

JULY 2014

# HOUSE & HOME

THE MAGAZINE OF HOME & STYLE

Easy Lobster Boil  
& Summer Sides

*the BEST of*  
**SUMMER**  
**LIVING**

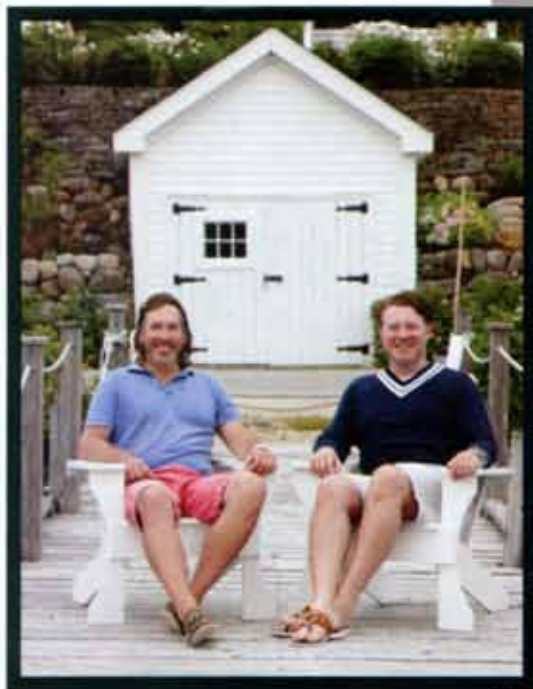
**FRESH IDEAS**  
*for Relaxed  
Decorating*

A FAMILY  
BEACH HOUSE  
BY SARAH  
RICHARDSON

*plus*  
16 OF THE  
**BEST**  
HURRICANE  
LANTERNS

DESIGN  
DESTINATION:  
NEWPORT,  
RHODE ISLAND





**Designer Philip Mitchell's** love affair with East Coast living started, surprisingly, with lunch. He and his partner, advertising exec Mark Narsansky, were on vacation with friends in Chester, N.S., a tiny town set on the shores of Mahone Bay. "We stopped in, we had lunch, and we bought a house," he says. "It sounds crazy! But as soon as we experienced one day in the village, both Mark and I thought, 'You know what? This is a place we'd love to retire to one day.'" Three years later, they now split their time almost equally between Toronto and Chester, and it's no surprise that their friends have fallen for the village, too. In fact, they get so many visitors during the summer months that, when they bought a new place in town, they decided to build a coach house that would serve as guest quarters. Designed to look and feel like it's always been on the property, the "new-old" guest house is cosy, comfortable and, best of all, packed with hotel-inspired amenities.

# SOCIAL CALL

Designer and consummate host Philip Mitchell created the ultimate guest house to complement his East Coast home.

Text by STACY LEE KONG | Photography by JANET KIMBER



**TAKE DESIGN CUES FROM YOUR LOCATION** The bedroom offers views in three directions, and you can actually see the ocean from the bed, which inspired Philip's colour palette. "It's fairly neutral, but we've thrown in some turquoise and blue accents, which pick up on the fact that the guesthouse is on the ocean," he says. The bed, repurposed from a previous home, is the most striking example of this. It's an antique and was originally a natural oak tone, but Philip convinced Mark to paint it so they could use it to give the room a fresh, whimsical note. **Drapery fabric**, Lee Jofa; **drapery trim**, Primavera; **throw pillow fabric, trim**, Tèlia; **Euro sham fabric, bedskirt fabric**, Tessuti Uno; **bedding**, Au Lit; **wall covering**, Kravet; antique **benches**, Patina Antiques; **rug**, Elte.



**WHO:** Designer Philip Mitchell (far left, on right) and partner Mark Narsansky  
**WHAT:** A new-build coach house  
**WHERE:** Chester, N.S.  
**STYLE:** Refined nautical

**GO FOR BROAD APPEAL** "Making someone feel at home is about making the space warm, comfortable and inviting without making it too personal," says Philip. In this corner, maps of the East Coast add graphic interest on the walls and have universal appeal. Two cosy armchairs and a gourd lamp add pattern and colour. **Chairs,** Cocoon Furnishings; **chair fabric, throw pillow fabric,** Kravet; **lamp,** Brunschwig & Fils.



