

2001 ANNUAL RESOURCE GUIDE

# Cape Cod & Islands

# HOME

Living & Gardening on Cape Cod,  
Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket

SPECIAL ISSUE

THE BEST  
HOUSE OF  
THE YEAR

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A woman in a striped shirt and white pants walks a small white dog on a wooden boardwalk path. The path is surrounded by lush greenery and leads down to a harbor filled with numerous sailboats under a clear blue sky. The scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a pleasant day.

Our House of the Year

# Seaside Retreat





text by Arlene Bowen  
photography by Terry Pommert

She collects whaling memorabilia, ancient artifacts, and treen ware. Among her prized possessions are the inner ear of a whale, a forty-million-year-old fern leaf, a secret garden, a ship's piano, an ancient Roman tear bottle, and a cuddly bichon frise pooch named "B.B." Eclectic? Yes. Beautiful? Absolutely! At the Nantucket home of designer Trudy Dujardin, ASID, the exquisite, the rare, and the whimsical come together to create a place where she can "make a life, not a living," as she puts it. Still, her work is an important part of her life here. "Sixty percent of my projects are on-island," Dujardin declares happily. Although her Greenwich, Connecticut business keeps her busy with projects in places other than Nantucket, she tries to spend as much time as possible in her island retreat. Designed in collaboration with architect Lyman Perry, the finished house is "a collaboration," says Dujardin.

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The waterside of Dujardin's house is designed to offer variously framed views from the interior of the harbor. Plantings on this side of the house have been left natural. The deck and columned pergola create "an outside room, a transition space that reaches out to engage the exterior," says architect Lyman Perry. A curved second floor balcony off the master bedroom tops a fully fenestrated bay. Convenient and comfortable outdoor features such as these create continuity between the house and a setting that includes a spectacular view of the harbor and the town of Nantucket beyond. Sunset vigils on the widow's walk are among Dujardin's favorite treats for her many guests.



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# Seaside Retreat

To reach the private, verdant world of Dujardin's shingle-style home, visitors walk along a short stone path, under a fan arching privet hedge, and through a white moon gate where the path meanders just a bit before reaching the front portico draped in late blooming clematis. On the broad slate doorstep, two topiaries flank the many-paned glass door through which a vista of the harbor and the village of Nantucket beyond are visible. If several moments pass before the hostess arrives at the door, callers are likely to take advantage of the wait by trying out one of the mission-style white mahogany chairs thoughtfully placed in nooks at right and left, transforming the entrance into a comfortable garden-side perch.

For longer respites, white lacquered mahogany rockers sit on a pillared porch adjacent to the portico entrance. Opposite lies a tiered garden, one of the jewels of this residence. Designed by "The 'Sconset Gardener," Marty McGowan, the garden rises from a low retaining wall of stone and stretches to an arbor of trees at the front boundary. From a set of granite steps, separately spaced stones create a path that threads through the dense, multi-hued garden to a bower at top.

interior designer

Founded twenty years ago, Trudy Dujardin Interiors, Inc. "specializes in high-end residential design and non-toxic 'green' design." Dujardin is also an expert in preserving the past. Her work on the 1830 Federal-style Captain Parker House on Nantucket has been honored by the Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID) for "Best Historical Preservation Design."

Dujardin's years of experience in interior architecture, space planning, and decorating serves her well in her enthusiastic pursuit of environmental preservation. "Green design is my passion," says Dujardin, whose Nantucket home is a model of responsible design. She describes her house as an "environmentally friendly home for the fragile ecosystem of a small island, as well as for my own health

and well-being."

A graduate of Southern Connecticut State University, Dujardin went on to study at New York University and Parson's School of Design. She regards her fine arts training and her years of work in the building industry as preparation for her ardent interest in creating and in educating others about "green design," because, she says "being responsible to future generations is the only thing that makes sense to me."



Here, a large semicircular bench offers repose. The garden, the house, and Nantucket Harbor are visible from this leafy spot. At night, lights among the plantings make "everything glow," says Price Connors, a senior designer for Trudy Dujardin Interiors.

