

Colonial Revival

— Built over 120 years ago, this house was relegated to being a college rental with shoddy repairs but was rescued to receive a new lease on life. —

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This Colonial-style home in Newport, Rhode Island, had 120 years of history under its roof, but for a long time none of its potential was tapped since it was turned into a college rental and suffered the indignities of shoddy workmanship, impersonal builder-grade renovations and so much dust and dirt that it was impervious to scrubbing. However, the minute Rebecca Staub, principal and founder of Rebecca Staub Staging & Design, saw it, she knew that with a little love it would be the perfect home for



| OPPOSITE | SERENE COLOR SCHEME. Sun-bleached colors fill the home and come from the family's favorite time of day at the beach: late-afternoon until sunset. "I liked the idea of these colors that make you happy but are still relaxing," Rebecca says. "Pastel muted, sun-bleached colors create a soothing vibe."

| ABOVE | RESIDENT EXPERT. As the owner of a design firm, Rebecca was more than equipped to tackle the renovation and imported her philosophies of crisp and timeless design with a slight edge. "I love thoughtful interior design that can truly elevate and transform your everyday life," she says, "and it was fun to incorporate that into a personal home."

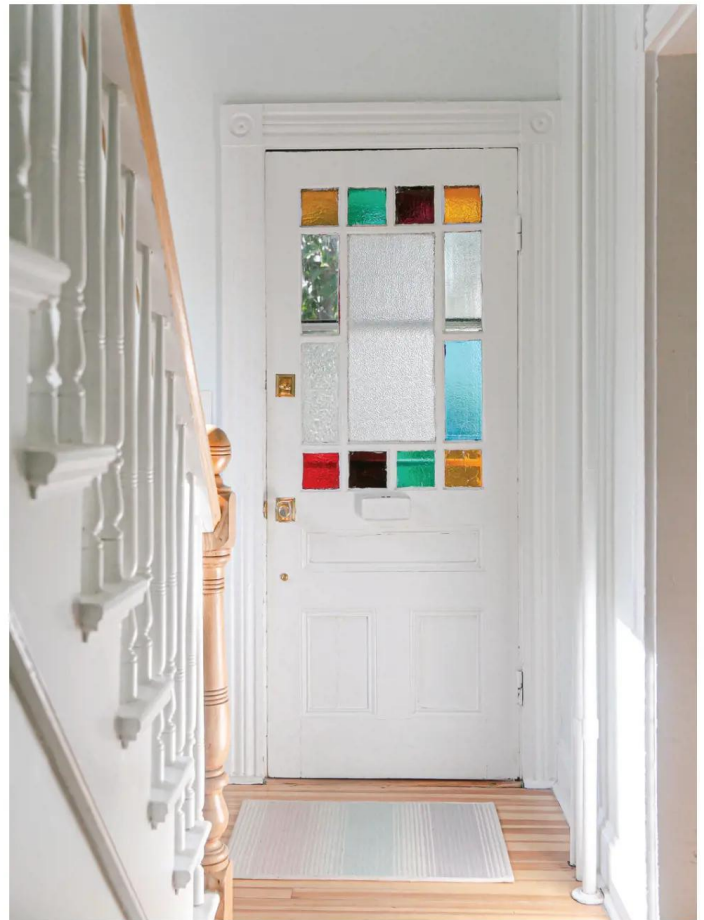
her family. "Through it all, I could see that the house had great bones and a nice flow," Rebecca says. "We resolved to bring it back to its original beauty."

Buying a historical house and renovating every inch of it is ambitious. On top of that, the home was only 1,200 square feet, with the inability to add any square footage due to its downtown location and no footprint space, but Rebecca was up to the task and came up with solutions to update the home and make it live large.

"We removed a chimney that ran through the center of the house," she says. "It took up 2 feet in the 4-foot-wide hallway upstairs and valuable space in the kitchen." This opened things up for the small house to feel a little bigger. "We also changed around the back of the house on the first floor by adding a slider to the dining room where there formerly was shelving," Rebecca says. It was a built-in, but not a particularly nice or high-quality one. This change brought a lot more natural light into the dining area, which is now one of the family's favorite rooms. Doing this also allowed the original back door to be closed up to make the half bath into a full bath. The changes made a huge difference. "It is still a cozy home, but when I tell people it is 1,200 square feet they don't believe it," she says.

