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Countryside cabin

New-build villa Coastal bungalow End-of-terrace cottage

Converted warehouse



Best of both worlds

Designer Elana Tenenbaum Cline has proved you can create a high-end home that marries quiet luxury with family-friendly credentials

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HOW DID YOU COME TO BE INVOLVED IN

THIS PROJECT? The homeowners, who live in New York City, purchased this house as a weekend residence. They found our design studio, Carta Creatives, through our Yorktown Heights weekend retreat project. With two children, aged three and 18 months, they appreciated our practical approach to designing for young families, ability to work within a clear budget and how we tailored the home's aesthetic to both their personal style and the existing architecture.

WHAT WAS THEIR BRIEF? They wanted a space that felt modern and fresh, yet still rooted in the natural warmth of the Hudson Valley vernacular. They asked for a design that felt high-end and considered, but also durable and family-friendly.

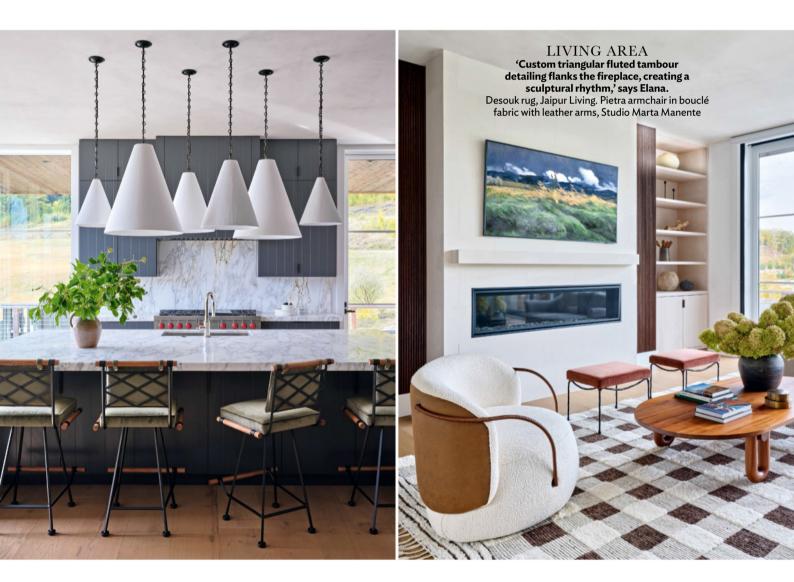
WHAT WERE THEIR BIGGEST PRIORITIES?

Their two biggest goals were to fully furnish the home and to

elevate the builder-grade finishes. They wanted it to feel personal, layered and complete from day one. Every selection — from the upholstery to the hardware — needed to balance function with a sense of quiet luxury.

WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION FOR THE DECORATING SCHEME? The natural materials and rugged elegance of the surrounding landscape played a very important part. We were interested in bringing architectural gravity to the home — mixing clean-lined silhouettes with tactile finishes like wood, stone and Roman clay.

WHICH ROOM WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO THE HOMEOWNERS? The open-plan living area. As the central hub for hosting, relaxing and family time, it connects to nearly every part of the house — opening to the pool deck, anchoring the front entry and offering clear sight lines



'Even as rooms shift in function or mood, the design holds together through a shared sense of groundedness and understated elegance' to all bedroom wings. It needed to do it all: feel expansive yet cosy, elegant yet kid-proof.

WHAT WAS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

Managing the contrast between day and night lighting across different material tones — especially in the kitchen cabinetry. We transitioned from very light to very dark finishes in key areas, so we had to carefully choreograph material selections, lighting temperatures and sheens to ensure the home felt cohesive and inviting in every lighting condition.

WHAT PROBLEMS DID YOU OVERCOME
WITH YOUR DESIGN? The open-plan layout, while
spacious, initially felt generic and lacked architectural rhythm and
visual separation. We introduced material variation, textural depth
and subtle architectural interventions, like ceiling beams to subtly
frame the dining area, layered lighting and crafted furniture.

HOW DID YOU CREATE COHESION

THROUGHOUT? Cohesion was driven through a tight material palette and a focus on tactility and tone. We repeated key elements – fluted textures, warm oak, soft matt black, natural stone – across spaces to create rhythm. We also made deliberate choices around scale and proportion, so everything from the furniture to the lighting felt part of a connected language.

WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE FOR CREATING A SUCCESSFUL SCHEME? Start with how the home needs to function, not just how it should look. Understand the rhythms of the people who live there. From there, layer in texture, contrast and light to create depth. Don't be afraid to mix high and low, soft and structured. Most importantly: edit! An intentional space feels more luxurious than one filled to the brim.



'The palette and forms are meant to echo the quiet drama of the Hudson Valley – soft, earthy and timeless, but with enough contrast to feel fresh'

