

# DECOR MAINE

| ARCHITECTURE ART DESIGN EXPERIENCE FOOD SUSTAINABILITY |

The  
February 2020

## KITCHEN ISSUE

Come for the Trails,  
Stay for a Beer  
IN NORWAY,  
OXFORD, AND  
PARIS

### 5 STANDOUT KITCHENS

In Kennebunkport,  
Falmouth, Rockport,  
and New Harbor—  
And Why They Work

A Winter Pasta  
Recipe from  
SOLO ITALIANO

PLUS:  
An Essay by  
ELISSA  
ALTMAN





*opposite page* The bright kitchen is painted a clean shade of white and clad with Taj Mahal quartzite countertops. "It's a natural stone, so you get all the beautiful movement in the veining," says Samantha.

# A TALE *of* TWO COASTS

*words by*  
ANNIE P. QUIGLEY

*A Florida-born designer channels home for  
a family in Yarmouth*

*photos by*  
COURTNEY  
ELIZABETH



**BUILDER**  
Brush & Hammer Builders

**INTERIOR DESIGN**  
Samantha Pappas

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN**  
Full Circle Landscaping

**TILE**  
Marbled Oak Tile

**CABINETS**  
Maine Cabinet Company, LLC



**opposite page** Wide-plank wood floors lend a farmhouse feel. The dramatic backsplash behind the range is also quartzite, to match the counters. **below, left** The sink is fitted with a streamlined, single-handle Brizzo faucet in a brass finish. “The mix of metals—brass, chrome, and stainless—all work together with the natural wood accents to really bring that coastal feel into the room,” notes Samantha. **below, right** Everybody—from grandchildren to guests—gathers at the island.



**THEY SAY PEOPLE** come to live in Maine one of two ways: either you’re born here or, after a lifetime spent elsewhere, you come and stay, and become a Mainer by choosing.

Samantha S. Pappas falls into the latter camp. Something similar can be said, too, of her second career in interior design.

Born and raised 1,300 miles south, at the other end of Interstate 95, Samantha earned a master’s degree in civil and structural engineering at Florida State University, married her college sweetheart, Ryan, and settled in Tallahassee. Until they got a phone call from up north: L.L. Bean, offering Ryan a job managing their hunting and fishing store in Freeport. So the Pappases packed up and moved north. And, as many who come to live in Maine find, something about the state felt like home—literally: The culture of being outdoors felt oddly similar to that of the sunnier, warmer state they’d left behind. “I absolutely love Maine:

**THOUGHTFUL DETAILS THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE EVOKE, JUST FOR A MOMENT, THE FEELING OF STANDING AT THE EDGE OF THE SEA.**

the seasons, the lifestyle, the people, everything,” Samantha says. “It would be really hard to get me to leave now.”

Life in Maine also unlocked a creative outlet Samantha had just begun to dip her toe in back in Florida. “A couple years after moving, my husband and I started building a home,” she says. “I genuinely loved the entire process, from floor-plan design to picking the details in fixtures and finishes.” She offered her services to friends and family, weighing in on which fixtures to get and helping redo a room here and there, before bumping into the owners of Portland-based Brush & Hammer Builders working on a house in their Yarmouth neighborhood and starting to consult professionally as an interior designer.

Samantha’s Floridian sensibilities seep into her designs, sometimes blatantly (she has pelican wallpaper in her own powder room, and adds, “Every time I walk by that space I feel a little



**below, left** Samantha sourced the natural oak counter stools from Rove Concepts. **below, right** The kitchen is well-equipped for the homeowner, a skilled baker. **opposite page** A natural-fiber woven lamp shade adds texture above a dining table.



bit of home”), and sometimes more subtly, in wide front porches and airy white interiors that seem, somehow, to capture Southern light, even in cold Maine winters. “I tend to be drawn to very natural, organic designs that bring the feeling of nature and the outdoors in,” says Samantha. “It’s an aesthetic that works in two very different places, Florida and Maine, that are both so filled with outdoor enthusiasts.”

When another family of Maine transplants—a retired couple who first moved here in 1976, raised their children in Cumberland Foreside, and now split their time between, yes, Florida and Maine—wanted to build a home in Yarmouth for their three grown children and six grandchildren to gather in, they called on brothers Anthony and Adam Requia and their father, Phil, of Brush & Hammer. And the Requias, fittingly, called in Samantha to help create a feeling of home, in every sense of the word, in the client’s adopted state.

**“I TEND TO BE DRAWN TO VERY NATURAL, ORGANIC DESIGNS THAT BRING THE FEELING OF NATURE AND THE OUTDOORS IN,” SAYS SAMANTHA.**

The new-build farmhouse in the Village Run development in Yarmouth mixes Downeast sensibilities with bright, spare openness. “We have this unique blend of traditional New England exteriors with minimalist, modern interiors,” explains Anthony. The couple wanted to create a place where their family, both in Yarmouth and a little further afield, near Boston, could gather, but not so spacious that it would be cavernous and cold when they were home alone together. And they wanted to allow for single-floor living but asked the builders to avoid an open floor plan, opting instead for something a bit more classic.