This is Dujardin's "secret garden." As a child, she read Frances Hodgson Burnett's book of that name, and it has occupied a special place in her heart ever since, particularly because it was her mother's favorite book. "I still have her copy," says Dujardin wistfully. Her mother passed away early in life, and Dujardin cherishes her memory. Among photos of family and friends is one of her beautiful young mother, who appears *au courant* in the style of an earlier era.



Sheltered from the wind, this side of the house is warmed on winter days by low-slanting sunlight. Dujardin leaves the rocking chairs on the pillared porch year 'round and often comes here to witness the winter sunrise with its "different, magical glow." At night, the steeply sloping garden has its own glow emanating from the many lights placed among the bushes. The dining room windows (lining the porch) frame the festive view for dinner party guests.

(opposite) Dujardin and B.B. stand at the front moon gate. Behind them, beyond the French doors, lies Nantucket Harbor. This is just one of the house's many vistas intended to create an intimate connection between the house and its environment. "As you move through, you see light entering everywhere," Perry explains. "A house is just not a box or an envelope to live in. It is integrally related to the site."





A border of hydrangeas provides floral accompaniment for *al fresco* dining. The mahogany outdoor furniture weathers the seaside elements well.

(opposite) Crisp white walls and trim provide a dramatic contrast for the warm cherry wood floors, hand rubbed with 14 coats of lacquer to give the impression of age. A sunny interior "painted" window "fools the eye" in the alcove. An 1890 American Impressionist painting by George Mundell hangs above a Biedermeier chest.







## Our House of the Year Seaside Retreat

The opposite side of the house—the waterside—is more natural than the purposefully planted front gardens. Pale lavender-toned hydrangeas along the perimeter of the deck not only delight the eye but emit music from speakers hidden in their densely flowered precincts. For dining *al fresco*, a portion of the deck is shaded by a wisteria-draped pergola. A patch of green lawn borders the deck and leads to an expanse of protected wetlands. Cutting a swath through to the beach is a low, narrow boardwalk accompanied along its stretch by whimsical garden mobiles—brightly painted flights of fancy by Connecticut artist Karen Rossi—dangling from hooks anchored in the sand.

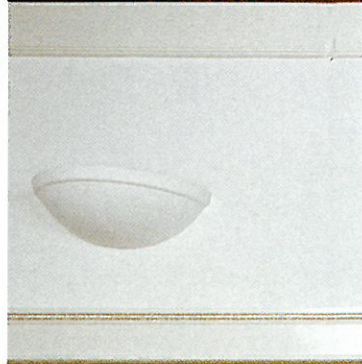
The congeniality, comfort, and sense of place so apparent in the exterior environs carries through into the house itself. French doors lead from the front portico into the

reception foyer and onto radiant cherry wood floors hand-rubbed to a French patina. For the foyer, Dujardin chose a sky blue area rug with a white, rope-patterned border, thus introducing the only color she uses in her décor. “For my homes, I want simplicity, so I use white with one color. I need a *tabula rasa* when I come home because I work with so much color during the day.” To achieve interest without adding color, Dujardin works in details, like an etched white-on-white tiled backsplash in the kitchen.

If the house has a decorative motif, it is the pageant of Dujardin’s varied collections, a theme that begins at the front door, literally. On the shutting-stile is a one-of-a-kind brass doorknob hand engraved by a man who is blind. He created the piece when he was eighty years old. In a corner opposite the door, a seventeenth-century sea chest topped



The upstairs hall serves as a gallery for paintings by marine artist Robert Newell. A ship's piano, dating from the 1830s, seems right at home. The curved balcony overhangs the living room, "allowing people to move into the volume of the space," says architect Perry. High dormer windows opposite the balcony open to a view of the town in the distance.






The more informal gathering room accommodates guests in comfortable canvas slip-covered chairs and sofas. Casual meals are made cozier in the fenestrated bay window overlooking the harbor. "This house likes to be full of people," says Dujardin. "It seems to invite happenings. Lyman created an inspiring space, a place that celebrates."





A photograph of a living room with a curved wall. The room features white overstuffed Bergere chairs, a glass coffee table with a vase of flowers, and a built-in white shelving unit. Large French doors in the center lead to a lush green garden. A balcony with a white railing is visible above the living room. The overall color scheme is blue and white.

The living room continues the blue and white color scheme. Recessed shelves in the living room display Dujardin's prized pieces. The airy, open floor plan encourages auspicious flow. The overstuffed Bergere chairs are covered in white linen. The marine painting over the sofa (opposite) is by David Bareford.



