

Country Living

Dream Rooms

**99 Inspiring
Design Ideas**

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Hale Navy
Benjamin Moore
(also used on
dining chairs)

Righting the Ship

When Martha MacCallum found the ideal Cape Cod escape, the news anchor refused to let a few dated details take the wind out of her sails. Instead, she freshened up the interiors with paint and fabric—in record time.

written by ADA CALHOUN | photographs by MAX KIM-BEE | styling by KARIN LIDBECK-BRENT



THIS PAGE The sunroom, furnished with a Frontgate wicker set, overlooks Cape Cod's Little Mill Pond.
OPPOSITE PAGE Martha MacCallum and her husband, Dan, gather in the dining area with their children (from left), Reed, Elizabeth, and Harry. The aerial photograph of the neighborhood was taken by Kelsey-Kennard in the 1960s.



Monterey White
Benjamin Moore
(also used in
upstairs hallway)

Three years ago, Fox News anchor Martha MacCallum's dream house went on the market. The shingled Colonial was situated next to Little Mill Pond, a quiet inlet that cuts into Chatham, Massachusetts, on the elbow of Cape Cod. But that's not what sold this mother of three. "It had five bathrooms!" Martha says. "It was perfect."

Well, almost. Built in the 1960s and remodeled over the next two decades, the home felt dark, especially considering its quintessential seaside location. Decidedly un-Cape Cod-like details—such as a disco era's worth of wood paneling—dominated almost every room. Instead of stripping the structure down to the studs, Martha and her husband, Dan, vice president of a New Jersey-based family business, were determined to spruce the place up quickly. They closed in August, with an ambitious goal: to host Thanksgiving there that fall.

"All it needed was paint," Martha recalls. "A lot of beach houses are really neutral, but I like when the colors of nature—yellows, greens, blues—explode inside." She enlisted a friend, interior designer Michael Maher, to help meet her self-imposed deadline. "We decorated on speed dial," Martha admits. She and Maher selected a creamy maize hue to cover most of the wood paneling and painted her daughter Elizabeth's room a vibrant turquoise. In the dining area, both the floors and the chairs sport the same high-gloss blue, creating the illusion that the seats are afloat at sea.

Rather than purchase all new furnishings, Maher reupholstered things the family already owned. Martha scored several new-to-her pieces from the property's previous *(continued on page 99)*

"It's sort of beachy and relaxed but sophisticated, all at the same time," says Martha MacCallum

ABOVE The family painted over the living room's dark-pine paneling and then reupholstered their old sofa in a complementary hue. The rattan armchairs date to the 1940s, while the maps of Nantucket Sound are from 1874. OPPOSITE PAGE Martha acquired this antique bench—a perfect fit for the front hall—from the home's former owners.



bright idea!

Old nautical flags make clever curtains.

THIS PAGE Three iron beds from Garnet Hill allow the boys' room to accommodate an overnight guest. Striped L.L. Bean blankets echo the Ralph Lauren wallpaper, while framed anchor prints and maritime-themed throw pillows enhance the seafaring vibe.

OPPOSITE PAGE Martha and Dan left the rough-hewn paneling in the mudroom untouched and accented the space with pennants from their kids' sailing competitions.

Martha outfitted the kids' rooms with extra twin beds, so they'll always be ready for slumber parties. "I love that dorm feeling," she says.



Caribbean Cool
Benjamin Moore



Patriotic White
Benjamin Moore

(continued from page 94) residents and filled in the blanks with accessories from area shops and garage sales. The goal? Interiors that referenced the home's coastal location without resorting to tired seashell motifs. Hence, the fabrics in sunny yellows and soothing pale blues, the captain's chairs and nautical flags, the anchor prints and vintage sailboat photos. "It's sort of beachy and relaxed but sophisticated, all at the same time," says Martha. And yes, it was completed on schedule.

This particular makeover, however, was anything but instant. Martha, who was raised in Bergen County, New Jersey, had spent a lifetime fantasizing about the ideal Cape Cod compound. "My parents rented a house in Chatham for two weeks every summer," she says. "I wanted my kids to get to know every nook and cranny of this little town, just like I did."

As soon as school's out, Martha's children decamp from their home in New Jersey and head to Cape Cod. "They get to spend a lot of time at the beach with their grandparents," she explains. And with their friends: Martha outfitted the kids' rooms with extra twin beds for sleepovers. "I love that dorm feeling," she says. A fleet of 10 bikes, many purchased at garage sales for under \$25, offers transport anytime the gang wants to pedal to the nearby nature preserve or to the local boatmaker's.

"The kids have a lot of freedom here," says Martha—though they can forget about technology. "There are no video games, and they don't sit around on the computer," she reveals. "They go down to the public dock and jump off for hours. It's a Norman Rockwell kind of existence." ♦

ABOVE LEFT The closets that line the upstairs hallway store games and puzzles. Martha bought the wicker chairs and lattice-work pillows at Chatham shop Midsummer Nights; the sailboat photos are yard-sale finds.

ABOVE RIGHT Custom linen drapes frame views of Little Mill Pond in the master bedroom.

OPPOSITE PAGE Headboards, upholstered in an ikat print by Quadrille, flank a Bungalow 5 nightstand in Elizabeth's room. Small throw pillows by Jonathan Adler and cotton sari blankets layer on extra personality.



The 12-foot porch ceiling aligns with indoor ceiling, Maher notes, "so it's a true extension of the interior, with comfortable seating and a place to eat." Fans and citronella candles repel insects from the un-screened space. **OPPOSITE:** In the stylishly utilitarian potting shed, Maher installed a flint faucet over an old zinc bathtub's pantry sink set atop iron sawhorses. An early 20th-century Tramp Art mirror adorns a wall painted in a decorative finish. **FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES.**