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Old meets new in designer Erin Gates's foyer; she refinished the entry's grand staircase and tempered it with a contemporary area rug from her own line with Momeni. **FACING PAGE:** Gates chose Breccia Capraia marble for the living room's wood-burning fireplace surround. Modern white and brass touches like the coffee table and chandelier pair with velvet sofas custom designed with Bjork Studio in Atlanta.



Text by KRISTAN ZIMMER | Photography by KIRSTEN FRANCIS | Styled by FRANCIS BAILEY



A New Storyline

For interior designer and author Erin Gates, a new residence and a thoughtful renovation lead to a dream home—and her latest book.





ABOVE: Gates played off the green patina of the aged copper roof over the front stoop by painting the shutters and the front door Sherwin-Williams Mountain Road green. **RIGHT:** In the long, skinny living room, a sunny window spot houses a desk and rolling upholstered chair. **FACING PAGE:** The formal dining room is dinner-party ready with its custom-designed table inspired by a French antique, chairs from Chairish upholstered in a rich green velvet, and an elegant Visual Comfort & Co. chandelier.

Interior designer and *New York Times* best-selling author Erin Gates had driven past the stately house countless times. She'd always admired its Second Empire architecture, sweeping front lawn, and white picket fence.

When it hit the market, she and her husband, Andrew, had to see it, even though it was on a main road. Andrew and Gates's dad, an architectural designer and developer, scouted it first. "My dad called me twenty







ABOVE: A Charles Stewart sectional in a durable Perennials fabric anchors the family room. **LEFT:** "Everyone who walks in says, 'I love this,'" says Gates of the little bar room off the kitchen, which has a ceiling dressed in a Schumacher tortoiseshell wallpaper. **FACING PAGE:** Gates loved the Michael S. Smith Inc. Jasper collection wallcovering in the former iteration of this mudroom so much that she had Commercial Wall Coverings hang it again when she expanded the space.



minutes later and said, "You have to get over here. This is your house."

Then two things happened: Gates began the multistep renovation of her dream home, and she got the inspiration for another book. "I had told my editor from Simon & Schuster that I wasn't going to write a third book," recalls the author of the *Elements of Style* series.

"She follows me on Instagram, and she was like, 'I saw your new house. I really think this is a book.'" The storyline was too good to pass up: *Elements of Timeless Style: Creating a Forever Home* debuts September 30.

True to the title, Gates's new home exudes classic elegance. Set on an acre of wooded land in Wellesley, Massachusetts, with a half-circle driveway and a three-story barn, it has a traditional layout and stately front hall. While the mechanicals



Gates mixed metal finishes and earth tones for a modern take on a classic English kitchen, selecting a brushed brass hood above the range, beige cabinets, and a slab-marble backsplash and countertop with gray and brown veining. "I love the mix of warm and cool," she says.





ABOVE: A separate refrigerator and freezer flank the doorway to the butler's pantry. **RIGHT:** A ceramic subway tile backsplash and glass doors on the cabinetry allow Gates's favorite blue dishes to shine. **FACING PAGE:** A breakfast nook in the family room features a café table from Modway, an upholstered vinyl banquette custom designed by Bjork Studio, and chairs from Hollywood at Home.

and windows had been updated, it needed cosmetic work—music to a designer's ears. Gates had Brookes + Hill gut the bathrooms, give the kitchen a facelift, refinish the wide-plank oak floors, and paint everything. "It was actually the quickest renovation I have ever done," she says.

Gates desired a home defined by warm colors, rich textures, and easy elegance. She started in the dining room. "This was probably the room I was most excited about," she says. She envisioned a panoramic mural, specifically a soft gray landscape. To get the look of a hand-painted grisaille without the price tag, she called on The Mural Source in Virginia, which specializes in murals that are printed to order.

For the window coverings, Gates worked with Manny Makkas of Makkas Workroom to select a gray linen drape. They kept treatments straightforward throughout to highlight the home's character and charm. Makkas's favorite: a simple lined café curtain beside the soaking tub in the primary bath.





BELOW: The primary bedroom, which is painted Benjamin Moore Fairview Taupe, has a custom upholstered bed from Liven UP Design in California and burlwood side tables from Made Goods. **FACING PAGE:** A cast-iron soaking tub from Penhaglion finished in aged brass takes center stage in the primary bath and pairs beautifully with Michael S. Smith Inc. wallpaper in the entryway to his-and-her closets.



“My primary bathroom is one of those spaces I didn’t hold back on.” —*INTERIOR DESIGNER ERIN GATES*

“My primary bathroom is one of those spaces I didn’t hold back on,” says Gates, who designed custom vanities with New England Artisan Restoration to look like antique chests.

Gates knows even a dream home calls for concessions, and the kitchen proved her biggest challenge; she prioritized functionality and was uncompromising on style. With lots of doorways, choosing a layout wasn’t easy, but eleven-foot ceilings helped. Simple shaker cabinets go all the way to the ceiling. Additionally, she had Cambridgeport Construction turn an old mudroom into a butler’s pantry for added storage.

Storage was key throughout the project, not only to keep clutter out of sight but, in the case of an arched bookshelf, glass doors, and floating shelves, to let heirlooms shine. “I always like layering in personal and meaningful items, especially art and antiques,” says Gates. “These items reflect our story as a family, and that is the extra touch that makes every home feel soulful.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: For details, see Resources.

INTERIOR DESIGN: Erin Gates Design

BUILDERS: Brookes + Hill; Cambridgeport Construction

