

New England HOME

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High Style

FOR THE NEW YEAR



The living room's pale walls make a gallery-like backdrop for the homeowners' art collection, including the moody maritime scene by nineteenth-century artist Antonio Jacobsen that hangs above the original marble fireplace. **RIGHT:** A scarlet velvet loveseat and a floral linen sofa make an unexpected but lovely pairing.



TRUE COLORS

There is plenty that's old—but nothing old-fashioned—
in this Beacon Hill townhouse.

TEXT BY PAULA M. BODAH | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARAH WINCHESTER
PRODUCED BY KARIN LIDBECK BRENT



ABOVE: Homeowners Nancy and James Schibanoff found the chest on stand at the W.A. Smith auction house in New Hampshire.

RIGHT: The dining room walls wear de Gournay's showstopping Abbotsford mural wallpaper. A glossy strié tea paper on the ceiling is an additional touch of glamour.

Nancy and James Schibanoff had always been drawn to the historical. In southern California, where they spent most of their married life and raised their three children,





they got involved in local preservation efforts to save an early twentieth-century Mission Revival house that now sits on the National Register of Historic Places. For their own home, they sought out eighteenth-century English furniture, collected eighteenth- and nineteenth-century art, and amassed a trove of classic blue Delft tiles. So when they decided it was time to move east to be closer to their grown children and the grandkids, Boston—specifically historic Beacon Hill—seemed a natural place to settle. Located on what interior designer Gerald Pomeroy calls “maybe the most beautiful street in Boston,” the 1829 townhouse they fell in love with was almost impeccably preserved. Most of the home’s original architectural details, from the simple, elegant millwork throughout to the living room’s parquet floor and classic marble fireplace, had survived for almost two centuries.



Three of the home's four floors (the top two are devoted to bedrooms) needed little more than a decorative redo to freshen things up and better reflect Nancy and James's own sophisticated-but-relaxed style. The garden level, however, designer Pomeroy and his clients agreed, needed some additional intervention. The space comprised a series of small, dark rooms, including a galley kitchen, a full bath, and a small living room with a flagstone fireplace. "I'd look at that fireplace and it would irritate me," James recalls. "It might have been great in a mountain house, but it didn't seem right for Beacon Hill."

Pomeroy and architect Ruth Bennett reconfigured things, eliminating walls and enlarging windows to create an open space with an expanded kitchen, a sunny casual dining nook, and an airy sitting area. Nancy and James's Delft tiles are now on proud display on both the new fireplace and the kitchen's backsplash.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The owners' collection of Staffordshire dinnerware, displayed in the dining area, inspired designer Gerald Pomeroy's choice of the garden level's blue-and-white palette. Golden yellow fabric adds a sunny note to the sitting area; the Schibanoffs collected the Delft tiles around the fireplace over the years. The kitchen backsplash sports more Delft tiles. The garden-level powder room was treated to a bold Thibaut wallpaper.



POMEROY, WHO NEVER SHIES AWAY FROM SATURATED COLOR, RAMPED UP THE WARMTH WITH SOFAS AND AN OVERSIZED OTTOMAN ALL OUTFITTED IN A RICH GOLDEN YELLOW.

The tiles drove the blue-and-white palette on this level, and Pomeroy, who never shies away from saturated color, ramped up the warmth with sofas and an oversized ottoman all outfitted in a rich golden yellow.

One floor up, at street level, the designer introduced a more classically elegant, formal feel. The ceiling's strié tea paper unifies the living and dining rooms and adds a sense of drama rivaled only by the dining room's stunning Abbotsford mural wallpaper by de Gournay. Living room walls wear a neutral paint. "I kept them simple to really celebrate my clients' art collection," Pomeroy says.

While Nancy is partial to the sunny garden level, James says his favorite spot is his library, a cocoon-like room on the street level where the books and artwork—including a series of colored prints depicting the heroic English Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson—stand against a backdrop of deep forest green. "I think Gerald is a genius with colors," James says. "I wasn't so sure about the green, but I deferred, and now I think it's brilliant. I love it."

For the Schibanoffs, lovers of historic architecture, Beacon Hill was something of a homecoming—and this thoughtfully updated townhouse a fitting place to call home.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For details, see Resources.



ABOVE: Colored prints in the library pay homage to the heroic English Vice-Admiral Horatio Nelson. **LEFT:** The Schibanoffs collect all manner of historic ephemera. **FACING PAGE:** Forest-green walls give the library, James Schibanoff's favorite room in the house, a cocoon-like feeling.

INTERIOR DESIGN:
Gerald Pomeroy,
Gerald Pomeroy Interiors

ARCHITECTURE:
Ruth Bennett, RBA Architecture

BUILDER:
Lemanski Construction

