

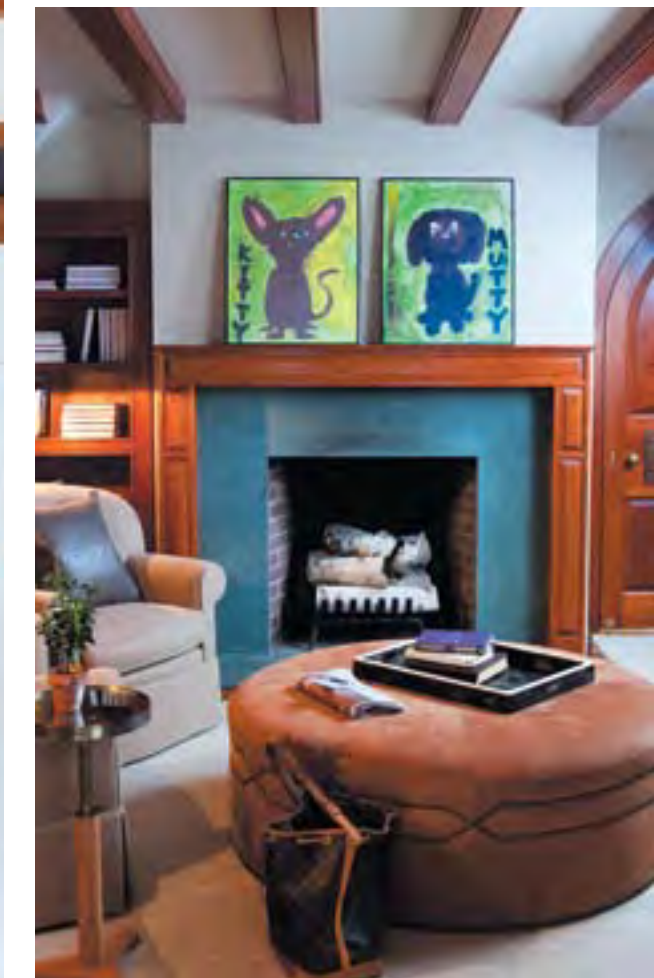
History Lesson The Belle Haven community knows this property well; it belonged to the Mead family, which owned hundreds of acres in the Greenwich area. The original house on this plot of land was built in the late 1790s. More than a century later, cow barns were converted to living quarters, pictured here. See [Resources](#).

Barn Dance

A DEFT DESIGNER INTRODUCES MODERN MOVES SURPRISINGLY IN TUNE WITH AN UNUSUAL OLD HOME

BY MARIA LAPIANA | PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEITH SCOTT MORTON | STYLED BY COREY GRANT TIPPIN

Night Gallery Painted barn doors slide open to reveal the living room, a space designer Alicia Orrick saw initially as dark and moody. She instinctively imagined it as a “night room” and gave it a pub-like feel, perfect for entertaining. An Elizabeth Eakins rug stands out against the reclaimed wood floors. The table and nail-trimmed ottomans are from Holly Hunt. **Good Read** In the cozy library (FAR RIGHT) the custom ottoman was designed by O&CO; the chair fabric is by Rogers & Goffigon; the pillows and tray are from Bungalow in Westport. See Resources.



IT ISN'T EVERY DAY

an interior designer feels an affinity for a home so palpable that it flat-out takes her breath away.

But a fateful bond is exactly what Alicia Orrick experienced the first time she drove up to the unusual barn home she'd been hired to decorate. She doesn't remember if her heart stopped, or if it started pounding wildly in her chest, when she realized she'd clipped this very house out of a magazine years ago—to serve as inspiration for her own home.

“I'd never been inside, but I knew immediately it was the same place,” remembers Orrick. She was at once stunned—and “thrilled.”

“This is a home that casts a spell on you,” she says. “From the moment you walk in, you're transported to a different place and time.” A year into the project, the passion she felt from the start still inspires her.



Cow barns dating from the 1790s comprise the main house, which sits on the original Mead estate in Belle Haven, a peninsula to the west of Greenwich Harbor. The well-documented property remained in the Mead family for well over a century; the barns were converted into living quarters by interim owners in the 1940s. Today the barn compound includes a guesthouse, pool, squash court and climbing gym.

