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Ever notice that the colors and patterns you grab off the fashion racks are similar to what you surround yourself with at home? Interior designer Ken Gemes sees the connection all the time—most recently in a big way when he designed a home for fashion executive Kay Krill, CEO at Ann Taylor and Loft.

Kay asked Gemes, a longtime friend, to help with the renovation of a stately, century-old home she had bought on Long Island Sound. The brick-and-frame Colonial-style house had spectacular views of the water and the New York City skyline, but it hadn't been updated in decades.

"It was in rough shape," says architect McKee Patterson, who tackled the structural issues and reconfigured spaces to create a new kitchen, plenty of family gathering spaces, and bedrooms with bay windows and water views for Kay and her sons.

Dining room A chandelier from Made Goods hangs above the custom reclaimed-teak table. French doors are draped with Pierre Frey panels in a bold graphic.
Homeowner Kay Krill is CEO at Ann Inc.
Entry table A faux-shagreen table provides a drop-off spot. Walls are Benjamin Moore's "Baby Fawn."
Chest Shinekia Thomas's fashion art hangs above a chair in the dining room. The chest is from Hickory Chair.
Preceding pages Artwork above the living room mantel is by Shinekia Thomas. The architect added built-in bookshelves that flank the Chesney stone fireplace.





The sunroom settee and chairs designed by Laura Kirar for McGuire are practical and pretty, with cushions covered in Holly Hunt's Great Outdoors Lakeshore fabric in "Silver Cloud." A custom ottoman and pillows are covered in Trina Turk's bold "Sunglass Print" indoor-outdoor fabric from Schumacher.





Kitchen A playful retro beach interpretation of a toile from Pierre Frey on the Roman shade energizes the kitchen. The flared shape of the light fixture from Ironware International mimics the shape of the custom-designed range hood and the supports on the peninsula.

Sunroom bar area Two shapely stools are parked under an enameled table. Zebra-base lamps are from Oly; the shell-frame mirror is from Made Goods. Cabinets in the wet bar behind are painted Benjamin Moore's "White Dove." A woven zinc mesh material adds interest to upper door fronts.

Family room A peninsula separates the kitchen from the family room, where chairs in a black-and-white linen from Jim Thompson and a sofa in a textured herringbone are all about comfort. The custom coffee table is the right height for propping feet.

Front entrance The historic look of the early-1900s house was maintained.





The historical character of the house had been largely stripped away in earlier remodels, so Patterson beefed up the charm with architectural details such as paneled walls, moldings, coffered ceilings, and built-ins. New casement windows that look original and walls of French doors connect the interiors to the outdoors.

"I wanted the house to be open and inviting," Kay says. "We put French doors in every room, so every area opens onto the stone patio facing the water." A wide staircase that steps down to a center hall with French doors leading to the bluestone patio is one of Kay's favorite features. "Walking down the stairway every morning and looking at the water is special," she says.

Gemes selected quiet colors and soft sand-colored fabrics that would enhance rather than detract from the picturesque setting. "What was going on outside was the focus," Gemes says. "The views led us to monochromatic color schemes, all based around parch-

ment, taupe, and pale grays." In each room, graphic geometrics or updated toiles in sophisticated charcoal, gray, and chocolate hues make a statement without being fussy. Textures play a major role as well—nubby sisal and herringbone rugs, faux-shagreen tables, and shell mirror frames.

"These are sophisticated rooms that show great restraint from a design standpoint, but they are intended to be totally lived in," Gemes says. In the sunroom, which is near the outdoor swimming pool, seating pieces are covered with water-resistant indoor-outdoor fabrics. The dining room table where the family often eats was custom made with a rough-hewn surface.

"Everything is very laid-back, understated, comfy, and welcoming," Gemes says, "which is very much who Kay is."

"My house is a perfect reflection of me," Kay agrees. "The house is primarily grays and taupes with a pop of color. That is really my



wardrobe aesthetic and style—black, navy, neutrals with a pop of color in summer months. The fabrics are all geometrics and toiles, which also reflects my aesthetic: simple, yet make a statement.”

Several fashion illustrations that Gemes found at an Atlanta gallery were must-haves—not only for their homeowner-appropriate subject, but also for the artistic qualities and moody, soft colorings. “They’re so understated and beautiful. I showed them to Kay, and she fell in love with them,” Gemes says. Drawn on linen, the large framed pieces hang above the living room fireplace and in the center stair hall, with two more in the dining room.

Rooms in the nearly 5,000-square-foot house are linked by French doors, offering long sight lines through the spaces and to the outdoors. Gemes and Patterson chose paint colors, millwork, and floor coverings that would define individual living areas while ensuring a cohesive flow from room to room.

“Once the fabrics were determined, Kay and I selected various wall colors that were put on cards, so we could reference how the colors would interact,” Gemes explains. Waterfront property poses special challenges because reflections of sunlight on the water alter how colors look, so samples were evaluated in the spaces at different times of the day, the designer adds.

After busy days working in the heart of Times Square, Kay relishes her evenings, sinking into comfortable chairs with her sons and watching gorgeous sunsets and the glittering Manhattan skyline. “My home is my haven in many ways,” Kay says. “Being on the water relaxes me the minute I walk in the door. The subtle neutral palette and furnishings throughout the house coupled with the blue water is a calming and beautiful combination.” ■

Architect: McKee Patterson **Interior designer:** Ken Gemes

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Master bedroom An orange bed pillow wakes up the otherwise quiet color scheme. A charcoal-and-white Schumacher fabric dresses the windows and bed pillows. The club chair is upholstered in a gray Pierre Frey linen, and the rug is Merida's "Pinstripe" wool.

Master bath The tub is tucked into a dormer and offers views of the Manhattan skyline. The Roman shade is Plumwich's hand-screened "Guorra" fabric.

Back exterior The first level opens to a covered porch and bluestone patios. Bay windows and dormers upstairs face the water, too.

Terrace seating area Awning-stripe Sunbrella fabric keeps seating relaxed on the patio near the sunroom and pool.