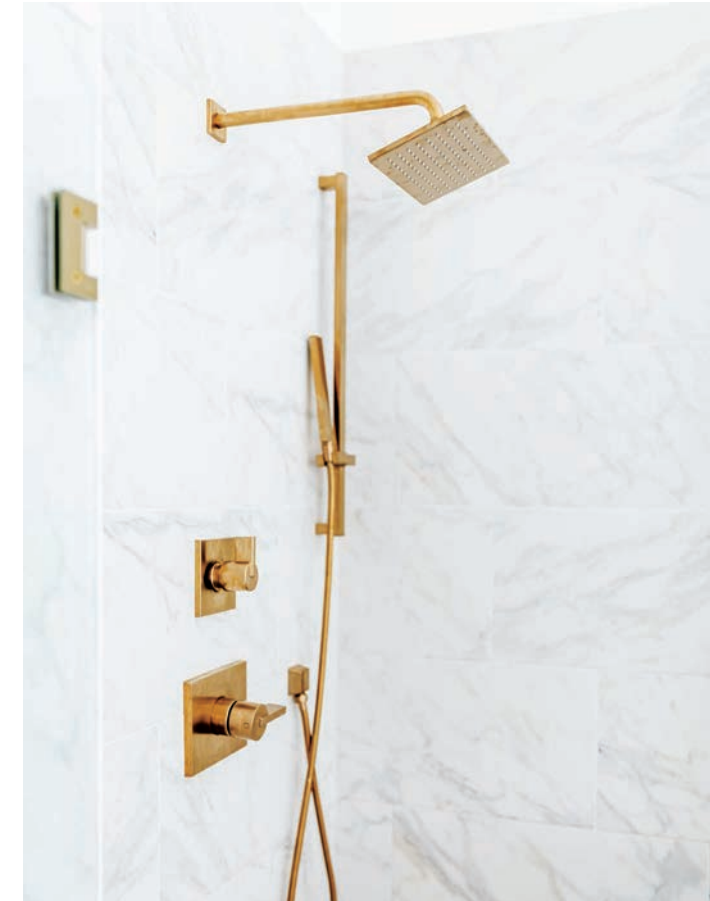
With the building work completed on the four-bedroom, three-and-a-half-bathroom home, Samantha worked with the homeowner on the tiny details that make a house feel personal: the palette, fixtures, and fittings. A sense of the coast—both Maine and Floridian—echoes through the finishings, from the brightness of the white walls, painted in Sherwin-Williams’s Alabaster, to





The master bath features brass detailing and honed River Blue marble countertops.





glimpses of sea-foam hues and woven, grass-like lamp shades. “I knew that the couple moving in here was coming from a home with water views on the Foreside, so my initial inspiration stemmed from coastal scenes and colors,” says Samantha. “There are a lot of soft greens and blues with touches of warm golds and wood tones.”

Nowhere more so than the kitchen. “The homeowner lives in her kitchen, so we knew we had to have this space be her sanctuary and be functional for her,” says Samantha. Together, they opted for Taj Mahal quartzite counters and a matching heat guard behind the stove, a bright mix of chrome and brass, and a generous kitchen island, for the family to gather around. “My grandkids call the island ‘Grandma’s restaurant,’” says the homeowner (who asked that their names not be used). “I print out a simple menu of what they are having. It’s their favorite spot to sit right now.”

On one wall, three large-scale windows take the place of bulky upper cabinets and offer plenty of natural light plus a view of the woods; on another

**opposite page** Into the bedroom, where large windows look out at the quiet woods.

**above** “With the cool colors being used in the tile, countertops, and vanity, I wanted to add some warmth by using brass,” explains Samantha of the master bath. Seen here is the luxe shower setup.

are two drawings the homeowners’ youngest son made when he was little. “One says, ‘Love is—smelling dinner’; the other says, ‘Thank you for the homemade muffins,’ but in unique 3-year-old spelling,” says the homeowner. “They’ve always hung in my kitchen as they capture my philosophy of love: good, homemade food.” They’re in fine company, beside an antique French baguette form and amid the couple’s collection of works by Maine artists.

Thoughtful details throughout the house evoke, just for a moment, the feeling of standing at the edge of the sea. Set gently on the counter in a powder room, a ceramic sink in the shape of a shell by Yarmouth artist Allison Evans looks as though it’s just been scooped from a wet beach. In the master bath, a rough-hewn bowl looks a little like driftwood.

And on the large screened porch is a wide hanging swing, its seat wrapped in a quilt the homeowner made herself, all under a pale blue-painted ceiling—a tradition in the South and all but the sign of home in Maine. ■





A powder bath off of the kitchen features a sculptural shell sink, a full wall of zellige tiles, and a pair of subtly nautical cage sconces.



A mirror with rounded corners softens a bathroom of hard-edged stone and cool hues.





When it comes to interiors, Adam and Anthony are drawn to clean lines and simplicity. “But,” Anthony notes, “we always come back to the timeless look of a New England exterior.”



In warm weather, the generous screened porch becomes an extension of the living space. "Once people get out there, it's hard to get them to come back in," the homeowner says.