The homeowners—a couple with three young children—were “ankle-deep in a renovation project” when they saw the house and fell for it. “We love older homes,” says the wife. “New houses just don’t resonate with us. We love the warmth and character and quirkiness. We weren’t necessarily looking for a barn ... but we loved it as soon as we saw it.”

They commissioned Orrick (of Orrick & Company in Greenwich) to

furnish family-friendly rooms that would honor the structure’s agrarian history and strong old bones—even as its overall style would lean toward the sophisticated. “They loved the barn space so much they wanted to maximize its beauty,” says Orrick, “and the house is so dynamic, I knew that each room was going to tell a story.”

They decided early on that a mix of contemporary furnishings against old wood was the way to go. “I knew that adding more barn-type furniture would weaken the story,” says Orrick. “I wanted to create contrast and tension in the space. Everything we love in life, whether food, fashion or art, needs contrast and tension to keep it fully alive.”

“The entrance is dramatic, so it had to introduce the narrative of the house,” says Orrick. “You immediately see the big white sliding doors and



Lounging Around In one of two mirror-image sitting areas (ABOVE) in the living room, the designer created a distinctly grown-up, “cocktail lounge” feel. The sectional sofa is from Edward Ferrell Ltd., the fabric from Yoma Textiles and the coffee table from Christian Liaigre. **Side Dish** The dining room (RIGHT) features a simple, sophisticated mix of materials. The table is from Christian Liaigre, the chairs and chandelier from Holly Hunt. Chair fabric is from Donghia. See Resources.



Tall Storey The home's previous owners carved out three floors from the voluminous space inside the barn and added Arts & Crafts details throughout. Beyond the third-floor arched window is a TV/recreation room. See Resources.



Gathering Room Designed to accommodate a variety of activities, the family room (ABOVE) is styled for comfort. The sofa and chandelier are from Mis en Scene in Greenwich, the rug from Elizabeth Eakins. The game table is from Holly Hunt. **Compound Interest** The backyard stone patio (BELOW) provides a variety of seating options in the middle of the family compound. This view is from the lawn that separates the main house and several outbuildings, including a guesthouse and squash court. A pool sits beyond the trees at left. See Resources.





fireplace in the living room. There's an element of the theatrical about it."

The space is pleasantly symmetrical; at center stage, the fireplace is flanked by twin banquettes; in front, a table and pair of cylindrical nail-trimmed ottomans by Holly Hunt take a bow. The living room opens up on both sides to mirror-image sitting areas, where sectionals are upholstered in the deepest, most riveting shade of blue. "[The blue] was a big decision," says the homeowner. "But the thinking was if we didn't make it fun and different, everyone would end up in the family room."

No slouch, the family room is striking in itself. It can accommodate a variety of activities (says the designer: "I love it when spaces keep on going!"). But its commanding proportions demanded a central strong element: Enter a sprawling petrified teak table topped with Lucite—for a practical and contemporary edge—adding just the necessary spark.

The dining room is a study in dark wood against white walls. Upholstered chairs soften the space, while a bold steel light fixture over the table gives it strength. Pieces from the homeowners' art collection (many of them contemporary photographs) inject personality here, and throughout the house.

The second floor is the family's private domain. Each of the couple's three daughters had a hand in designing her room—from colors to canopy beds. An added bonus is a designated craft room, situated nearby to keep the girls' muses flowing.

The master suite is a symphony of soothing, neutral colors, diffused light, and a contrast of old and new. It is by far the wife's most comforting corner of the house.

"I just love all the tones—and my own dressing room. It's nice to have that. I find it all very peaceful," she says.

"The whole house fits our family perfectly," she adds. "I envision us here forever." She has one intuitive designer—and a bit of serendipity—to thank for that. ✨

Personal Best It was important that every family member's personality shine through, especially in the bedrooms. One daughter wanted a plush, curtained bed (LEFT) with an eye-popping chaise; while another preferred a more subtle space (BOTTOM RIGHT) with an elegant upholstered headboard. The master bedroom (CENTER, RIGHT) was designed as a retreat for the couple, with a calming, neutral palette. All bedding is from Lynnens in Greenwich. **Something Crafty** A room in the children's wing (TOP RIGHT) was designated as a craft studio, complete with worktable from Mecox Gardens and practical built-in cubbies. See *Resources*.