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by a large British pond yacht together offer a nautical salute to all who enter. A lustrous Biedermeier chest of figured walnut adds elegance to that salute, as does the tall, shelved niche just beyond. Topped by a concave arch reminiscent of a perfectly curved seashell, the niche holds pieces that speak eloquently of Dujardin's erudition and eclecticism. Arranged here is a nest of handmade Nantucket baskets by Bill and Judy Sayle, premier island artisans. A fine collection of treen ware holds its place in the niche as well. Highly collectible, treen ware most often takes the shape of cooking and eating utensils, boxes, and other common household tools. ("Treen" derives from the archaic English words "treow," meaning "tree," and "treowen," meaning "made of wood.") Lucky is the collector who finds a piece like the one Dujardin discovered: a treen ware bobbin-holder, the spindles of which are dolphins carved of whale ivory.

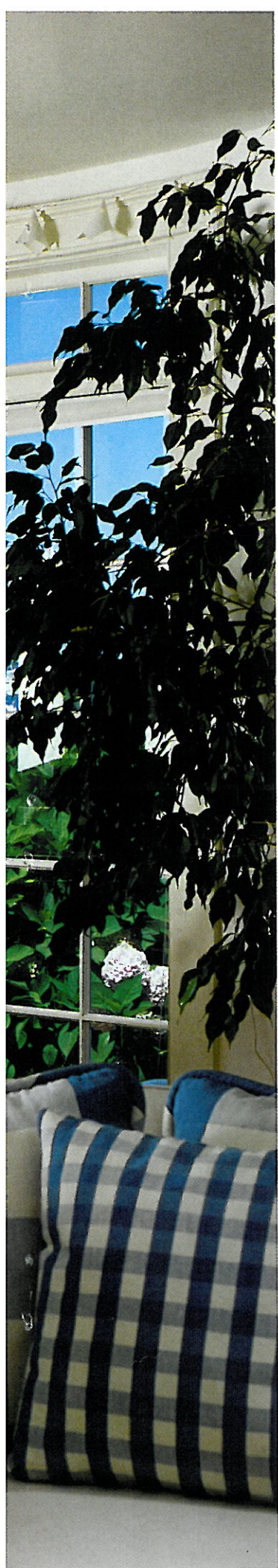
As would be expected in the Nantucket home of an enthusiastic collector like Dujardin, references to the whaling industry are plentiful. The oldest are whaling logs dating to the seventeenth century, but the most engaging pieces are the well-used nineteenth-century whaling implements mounted on a wall in the "gathering room." Several harpoons have come to rest here after their years of hurling through the air at the ends of lines and into running whales. A long-handled cutting-spade, the aristocrat of whaling implements, resides here too after serving captains and mates who used the sharp-edged tool to make the first cuts into the whale after it had been made fast.

In the living room, recessed areas worthy of a museum display some of Dujardin's most prized pieces, among them a 40-million-year-old fern leaf fossilized in Jurassic period amber—a real attitude adjuster for Dujardin! Everyday problems seem trivial in contrast. One of the larger pieces in Dujardin's collec-

tion is a ship's piano from the 1830s. She found it in a New Canaan, Connecticut barn under bales of hay and raised it up from that lowly residence to a place of honor on her curved second-floor balcony where it peers down at the living room below. Another large piece in Dujardin's collection is an artistic deception—literally. Incongruous as it may seem, from a first floor inside wall, a sunny window opens out to a bird cage hanging from a tree. The bird cage casts its shadow on the window's interior ledge. This tomfoolery, a *trompe l'oeil* painting by Christian Thee, leaps off the central wall of a small alcove linking the foyer to the dining room as well as to the busiest space in the house, the gathering room. As its name suggests, this sitting room/kitchen is designed for eating and being merry.

Cherry counters top the lower kitchen cabinets as well as the lengthy island that separates the smaller cooking area from the expansive sitting room. Arrayed along the island on its sitting room side are benches of Dujardin's own design. They are also cherry and so extraordinarily comfortable that one begins to believe that the wooden seat actually yields to the body's weight. The truth, however, is that the subtle contours of the skillfully wrought dished seat are responsible for all that comfort. Elegantly simple in shape, the mortised and tenoned stools are in the Arts and Crafts style. Dujardin also designed the western-walnut dining room table and accompanying chairs. The tabletop was produced from a single, eleven-foot piece of wood and "can seat twelve very comfortably," she adds. To accentuate the informality of the gathering room, Dujardin chose machine washable white canvas slipcovers for the intimate seating group assembled by the fireplace.