Fun and fresh design details make the home sing and highlight its beauty, such as an oceanic-inspired dining room and dynamic tilework in the kitchen, downstairs bath and upstairs bath. "The dining room has a kind of an under-the-sea vibe with the vintage table painted Aegean Teal by Benjamin Moore and it reminded us of the ocean," Rebecca says. "I see the Roman shades in a Stroheim fabric as the seaweed and the Visual Comfort chandelier as the bubbles a fish would blow." Of course, the wallpaper on the ceiling

AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW. The staircase is the first thing you see when you enter the original stained-glass door of the home. "The door has rainbow stained glass and I wanted something fun, so you feel the vibe of the house as soon as you walk in," Rebecca says. "The Missoni for Stark carpet immediately caught my eye." Its muted beachy colors tie together the energy of the entire house.





SPACE SAVERS. As a historical home, the kitchen was cramped, so Rebecca worked carefully to expand it while working within the confines of the restrictive footprint. She didn't add any square footage but rearranged the layout and removed certain features to capture a sense of space. Then, with the neutral color scheme, she achieved an airy feeling.

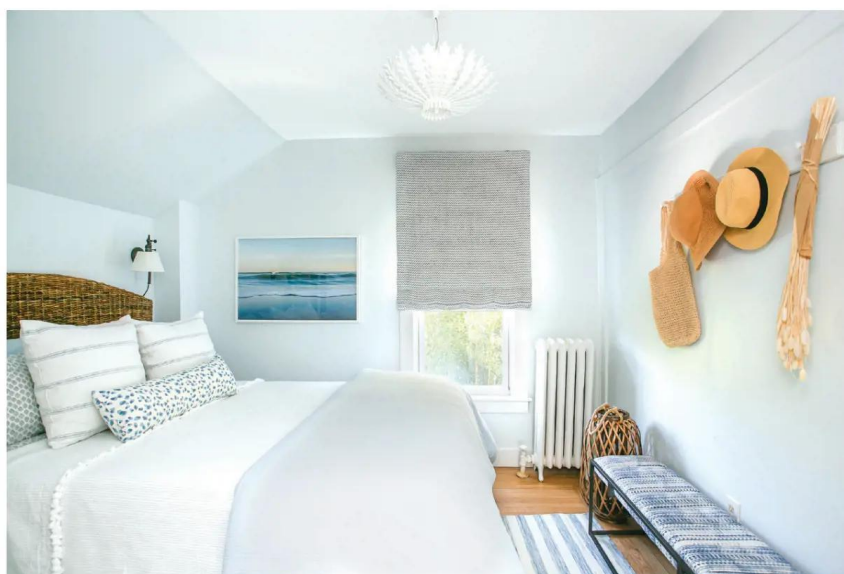


SMALL DESIGN, BIG STYLE. The upstairs bathroom is tiny, about 5'x5', which makes the location of the door unchangeable. "In order to make things work, I had to design a fluted vanity from scratch so you could walk into the bathroom," Rebecca says. "I had a piece of styrofoam that I cut to the largest-size half circle that would fit and brought it to my carpenter." Together, they designed the vanity with a vessel bowl on top. "While small, it is visually stunning and has storage, which is so important in any antique home," Rebecca says.

represents the sky from under the ocean. Intricate tilework is also seen throughout the rooms. "This is a second home and we knew it was going to have a lot of wear and tear, so we chose really simple, inexpensive porcelain tiles but laid them in interesting ways to make a statement," Rebecca says. The harlequin pattern of the marble-inspired tiles in the kitchen is a timeless pattern that is a nod to the historic nature of the house. The navy-and-white stripes in the downstairs bath are inspired by the nautical nature of Newport; the all-white bathroom upstairs with its custom wood vanity and wave tile are inspired by the beach.

With Rebecca's expertise and energetic personal style, the old home has been scrubbed of its collegiate past and returned to its previous glory—with some delightful personal touches, of course. "I tried to honor the age and bones of the home but also let it shine and be fun and playful for our young family," she says. **CB**

LIGHT SOURCE. Rebecca loved choosing the lighting for this home. Originally, the house had dismal flush-mount dome lights in every room. "I knew the lighting would instantly elevate the house. Each light is different and sets the mood for the rest of the décor in the room," Rebecca says.



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