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THE SOCIAL KITCHEN





Masterful Mix (OPPOSITE PAGE) A 1950s Billy Baldwin side table in the study sits next to a vintage sofa with John Robshaw (red and black) and Fortuny (blue with silver) pillows. The vintage Italian lamp and the antique Palladian prints from designer Robert Renda's collection add a sense of history. Kravet's custom Moroccan rug layers in texture and coziness. **Color Story** (THIS PAGE) In the downstairs hallway, a Quadrille toile wallpaper was chosen in a custom turquoise on black. The ceiling light is from Ballard Designs. Custom red shades from Illumie top vintage table lamps from Mecox Gardens. See Resources.



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SIMPLY PERFECT

A LITCHFIELD COUNTY HOME IS TRANSFORMED INTO A COMFORTABLE, COLORFUL REFUGE

BY BARBARA L. DIXON | PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICK JOHNSON



I wanted a relatively new house where I could catch the problems when they are small and deal with them in a small way," says Dr. Kenneth R. Cohen about his hunt for a country home in Litchfield County. "As a psychiatrist, I look at people's old difficulties and what haunts them. I didn't want this in a period house for our country home." Cohen, who is originally from Kentucky, and his now-late husband, Chris, were drawn to Litchfield County for its richness of history and because they had friends in the area.

"We fell in love with a house that had one previous owner, who had moved after only a few months to a larger residence," Cohen says. "The large windows, bringing the outside in, and the abundance of fireplaces spoke to us. I called Robert Rionda,

Sitting Pretty (LEFT) In the living room, Ralph Lauren's Whitby sofa wears LuLu DK's Wellington Onyx fabric; the Stark rug is from the M&K Collection. The table lamp is from Arteriors. Artwork is by Gary Komarin. **Stylish Dining** (TOP) In the dining room, black molding and a black Serge Mouille chandelier accent the Ralph Lauren Home Ascot Stripe wallpaper and Holland & Sherry wool drapes. Atop the Stark rug is a table from ABC Carpet & Home surrounded by end chairs from Lee Industries upholstered in a Hermès houndstooth fabric. The side chairs are from Room&Board. **Shelf Life** (OPPOSITE PAGE) In the upstairs hallway, a pair of RH picture lights illuminate a built-in bookcase. The colorful bench is from the owner's personal collection. See Resources.



Just Brilliant The first purchase for the home—turquoise pendant lights from L'Antiquaire—originally pushed the color envelope for the homeowner. Hickory Chair stools wear a gray leather. See Resources.



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who is my dear friend and the designer who had done our Manhattan home well over 10 years ago in a Modern, quietly sophisticated, glamorous and timeless style.” What was needed for the Sharon residence was quite different, and Rionda’s versatility was perfect. The designer knew it needed Cohen’s touch of high style layered with country flair and comfort.

Rionda’s classic, yet eclectic, approach with depth of knowledge from antiques to contemporary—as well as his sense of color—was drawn on at every turn. They set about transforming the home’s simple black-and-white backdrop into a colorful textural amalgamation. It was a labor of love by both designer and client, who created the close collaboration that it took to find just the right colors and pieces from family heirlooms to antiques, to contemporary finds.

Rionda had become astute at reading clients from his previous career as a lawyer before turning to design and joining his mother’s international firm Cecile Peoples Interiors. When she passed, the firm later morphed into Robert Rionda Interiors. “I knew with Ken’s high style and grandmothers on both sides educated and versed in the decorative arts, antiques and art, I could pull with a diverse approach and combine things that one wouldn’t think of putting together,” Rionda explains. “Ken was the perfect client to take on the journey to have no boundaries of time and space.”



When Rionda suggested turquoise pendants for the kitchen as the first accent color, Cohen reluctantly agreed. However, as it turned out, the bold choice set the stage for other dramatic selections throughout the home, which is layered with four centuries of furniture. "Almost every piece, every textile seems to push a boundary of color, design, texture or periods," notes Cohen. "Robert helped me take the 'Road Less Traveled' and not the safer path. It is a comfortable refuge, as is the town in which it is located. As I was taught, it is important to live graciously day to day!" ☀

Inner Peace (OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP) In the primary bedroom, a Landon metal bed from Bernhardt sports a duvet in a Schumacher fabric. Stark's Antelope rug grounds the room, which is wrapped in a Holly Hunt herringbone wallpaper through Phillip Jeffries. The vintage Danish corner chair and ottoman are from Bjork Studio. A Lee Industries sofa is paired with a midcentury coffee table from 1stDibs. **Guest Quarters** (OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM) Cole & Son's Rope wallpaper envelops the guest room, where a Paul McCobb desk from 1stDibs is paired with a vintage Danish chair from the owner's collection. The desk lamp is from Mecox Gardens. A metal-and-leather RH chair and a Ralph Lauren lounge chair flank a vintage Art Deco coffee table. **Embracing The Outdoors** In the pool house (TOP), David Sutherland armchairs and Janus et Cie sofas surround an Andrianna Shamaris coffee table; the chandelier was repurposed from the original house. The home (RIGHT) was designed by Rob Fish. See *Resources*.

