

Paradise Found

A Provincetown remodel gives an old home new life.

By Ann Luongo
Photography by
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CONSTRUCTION: Cape Associates
ARCHITECT: Chris Brown of
b Architecture Studio

With a neutral backdrop, pops of color and the homeowners' art collection take center stage.

QUIET IN WINTER AND LIVELY IN SUMMER, Provincetown can be either a peaceful respite or happening vacation destination, depending on the season. And anyone who has ever spent time in Provincetown knows that West Vine Street is the place to be. With its close proximity to many colorful shops and eateries, and even more colorful residents and visitors, it is both a vacation spot and a closely knit neighborhood all rolled into one.

Peter Rombult and Sean Murphy were searching for a place to call home that would feel like a world away from their busy, big-city lives. “We wanted everything to be the opposite of what we have in Boston,” Murphy says. “We wanted space, color and everything to be unique.”

Rombult, who grew up on the North Shore, always told himself that if he were ever lucky enough to own a vacation home, it had to be near the water. As fortune would have it, he found what he was looking for in a home right on West Vine Street.



Local artisan Derek Oliver cast the kitchen countertops and island surface out of concrete with sand from Provincetown.

Built-in seating saves valuable floor space and is tailored to fit around a sunny window overlooking the street.

“The light in the house is what drew me in,” Murphy says. “The open space, the details; it was an old house waiting to come alive again.” Though it had recently been renovated, Rombult says, there were some things he didn’t like: “Everything was white. Fortunately, we were given a blank canvas to work with.”

Down the street from their new home, the couple noticed a remodeling project that Cape Associates was working on, and liked what they saw. Even though they had never used a contractor before, they decided to hire a professional.



At less than 1,000 square feet, every inch of space was utilized, including underneath the stairs where pull-out storage was installed.

“First, we were just going to start with the windows and clapboarding,” says Mark Kinnane, executive vice president of Cape Associates. “But the project expanded and grew. The architect, Chris Brown (of b Architecture Studio in Winchester), worked closely with the owners. He came up with so many great ideas and the owners had ideas of their own that could be incorporated as well.”

The homeowners wanted to create a living space that would be functional, yet colorful and updated. Small spaces were utilized in creative ways to allow for discreet storage. For example, storage drawers were built under the stairs, as was shelving facing the kitchen to house appliances and a small wine refrigerator. There are also large drawers on the sink side of the island that pull out and hold kitchen products out of view.



“We didn’t want any appliances on the countertops,” Rombult says. “The microwave, the coffee pot, the wine cooler – we didn’t want to have to stare at them. We wanted to be able to go down [to the house] and always feel like this was a vacation space.”

The interior of the home incorporates splashes of color, from the yellow kitchen island and the turquoise-blue door leading into the kitchen to the green support column in the dining area. Adding a unique and personal touch to the space, local artisan Derek Oliver of Wellfleet cast the kitchen countertops out of concrete with sand from Provincetown. “We love the warm color and organic sensibility of the countertops,” says Rombult, “and the fact that they were cast locally with local materials.”

The shape and size of the master bedroom necessitated the use of built-in storage. Top right: A window seat was constructed into a doghouse dormer to take advantage of the spectacular view overlooking Vine Street.



Pine flooring painted black by the previous owner was given a new look. “I didn’t know what to do,” Rombult says. “I eventually found a gray paint, had it diluted by 50 percent and, purely by accident, the result was this beautiful, bleached-gray floor.”

Upstairs, the small nook at the top of the landing is Murphy’s favorite spot in the house. “I’m a knitter,” he says, “and I enjoy the peace of just sitting on the floor up there at the top of the stairs and knitting.”

The master bedroom has built-in shelving for storage and sleek custom bedside tables, and a small window seat offering an amazing view. “The view from the bedroom window is what sold me,” Rombult says. “Chris [Brown] carved out a perfect window seat in the doghouse dormer. We have a view down West Vine Street that artists want to paint.”



The diminutive first-floor bath (far left) is just big enough for a custom, glass-enclosed shower that is clear, giving the illusion of more space. Textured Japanese art tiles (right) add visual interest to the second-floor bath.

Interesting details can be found at almost every turn throughout the home. The bathroom has 24-by-24-inch tiles, and within those are smaller tiles of Japanese art that resemble paper unfolding. Even the electrical outlets are unique, Murphy says.

“They’re not like your regular outlets. They really catch your eye. Even the hot water baseboards are unlike your conventional convectors.”

Outside, a new deck was added, while an existing wooden shed was halved in size, allowing for extra

space to fit an outdoor shower with a patio. The couple felt that if they were fortunate enough to one day live near a beach, an outdoor shower would be a must-have.

“This was the first time we’d worked with an architect and a contractor,” Rombult says. “We couldn’t be happier with the results. We love this home and this neighborhood. We love the people here. This was a dream that’s been fulfilled. And it will be perfect once we get the garden done, which is our next project.”

Select styling props from Porter & Mags and Main Street Antique Center, both located in Dennis Port.

in the details



Stainless cable rail from Feeney Inc. is available online: www.feeneyinc.com



The trio of Gold Short Gong Lights by Siemon & Salazar installed over the kitchen island were purchased at Chimera in Boston.



Cape Associates modified this front door from Simpson Door Company with a cutout diamond window.