Casual meals are taken at a round, wrought iron, glass-topped table in a deeply curved and fenestrated bay on the waterside of





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## Seaside Retreat

the gathering room. In the morning, light pours into the dining bay as overnight guests come down to breakfast from the guest wing at the opposite end of the house. Ever cordial, Dujardin had a section of the house constructed to ensure her guests' privacy. A first-floor sun porch is "the 'curl-up-with-a book' room," Dujardin explains. A staircase off the sun porch leads up to a sitting room with a spectacular water view and to two bedrooms and a bath. Should a slug-a-bug guest miss breakfast, the galley kitchen in the upstairs sitting room is stocked and ready to help.

Since 1993, when the house was completed, Dujardin has begun to live in her home according to the principles of Feng Shui (pronounced "fung" "shwai"), the ancient Chinese method of auspicious placement (of the house on the land or of furnishings inside the house) to enhance all aspects of living. After consulting with a Feng Shui advisor, Hank Reisen of Reisen Design Associates in Cambridge, Dujardin has appropriated the sitting room in the guest wing to use for her home office. Because her business is hardly a nine-to-five operation, she maintains an office at home. Until recently, that office had been in a first floor cherry-paneled room without much of a view. Reisen suggested that she move her office up to the guest wing sitting room where the broad windows and bracing view would inspire creativity. Should Dujardin work here until bedtime, she need only walk across the balcony

to her bedroom suite on the waterside of the house. The tall window and curved balcony in her bedroom let the moonlight, breezes, and "chi" (energy) of Nantucket Harbor stream into the bedroom, preparing Dujardin for the productive day to come.

For Dujardin, productivity depends upon more than chi. Ironically, an acute sensitivity to chemicals has been her guide to learning the "ins and outs" of what she calls "a healthy house." She first purchased her Nantucket property in 1987, and during the ensuing six years she researched environmental protection methods for her wetlands as well as interior techniques to guard against the chemicals she regards as toxic. That her home is constructed of non-toxic materials, and that the circulation system filters the air she and her guests breathe is, for Dujardin, integral to the beauty with which she strives to surround herself. If a decorator's style can be determined by assessing her (or his) own home, then the first element of Trudy Dujardin's style is her desire "to enhance life, not destroy it." To this, we can add her informed and multifarious collections, her belief in simplicity of color, and her irrepressible conviviality. This, then, is one decorator's formula for living.

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*Arlene Bowen is a college English professor and is a devotee of home design.*

### architectural design

"I'm proud of the house," says architect Lyman Perry of the Dujardin residence. "It doesn't shout out at you." With his gift for designing in the vernacular architectural vocabulary of a place, Perry's goal is "to produce new structures that look as if they have always been there." His architectural contribution to Nantucket began in 1976 when he

**Lyman Perry**

purchased land on the Island. Three years later, he built his house. But he did not stop there, and over the years he has completed some 100 projects—new structures as well as additions and renovations. He also designed the prize-winning Nantucket Golf Clubhouse and is now working on a golf clubhouse on Martha's Vineyard.

Dujardin's house, Perry says simply, is "the typical Nantucket cottage." Pressed further, he does not refer to shingles or roof lines. Rather, he talks about simplicity, tradition ("No post-modern stuff"), and the intimate relationship between the structure and the land upon which it sits. Trudy Dujardin notes that Perry is "gifted with an inner sense of how to place a dwelling on the land."





The cherry countertops and cabinetry were custom made by the home's builder, Sam Hill of Nantucket. The Leucos light fixtures overhanging the island lend a contemporary air to the light-filled kitchen. "The fact is that it's comfortable," says Perry of the gathering room/kitchen, a space conceived and designed as one room. To unite the cooking area with the social space, Perry chose to top the island with the same cherry that covers the floors in this room and throughout the house. The counter is curved at the ends. "It takes the curse off the sharp edge," says the architect.

