

# Southern home



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**COLOR**  
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Architect Steve Vanze and Sydney Katz took cues from the home's bucolic hilltop location and composed the Colonial-style structure from locally quarried stone, wood, and slate.



ARCHITECT STEVE VANZE AND INTERIOR DESIGNER TRACY MORRIS MARRY TRADITIONAL ELEGANCE AND MODERN LUXURY TO CREATE SPACES WHERE THEIR CLIENTS' BLENDED FAMILY OF EIGHT CAN CONNECT IN COMFORT AND STYLE.

# A NEW OLD HOUSE

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**B**y definition, “transitional style” is a singular design style that comprises a variety of elements—both traditional and contemporary—in a way that is both timeless and cohesive. Or, in a nutshell, you could simply say that it’s a beautiful blend. So when interior designer Tracy Morris first began working with her clients, a blended family of eight with children ranging in age from 3 to 23, the style seemed quite apropos.

“One of our greatest challenges with this project was creating a design that appealed to everyone both in the way it looked and in the way it lived,” Morris says. “My clients have very refined tastes, but they are also warm and authentic, so I thought it was important for their home to feel fresh and approachable to reflect who they truly are as a family.”

Built atop a steep hill and nestled among acres of forest land, the stately structure is composed of locally quarried stone, clapboard, and slate, retaining a “been-there-forever” appeal despite the major renovation. Inside, architect Steve Vanze, FAIA, took cues from classic Colonial design elements but reinterpreted them to feel current for today. Coffered and cathedral ceilings, generous crown molding, paneling, and shiplap are all reminiscent of the centuries-old style but are modified with cleaner, pared-down profiles that keep them from reading too heavy.

“The nods to the past may be subtle, but they are definitely present,” says

Above: Natural light floods the wide entry foyer through towering sidelights that flank the front door and illuminate the appointments displayed on the deep, custom shelving units backed in antique mirror, which create a pass-through to the formal dining room. Right: Clean-lined, transitional furnishings temper the formality and traditional styling of the intricate millwork in the living room, just as goldleaf lighting and brass accents balance its cool color palette.

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Opposite: A brilliant blue sideboard with brass hardware emboldens the dining room wrapped in muted silvers, grays, and whites. Inspired by the Lacanche range in the kitchen, the custom color reappears on the banquette upholstery and on the walls and cabinets in the adjacent scullery. Top: A freestanding, furniture-style hutch anchors the spacious kitchen. In addition to providing storage for place mats, linens, and dinnerware, it also serves as a visual divider between the kitchen proper and the breakfast room. Above left: The graceful silhouette of the quartzite backsplash echoes the gracious curves and clipped corners of the corbels that support the range hood. Above right: The rich stain of the breakfast table evokes substance amid shades of lofty white while its circular shape lends contrast to the straight lines and sharp edges of the chairs and windowpane-patterned rug.



Opposite: The study's stormy gray hue is lightened up by the pale color palette presented in the Oushak rug and upholstery. The powder room's flowery damask wallcovering is downplayed by the masculine profile of the mirror and sconces. This page: The house is laid out in a U-shaped configuration defined by a pair of glass conservatories. Oversized lighting and furnishings fill the spacious family room and keep the vibe cozy amid the tall, vaulted ceilings. Forming wings off the main house, the two conservatories are designed for alfresco living year-round.





Opposite: In the primary bedroom, an ethereal palette of pale blues and greens is grounded by a chocolate-colored platform bed. A tub niche is bathed in natural light and treetop views. Designed to mimic the windows, a custom mirror runs the expanse of the double vanity. This page: Neutral hues and tranquil views create a calming experience in a bedroom's sitting area. A mosaic tile wall featuring Carrara, Thassos, and Bardiglio marble adds texture and interest to a bathroom.



Vanze, who worked alongside project principal Melanie Giordano, AIA, and project manager Sydney Katz, AIA. “On the outside, a crisp Adams door and window surrounds suggest the permanency of a traditional home yet convey a feeling of newness, while inside the living room’s mantel and overmantel are simplified versions of those trimmed in gesso in the 19-century. Even the kitchen cabinets are tethered to the past with their flush inset doors and furniture-like detailing.”

Morris highlighted these impressive architectural moments by painting the millwork and built-ins to match the walls—soft white in the entry and living room, satiny slate in the study, and high-gloss peacock blue in the scullery. According to the designer, this trick of the trade is not only used to showcase the exquisite embellishments but also to keep the eye roving around the room to absorb every inch of splendor. Washed Oushak rugs, luxe upholstery, and tone-on-tone wallcoverings enrich the predominantly neutral palette by heightening tactile interest while pops of brilliant blue from the grand Lacanche range, custom painted sideboard, and breakfast room chairs impart an exciting visual contrast. Unlacquered brass hardware, gold leaf accents, and lighting radiate warmth amid the otherwise chilly color scheme and glisten in the natural light that floods through expansive banks of windows and the glass conservatory.

“The simple complexity of the house is best felt in its framed views,” Vanze says. “Composed images of framed hallways and views through windows and doors centered on the landscape or a piece of art bring a sense of order and peace to the home.”

