



all in the summer

A Bedford home feels seasonable all year round

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE FREIHON

EVERYDAY ESCAPE
Puddles, one of ten family pets, leads Cullen, Dillon, Adrienne, Mollie, and Danielle Morgan back to the main house from the two-story pool house, built by Chris Amundson of American Development Corp. in Mahopac





COUNTRY LIVING Adrienne and Finnigan exit the barn to start the day with a morning lesson; Puddles greets visitors on the front porch—the door was custom-made from reclaimed wood; the stars, suspended from the wisteria-covered pergola, are Adrienne’s touch of whimsy.

ONE DAY IN THE EARLY 1990s, Adrienne Morgan and her husband, Ronnie, started looking for a place to keep horses, a lifelong passion of Adrienne’s. After a brief dalliance with North Salem, the Manhattanites found a promising setting in Bedford—a 20-year-old house on a densely wooded nine-acre lot that didn’t present itself as “horse property,” but certainly had potential.

“The residence was a 1970s Williamsburg colonial,” recalls architect Gordon Kahn, whom the couple hired to redesign the house. Kahn’s first task was to listen. “I asked the Morgans what they liked about the existing house and what new spaces and details they had on their wish lists. Adrienne said she liked the house’s old-style touches—paneling in the front hall, for instance—but she wanted to make it more open and light and incorporate traditional farmhouse-inspired details. Adrienne and Ronnie love to be with their four kids, so they needed a big room for family.”

“Gordon is a great listener,” says Adrienne. “I met him and we hit it off immediately, so I didn’t need to interview any other architects.” After taking a lot of notes, Kahn summarized what he was hearing, and then presented







the Morgans with lots of ideas—many with added twists to make them more interesting—ultimately keeping in mind that both house and horses were part and parcel of the redesigned property.

“Gordon joined us after we had been living in the house for enough time that we really knew what worked and what didn’t,” explains Adrienne. “While the only reconfiguring we did of the original house was to the third floor, we did make a significant addition to the first floor by pushing out the kitchen, removing an old sunroom, and adding a spacious great room, plus an adjacent breakfast room, mudroom, and laundry room.”

In keeping with the farmhouse theme, Kahn completely restyled the exterior, adding shingle siding;

IN AND OUT
The sunroom, above, is a transitional space where the line between indoor and outdoor is blurred. The beams in the great room, left, were reclaimed from a Vermont farmhouse.



VARIED VIGNETTES Kahn designed the kitchen as a series of vignettes: the bay window, the storage/display nook (right), the cooking hearth, and the island. Adrienne came up with the idea for a variation of storage styles—open with brackets, closed, chicken wire, glass, and curtained. The result is a cozy, special place that isn't "fitted."

a gracious, rocking chair-worthy front porch; gables; shed dormers; and a charming brick patio tucked under a vine-covered pergola. Stepping through the custom-made plank front door, a visitor arrives in the very hall that inspired Adrienne's directives to Kahn. A cozy den to the right, with its vibrant tiled fireplace surround and hearth, serves as a TV room for the four Morgan children. A staircase to the left sweeps up to the second- and third-floor bedrooms. Straight ahead is the light-filled heart of the home—the kitchen, anchored by an oversized island. "We like using reclaimed materials in a way that they look like they belong," says Kahn, who practices in Manhattan and lives in Pound Ridge. "So when it came time to design the kitchen island, Adrienne found an old piece of furniture at Apple Antiques in Mt. Kisco, and we had Bruce Conner, an immensely talented carpenter, modify it and repurpose it."

An enthusiastic cook, Adrienne wanted a kitchen that she could work in while the kids snacked or did homework nearby. Kahn designed a bright space accented by reclaimed beams and recessed nooks. The kitchen is open to both a breakfast room and a great room where custom paneled millwork, modeled after the original paneling in the entry hall, adds definition to the expansive space. A loft, accessible by ladder from the two-story great room and furnished with an ample down featherbed, is a favorite location for sleepovers. A charming dining room





SHANGRI-LA
The master suite is a fanciful intermix of functional lines and ethereal softness. "Our bedroom is my favorite place in the house," says Adrienne. "It's a peaceful place to escape and relax."



with pale yellow walls is reserved for extended family gatherings, like Thanksgiving, as most of the time the family prefers to eat in the kitchen or breakfast room.

Stripped pine and white slip-covered furniture lend an airy, summer-house feel to this hide-away in the woods. The children's rooms have the same beach-cottage feel, but are each personalized with their own selected colors and patterns. Together the children share two baths—one for boys and one for girls—and an open second-floor porch perfect for nighttime star-gazing.

The unfinished third floor was targeted as the next project once the first-floor renovations were complete. There weren't any windows, and from the odor Adrienne knew "something" had been living up there. With a talent for envisioning the "after," she had been dreaming about a tranquil aerie where she and Ronnie could get away and relax. It was time to call Gordon Kahn again. "Adrienne partnered with us more than most homeowners do," says Kahn. "We took her ideas and melded them with ours. For example, Adrienne loves wood with whitewash. It was her idea to line the walls and ceiling of the third-floor master suite with the painted butt-jointed siding. The space we had to work with answered the questions about layout, and the rooflines determined where the walk-in closet and bathroom would go. Our job was bringing in the light, adding a peak for headroom, siting the bathtub in the big bay window, and designing the balcony overlooking the pool."

Prior to renovating the main house, the Morgans had built a barn and paddocks for Adrienne's horses. Transforming a portion of the property from forest to fields was a huge undertaking. "We felt strongly about not clear-cutting and were careful to keep many of the big, old trees in the





OUTDOOR OASIS
 The path of the sun and the importance of interaction between the main house and the pool house were key to Kahn's siting of the pool and pool house. Adrienne and her landscaper, John Santorini, created the gardens and paths that connect and surround the structures.

fields, so the horses would have lots of shade," says Adrienne. "By only clearing selected areas, we really opened up the property and gave it that farm-like look that I love."

Once the transformations of their home and property were complete, the Morgans were ready to focus on a non-equine form of recreation—swimming. Kahn laid out the rectangular pool to reflect the trees and the house and designed a complementary pool house. The two-story structure featuring a massive fireplace of stacked fieldstone was built by Chris Amundson. Glass-block walls line the bathroom, allowing light to filter through to the interior.

Generous use of stone throughout the property helps ground the structures to the land and tie them to one another. Kahn's keen eye for details and Adrienne's sure sense of style have married so well that the property has just about reached its full potential. Next up? A renovation of the old garage, including a second-floor dance studio that will feature ballet barres embedded in walls of glass, fulfilling Adrienne's wish for light, and Gordon Kahn's twist on the traditional. ■

