



Raising *the* Barn

A designer and her husband
create a showstopping coastal
home from a centuries-old
barn on Nantucket.

By Madeline Bilis
Photographed by Julie Bidwell



The 250-year-old barn that designer Tanya McQueen Forman set out to transform into a modern-day home has been no stranger to big changes. Originally built on a dairy farm in New Jersey, the antique structure was dismantled and transported to its current spot on Nantucket via boat in the 1990s. Still, when onlookers suggested it might be easier to tear the thing down and build an entirely new house, McQueen Forman and her husband, producer Tom Forman, knew they couldn't let the building's



Opposite page: The barn's original, 200-year-old wood beams. Clockwise from top: The homeowners spent a year scouring antique shops and estate sales and worked with local craftspeople and contractors for a mix of old and one-of-a-kind pieces that feel authentic and capture Nantucket's charm.



story end with them.

"The house, for better or worse, is very us: a little old, a little weird, totally memorable," Forman says.

Their goal was to merge the barn's historical elements with contemporary updates, resulting in a coastal retreat that's equal parts charming and comfortable. "We were looking to honor everything that made us fall in love with the barn in the first place," McQueen Forman says.

Among those things was the grand scale of the centuries-old construction, which is evident from a glance at its

facade. In place of barn doors that once shuttled in cattle, oversized windows now let in lots of sunlight to the place instead—and offer leafy views of the East End of the island.

Inside, soaring beamed ceilings and original wood floorboards on the main level set a stately tone for the rest of the home. Here, an open-concept layout allows for distinct zones: A tall brick fireplace anchors the living area and provides framing for a custom fiber art piece by artist Alex Buchanan on the mantle.

Beside the fireplace, a one-of-a-kind bar offers a



From top: The lighting fixture in the dining room is repurposed from the renowned Texas Round Top antique fair; two large windows overlook the property. Opposite page: Stripped deep wood drawers complement the soapstone counter.



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stylish spot for entertaining. McQueen Forman knew the vintage rattan-and-zinc piece was meant for the space; she had contractors remove a wall of windows to install the bar since it couldn't fit through the doors. "It was absolutely worth it," McQueen notes. "It looks like it was meant to be there!" A set of three custom gold stools adds sparkle to the natural elements of the bar—they're front-row seats to homemade cocktails, as well as the books and nautical knickknacks displayed on the shelves behind it.

Paneled teal walls create a partition between the kitchen and the rest of the main living area. Beyond them, soapstone countertops and a deep farmhouse sink complement oak cabinets painted in Benjamin Moore's Blue Note. A shining True Residential stove, range and hood add a



Clockwise from top: In the bathroom, a custom-made marble vanity lies beneath a Signature Hardware mirror that bounces light from the far window; the leather bench at the end of the bed was an Etsy find. Forman's office features a raw planked wood desk curated by Bobo Intriguing Objects and tall custom-designed armoires that elongate the room's height as well as offer storage.



Situated on Nantucket's desirable East End, the exterior facade of the barn, with its tall shrubbery and hydrangea bushes, alludes to the charm within.

decidedly modern twist to the rustic workspace, as does a glass-fronted fridge, which guests can access from the living room side of the teal walls.

The couple added a playfully decorated finished basement onto the barn during the renovation, increasing its total living space to 4,000 square feet. Elsewhere, five bedrooms and five bathrooms make for plenty of room for the couple's grown children, family members and friends to visit. Each sleeping space offers personality-filled touches—botanical wallpaper in one, a sea foam green-painted bed frame in another.

"Generally, the homes on Nantucket have a traditional, iconic New England feel, but the barn is something all its own," McQueen Forman says. "It gave us an opportunity to be uniquely ourselves and to create a home for our family on the island that feels like us." ■



DESIGN DETAILS

TYPE
Single-family home

LOCATION
Nantucket

INTERIOR DESIGN
Tanya McQueen Forman
tanyamcqueen.com

BUILDERS
Michael Toole, general contractor
Jeremy Trotter, cabinetry
Dainoras Raudonius, carpentry

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
Taylor Hughes, Hughes Landscape
hugheslandscapeack.com

RESOURCES

ETSY
Bathroom leather pulls; living room square coffee table; primary bedroom bench; basement bedside tables
etsy.com

FARROW & BALL
First-floor full bath paint in Inchyra Blue; basement paint in De Nimes
farrow-ball.com

FOUR HANDS
Dining room table; living room sofas and armchairs; den rug
fourhands.com