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Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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. In
Living
Color

CONNECTICUT COTTAGES & GARDENS FEBRUARY 2015

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DESIGNER
ROBIN MCGARRY
FILLS A FAMILY HOME
WITH LIVELY COLOR
AND SUMPTUOUS
TEXTURES



THE BRIGHT SIDE

BY ALEXA STEVENSON
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Complementary Colors A red purse (ABOVE) provides a bright pop of color in an upstairs bedroom. Benjamin Moore's Grenada Green covers the walls in the sitting room (LEFT). The lumbar pillows on the sofa are made of Maxwell Fabrics' Elana in Coral Reef. The pillow on the Baker chair is in a Jim Thompson fabric. See Resources.



Purple Reign (ABOVE) Ottomans covered in an eggplant-colored fabric from Arc Com rest on a vegetable-dyed rug from Alix Unlimited in the living room. **Bold Beginning** (OPPOSITE PAGE) A bench covered in an eye-popping stripe from Zimmer + Rohde greets visitors in the entryway.

THANKS TO NETFLIX, we know that orange is the new black. But a vibrant house proves that orange isn't alone: Apple green, Chinese red and a host of other colors are having their moment. "I've always enjoyed a lot of color—probably overdone it!" says the homeowner. "And I've always had color where I lived, but have played with different spectrums." When she and her family moved into a traditional shingle-style house, she wanted to belie its traditional exterior with a bold statement inside. "When I looked for a designer," she says, "I focused on designers who used colors I liked." The homeowner enlisted Connecticut designer Robin McGarry, who immediately understood her vision. "It was a traditional house, and she wanted take it out of being too predictable. What made this a great project—was the clients' adventurous spirit and lack of inhibitions to be daring with color and patterns."

The clients' willingness to have fun with color and pattern is evident from the first step inside the house. A bold stripe featuring a peppy apple green—a favorite color of the homeowner—from Zimmer + Rohde covers a bench in the entryway. "She loved the whimsical feel of the fabric, and when people walk in they know they will have a fun experience," says McGarry. Beyond the entrance, pattern and color reign supreme. Under McGarry's deft hand, rooms are vibrant without being overpowering and seamlessly blend into one another. "I can pick up a pillow in one room and place it in another, and it works," says the homeowner. "But you never get the feeling we used the same color palette in every room."

For the main living areas, McGarry started with the floor coverings. "I always start with the rugs to set the tone and color palette for each space." In the dining room, a hand-knotted, vegetable-dyed rug sets the





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Rhapsody In Blue Sapphire blue fabric from Jacques Bouvet covers the dining room chairs. Floral arrangements are by the Silk Touch. A piece of art from the client's collection hangs above a bar cabinet finished in gold leaf. Walls are covered in a dimensional Koroseal covering. See Resources.



All About Blue
(OPPOSITE PAGE) A neutral sofa in the “blue room” lets the various patterns—curtains made of a blue and green ikat from Schumacher and pillows covered in Duralee—have their moment. Paint is Benjamin Moore’s Stratton Blue. See *Resources*.

Working It (LEFT) A Cherner chair provides comfortable seating in the office, where an Alix Unlimited hand-knotted rug provides a pop of color. Built-in cabinets with frosted-glass fronts conceal craft and art supplies. A Pearson Furniture Company bench (BELOW LEFT) is upholstered in a red hexagon Larsen fabric. See *Resources*.



stage for lavender walls punctuated with deep blue chairs. A bar cabinet has a gold-leaf finish, and the combination creates an almost glowing effect. Another vegetable-dyed rug found a home in the sitting room, where the client wanted to once again use that beloved apple green. This time, it saturates the walls and is punctuated with blue and pops of Chinese red (a shade found in almost every room) in the pillows and the artwork. “The client has an impressive collection of artwork,” says McGarry. “She has an appreciation for good work and art. And the home reflects that.”

The living room rug subtly pulls together greens and purples. The space is kept a little bit quieter to highlight the artwork and a clever mix of furniture styles—a spider table sits comfortably with an acrylic side table and a painted chest. Mastering the mix, especially when generously using color and pattern, is crucial to good design. “The client appreciates the value of the composition of the room,” notes McGarry. “The mix of furniture added an unexpected and unpredictable twist.”

In contrast with the home’s traditional exterior, the interior is now very livable and inviting. “Robin is a creative force. She really listened to me and would figure out a creative way to incorporate pieces I wanted,” notes the client. “If you drive up to the house, it feels formal. But when you walk in, it’s much more informal and comfortable. I don’t have one room that people would be scared to step into.” ✨

