

playing for keeps

A New Jersey couple intent on flipping an old home unexpectedly winds up flipping for it.

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funny how life works. Clarissa and BJ Taylor were childhood sweethearts who eventually married and had a son, Jack. Together, they set out to flip old homes in their hometown of Westfield, New Jersey. Only after updating one of them did they realize its full beauty: It's just two blocks from Jack's school and close to his grandparents. They decided to move in.



AN AGED BLUE CHEST IS AN UNEXPECTED FOCAL POINT. TO REPLICATE THE DRESSER'S STYLE, FIND AND PAINT AN INEXPENSIVE VINTAGE PIECE, DISTRESS IT WITH SANDPAPER, THEN ADD INTERESTING PULLS.

knowing Clarissa and BJ adore the colors of the shore and have an active son and several cats, designer and friend Jules Duffy incorporated commercial-grade fabrics in relaxing hues. The design scheme layers bold, neutral elements with soft, patterned ones and nature-inspired decor that “reads sea but not beachy,” Duffy says. To encourage as much light flow into the living room as possible, the couple added small interior windows at the top of each built-in bookcase on the original mantel wall. The wall’s finely crafted trim work provides the perfect stage for a 1940s black-and-white photo of Clarissa’s mother, a model.

BLUE MAGIC By design, blue hues vary across the room. “I don’t agree with always matching the same color tones,” designer Jules Duffy says. “This makes for a more collected look.”





TABLE TALK The centerpiece container is a Spanish copper pot salvaged from the site of a mid-19th-century shipwreck.

GOING OUTSIDE Because the 1920s English Colonial had good bones, the couple didn't need to make many major structural changes to the 2,400-square-foot home. "We just enhanced what was already here," Clarissa says, noting the new crown molding, refinished floors, and striking landscape.

a balance of lively and serene reigns in the dining room, where the couple added architectural details such as the coffered ceiling and French doors. Dark curtain rods work in harmony with the weighty wood pedestal table—one that allows more intimate seating and is easier to navigate around to get outside. The vintage-style cane chairs echo the nonfussy chandelier crafted from ribs from old French wine barrels. "Everything is meant to be casual and fun, which is exactly how BJ and Clarissa are," Duffy says.



a full-scale kitchen remodel was the couple's most involved task, and that's when Clarissa, a kitchen and bath designer, put her experience to work. "I wanted to have a lot of light and also an open, more accessible space, because this is where we spend most of our time," Clarissa says. Creamy white cabinetry with bun-feet furniture styling offers a clean and classic look, while beaded board paired with marble continues the casual-yet-refined balancing act. For even more authentic styling, she added a farmhouse-style sink and faucet.





REMEMBER WHEN
Old apothecary bottles filled with sand from various trips are like a 3-D scrapbook on the mantel. In the dining room, a cabinet refitted with two antique French window panels holds the couple's shell collections, floral paintings, and decorative trays. 🏠

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