**< CONSIDER GUESTS' PREFERENCES**

Despite not watching much TV themselves, Philip and Mark installed one to accommodate guests who do. Mark collects antique clocks, some of which are displayed on the mantel above the electric fireplace. The surround was deliberately distressed with burnt umber and ash to make it look suitably aged.



**< INTRODUCE CONTRAST**

The warm wood grain of the antique bedside table is a classic counterpoint to the deep blue paint of the bed. Philip often puts out a clock radio so guests can listen to music and won't have to depend on their hosts for a wake-up call. **Silver lamp,** Patina Antiques; **lampshade,** RomEla Antique Lighting; **side table,** 1stdibs.



**ADD A WORKSPACE** An antique desk looks over the main house's tiered gardens. Contrasting upholstery and nailhead trim dress up the accompanying slipper chair. A travel backgammon board easily rolls up when not in use. **Chair, desk,** 1stdibs; **chair upholstery,** N'Shape Designs; **chair fabrics,** Kravet; **lamp, lampshade,** RomEla Antique Lighting; **antique maps, framing,** D & E Lake Fine Arts.





The rope handrail is a whimsical nod to the seaside locale

**< PRIORITIZE PRACTICALITY** Because the guest suite is small, Philip had to maximize space with clever storage solutions. Along one wall of this narrow hallway, he put in a bar with fully stocked cabinets, a mini fridge and sink. Directly opposite, built-in drawers and shelving function as clothing storage (not shown). **Cabinets**, Bellini Custom Cabinetry; **hardware**, The Door Store; **countertop, backsplash**, Ast Stone.



**< GIVE OLD FINDS NEW LIFE**

Oil paintings, boat etchings and photographs that used to hang in the couple's Toronto home and previous Chester house became a curated collection in the stairwell that leads up to the coach house apartment. **Pendant light**, RomEla Antique Lighting; **handrail hardware**, The Door Store.

**> EMPHASIZE HISTORICAL DETAILS**

In the bathroom, the floor was modelled after a 1940s lavatory, and to give the room a vintage feel, Philip used practical black grout. The inset mosaic border is antique Labrador brown granite, as are the tub deck, shower sills and jam. The tilework continues in the shower, where a tiny window overlooks the ocean. The handy little table beside the sink is a local antique. **Faucets, accessories**, Ginger's; **sconces**, Summerhill Hardware; **tub deck**, Ast Stone; **mosaic floor tile**, Saltillo Imports.



**▲ MAKE NOOKS AND CRANNIES WORK HARDER**

At the top of the stairs, a window seat affords a pretty vista. **Blind fabric**, Tessuti Uno; **window**, Ridley Windows & Doors; **radiator mesh**, Summerhill Hardware.





**MATCH YOUR DESIGN TO EXISTING STRUCTURES**

Despite being a new-build, the coach house was designed to look old. Philip went for divided windows, an Enviroshake roof that looks like authentic cedar and trim details true to the period of the main cottage, which was built in 1795. Pretty hydrangea bushes keep the coach house totally private.



*Adirondack chairs complement the classic white siding*

**> CREATE A PRIVATE RETREAT**

This secluded terrace overlooks the main house's gardens and the ocean beyond, so guests can enjoy the view with their morning coffee.

**Windows,** Ridley Windows & Doors; **chairs,** Blue Shutters Antiques; **composite cedar roof,** Enviroshake; **sconces,** Sescolite.

**CREATURE COMFORTS**

DESIGNER PHILIP MITCHELL'S CHEAT SHEET FOR HELPING YOUR GUESTS FEEL AT HOME.



**SNACK TIME** Stock a kitchenette with a coffeemaker, wine fridge and all the fixings for late-night snacks. **Glassware,** William Ashley China.



**THE WRITE STUFF** Fill a small desk with pens, paper, stationery, notepads, envelopes and stamps for guests.



**COSY UP** Steal a page from boutique hotels and provide visitors with extra blankets, a hair dryer, plush bathrobes and even a variety of pillows.