



A Sublime Setting

A Beautiful Home, Inside and Out

W

hen looking for the perfect home, the parcel on which it sits can be equally important. Cheryl and Mark Carbeau got the best of both worlds when they purchased their 4,200-square-foot Dutch-colonial in June 2008. In their move from Texas to Massachusetts, the Carbeaus sought a home that would suit the needs of their young family, which

includes three children, now ages 14, 12 and 6, plus one playful labradoodle. Determining their ideal location presented several challenges for Cheryl and Mark. Cheryl, originally from Marblehead, favored a community with a vibrant downtown. Mark grew up on a cattle ranch in the Midwest and desired open spaces. Their search for a compromise led them to Concord, where their home is just a short distance from the busy center of town, yet surrounded by vast and charming conservation land.

The Carbeaus decided on a new house that had the character and qualities of an older home, which both appreciated and were accustomed to. Though the home was new, the land came with some history. Formerly Macone Farm, which was established by Italian immigrants and known for its Italian vegetables, the area was divided into four housing plots. The Carbeaus' property features an original piece of Macone Farm's entry gate, which serves as a unique exterior design element as well as an interesting conversation piece.

"We weren't necessarily looking for a new house, but we came upon this one and it had a lot of beautiful, natural details in a setting that's very mature," Cheryl says. "It has beautiful, natural lighting no matter what room you are in, and it also has a ton of built-ins and nooks and crannies that typically you don't find in a new house."

In addition to the blend of older-style architectural details and contemporary atmosphere, the use of space in the home fit the Carbeaus' lifestyle.

"We like the layout and the flow of the house. We like to entertain; we have a large extended family and we love it when friends stop by, or the kids bring

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by **Beth Daigle**
photos by **Eric Roth**



Opposite page: The front seating area of the living room looks out onto the tranquil pond and features two tables that interior designer Carol Sarason treated with a burlap and lacquer finish. This page: A closer examination of the small burlap-topped tables reveals the unique look and feel that this simple treatment adds to an otherwise typical tabletop.



In addition to the black French doors and grass cloth-covered ceiling, the living room's main seating delivers a dramatic pop of color from a wall-mounted, red feather headdress from Cameroon. It picks up on other red notes in the room and reminded designer Carol Sarason of flower photos she'd seen in another part of the home.



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their school friends home,” Mark says. “The open floor plan between the family room, kitchen and screened-in porch, which are really connected as one room, is a great living space.”

That living space extends outside, where an undeniable synergy exists between the landscape and the interior. Looking out from the front of the house, your gaze falls onto a picturesque pond that provides a habitat for wildlife and a place for the family to fish or take a quiet ride in a kayak.

The Carbeaus’ love of nature and landscape (Mark is an avid gardener) has encouraged them to create connections between their interior and exterior spaces as often as possible. With help from Concord interior designer Carol Sarason, the

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”

~ Mark Carbeau

Carbeaus have injected color, personality and sophistication into their rooms while maintaining an earthy sense of relaxed style.

“Carol has a very playful, and a little bit contemporary, feel,” Cheryl says. “We worked really well together.”

Sarason’s thoughtful brand of design enabled the Carbeaus to achieve a desired neutral palette with pops of color that can be added or removed depending on the season. She also employed a sensible approach that considered repurposing

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Top: The exterior of the home is beautifully landscaped and features much of Mark Carbeau’s own handiwork. Bottom: Cheryl Carbeau walks the couple’s dog, Gracie, along the man-made pond that can be seen directly from their front windows. Turtles, foxes, deer, frogs, beavers and a bounty of fish and birds have all been seen in or near the pond.

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Colorful window treatments, chair cushions and a rug by Company C add energy to the kitchen. Plato cabinetry and Brazilian granite add warmth. To the right of this space, see page 1, is a breakfast nook featuring a blue banquette purchased for its bold color and comfortable seating, as well as its high back intended to mask the view of the grill area outside.



The formerly cumbersome leather couch is now upholstered in a light fabric with a slight curve promoting ease of movement. Blues and reds were brought in for color, and the Imperial Trellis pattern on the drapes and pillow acts as a subtle reference to the trellis outside.



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items rather than purchasing new.

Fostering collaboration with her clients is important to Sarason as she works to achieve a look that best reflects their tastes. She draws inspiration from each home the moment she walks through the door.

“Every house is different, but if we are going to use an example, Mark and Cheryl’s house is a great one because the setting is sublime,” Sarason says. “We wanted the inside of that house to feel as inviting and as warm as the setting. The setting offers you so many opportunities to explore.”

Defining their style as “understated elegance,” the Carbeaus chose to combine some of the finer items they’ve collected over the years with less formal pieces in order to create an environment where family and friends can gather with ease.

“We want people to feel comfortable

“

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~ Carol Sarason

hanging out here, but at the same time be a little bit elegant,” Mark says.

One of the first steps toward achieving this goal was Sarason’s mission to reuse a bulky, but well built leather couch that the Carbeaus brought from Texas. Rather than discard it, they reupholstered it and placed it in the family room.

“New is not always better,” Sarason says. “They were a little apprehensive [about the couch], but it worked.”

One of Sarason’s first thoughts was that the home needed color. She knew the Carbeaus would be open to the idea when she noticed their own choice of teal and eggplant-colored grass cloth in a small mudroom during her first visit to the home. She also noted wall art featuring photographs of colorful flowers.

“I thought, these people love color,”

Sarason says. “I’ve got great stuff to work with here.”

Sarason started with a blank slate in the formal living room. The space was bare, and the white trim, white cabinetry and white coffered ceiling looked stark. Sarason added color and texture, and in what she considers one of the most overlooked opportunities for change, she introduced a deep brown grass cloth to the ceiling.

“Grass cloth can give you more than paint ever could,” Sarason says. “When we put all that brown up against the white trim, you get the power of contrast and it’s fabulous.”

In another thoughtful move, Sarason opted for black paint on the French doors leading from the living room into Mark’s office. This break from the white trim added depth and served as a visual separation in the living room between the window and main seating areas.

Additional texture was brought to this room via the tabletops. Sarason had the surfaces of the sofa table and side table creatively wrapped in burlap and painted with a durable lacquer finish.

Sarason believes her work added warmth and personality to the Carbeaus’ home and also enabled it to reflect the family’s history and interests. Her keen sense of style, coupled with an intuitive connection to her clients, produced an environment that is tasteful, interesting, welcoming and aesthetically pleasing.

“I love all of the color,” Cheryl says. “It makes me feel comfortable and happy here.”

“And for me,” adds Mark, “my favorite thing is how we connect the outside with the inside. There are interesting layers inside, and then you catch a window and you see something out there and they go together. The colors work, the textures work and there’s a certain harmony that comes from it.” mvm

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