

CANADIAN

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Prebaked ham
that tastes homemade

HOUSE & HOME

CANADA'S MAGAZINE OF HOME & STYLE

Dramatic Decorating

FALL'S BEST LOOKS: LAYERED + CONFIDENT

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LYNDA REEVES'
LATEST
SHOWHOUSE

*Suzanne Dimma's
Off-the-Grid Getaway*

Shingled Charm in Chester, N.S.

TURNING THE TIDE

WITH HEART, SOUL AND VISION, DESIGNER PHILIP MITCHELL RETURNS A CLASSIC MARITIME COTTAGE TO ITS FORMER GLORY.

Text by IRIS BENAROIA | Photography by JANET KIMBER





A wall was torn down between the dining room and kitchen (off to the left) to create a casual flow for entertaining and allow the view of the bay to be seen throughout the length of the home. The formal room feels cozy with its warm wood tones, full drapes and low ceiling. **Wall colour,** Creamy White (OC-7); **trim colour,** Olive Branch (2143-30), Benjamin Moore; **chandelier,** Douglas Poole Antiques; **drapes,** Kravet. **OPPOSITE:** The kitchen's beadboard walls, apron sink and original large-plank flooring create an authentic cottagey look. A multifunctional island houses a second sink, extra storage and a wine fridge. Philip opted for surface-mounted light fixtures all set on dimmers to cast a soft glow in the country-inspired space. **Cabinets,** Bellini Custom Cabinetry; **island countertop,** Caledonia Marble; **perimeter countertop,** Bella Marble & Granite.



Mark Narsansky (left) and Philip Mitchell won a Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia award for the restoration of their 1860s house. **Design,** Philip Mitchell Design; **contracting,** Greg Cole; **built,** house number, Chiselworks; **scopes,** Summerhill Hardware.

MORNING TIDE

Right now, I'm looking at the most stunning view of the water from my back window," says Toronto designer Philip Mitchell from his weekend home in Chester, N.S. "Some days, 50 boats sail by."

On this afternoon at Morning Tide, the charming 1860s Gothic Revival cottage restored by Philip two years ago, grapefruit-sized hydrangeas bob in the breeze thanks to his partner, Mark Narsansky, the green thumb in the relationship, who is also a painter. Mark has planted two varieties of hydrangeas, six types of roses, crimson-coloured geraniums and lilac trees. The latter emit a heady scent to passersby in the quaint town of about 2,000.

It may be a low-key seaside town, but Chester can satisfy even the epicurean, says Philip. Patisseries, organic grocers and a farmers market are all within walking distance, where Philip and Mark buy fresh ingredients for frequent get-togethers with friends. They also spend their time engaging in marathon lounging-and-reading sessions in the sunroom — or "summer living room," as they call it.

"In the city, we live very differently: we work nonstop," says Philip of life at their primary residence, a Toronto

condo (shown in *H&H*, October 2009). His eponymous design firm has him jetting off to style homes as far-flung as Milan, London and the Cayman Islands. Mark, who runs RBA Advertising in Toronto, doesn't have much downtime, either. "We don't even cook at home," says Philip. The pair eventually want to move permanently to Morning Tide.

Eight years ago, they cottoned on to Chester's charm when visiting friends, immediately falling in love with its picturesque buildings, sense of community and laid-back friendly feel. Two years ago, they took the plunge and bought the 2,000-square-foot clapboard house that sits right in the heart of the town. "We looked at 20 properties in one day, and this was the last one. Before we made it to the second floor, we said, 'We'll take it!'"

Originally, Morning Tide was more like Mourning Vibe. The derelict two-storey dwelling had five bedrooms on the second floor and had undergone about the same number of sloppy renovations through the years. In an attempt to modernize it, "the beautiful charm, detail and architectural elements had been stripped from the house," says Philip. "A lot of people said they would have torn it down, but we saw the potential."

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TOP LEFT: Located in the heart of town, the classically symmetrical exterior with double bay windows is a step back in time. **Benches**, Westminster Teak; **siding colour**, Stonington Gray (HC-170), Benjamin Moore. RIGHT: In the entranceway, the beautiful newel post on the staircase

was restored. Covers were built for all of the radiators, so they look like pieces of furniture. Straight ahead is the fridge, disguised as an antique armoire. Dozens of new and old maps of Nova Scotia line the wall. **Stair runner**, Elite; antique **maps**, D&E Lake. ABOVE LEFT: Coastal- and cottagey-

feeling, the sunroom — the only space in the house with light-toned painted floors — has subtle East Coast motifs, including bright buoys in the shelves above the window and a bronzed pendant lantern. **Sectional sofa**, coffee **table**, Pottery Barn; **rug**, lantern (on table), Restoration Hardware; **pendant**

lantern, Sescolite. RIGHT: Mark enjoys gardening on the reclaimed-brick terrace, which includes outdoor dining and living areas. An herb garden provides cooking essentials. **Landscape design**, Mark Narsansky; **walkway**, ColeBuilt.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JEFFREY M. HARRIS



Though a big undertaking, the doorway was centred in the sweet little guest room to accommodate twin beds, which have storage below. Quintessential Nova Scotia quilts and nautical sketches provide a charming sense of place. **Mirror**, Target; antique **prints**, Blue Shutters Antiques and W.R. Antiques; **picture framing**, D&E Loke; **bedding**, Au Lit Fine Linens; **sham fabric**, Tello and Lee Joffe.

TOP LEFT: A vignette in one of the guest rooms shows part of a collection of green Jasperware by Wedgwood that the couple has been collecting for years. They switch up displays throughout the home for a personalized touch. **Lamp**, Target; antique **Jasperware** by Wedgwood, Cynthia Findlay Antiques; **chest**, Five O Seven Antiques; **mirror**, W.R. Antiques.

RIGHT: Vintage bird prints hang everywhere in the guest room, known as "The Bird Room." By placing the headboard against the window, Philip was able to use a larger bed while keeping clearance under the sloped ceiling.

Duvet cover, Au Lit Fine Linens; **bedside tables**, **bench**, Patina Antiques; **artwork**, D&E Lake; porcelain **platter**, Jim Smith Studio.

BOTTOM LEFT: Philip's attention to detail shines in the principal bathroom, with its exquisite millwork, useful storage and marble countertop, which gives the room a vintage apothecary feel. Grey and white basketweave floor tiles and crewl fabric pop against the blue-grey wainscoting. **Vanity**, Bellini Custom Cabinetry; **stand mirror**, Ginger's; **countertop**, Bella Marble & Granite; **floor tiles**, Sotillo Imports; **sconces**, Summerhill Hardware; **artwork** by Sarah Irwin (etchings) and Margot Metcalfe (photograph), Jo Beale Gallery.

RIGHT: In the main-floor powder room, nautical-inspired light fixtures are a charming nod to the Maritime location. Panelled walls, a farmhouse-style sink and bifold shutters add character. **Sink**, Kohler; **sconces**, Summerhill Hardware; **artwork**, Crowther & Brayley; **wall colour**, Olive Branch (2143-30), Benjamin Moore.

