-scale print paper and the ceiling in a gleaming grass cloth.

“The clients didn’t want to mirror their previous house, which had more of a country farmhouse aesthetic,” the designer explains. “We ventured into ‘mid-20th-century design-meets-modern comfort,’ incorporating lots of layers, texture and warmth.” And the departure certainly paid off. “Rachel has an eye for unique details that are practical yet beautiful,” says the wife. “But most of all, she understood what we wanted, which was a happy house.”