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THE COMMANDING HEIGHTS

While the designer may be best known for glamorous Park Avenue-type designs, she's got a soft spot for her cottage in Westport. Though she also has a home closer to her Greenwich showroom, "I'll never get rid of it," she says of her Westport pad. "I have so many happy memories here, and it reminds me of my family and childhood."



lynnne

photographs JOHN BESSLER

Scalo

Lynne Scalo shows off her enduring style in Westport.

Who lives here?

I do!

Did you buy it recently?

I moved here in 2002, but the house is in the historic district and the first land records go back to about 1902.

How did you know that this was the house?

It's the cutest thing. The minute I walked in the front door—the realtor was having an open house—I took one step inside and said, "Ok this is it." But what I love about it is that it's authentic. It's teeny-tiny, but it's a real cottage. It reminded me of where I grew up and of spending summers on the water in Cape Cod. It's very New England.

How do you feel here?

Peaceful. It's very charming. It's great for me, because I spend so much time working and traveling that when I come home I just want it to feel really calm. It's beyond cute: It's like a little fairytale place.

What changes have you made since you moved in?

When I moved in the floors were painted green and I changed that, but I haven't touched much else. Over the years I put in a new roof and updated some of the mechanical stuff, but the architecture I kept the same. I'm sure other people would have come in and done a lot of different things, but I just liked the cottage-y feel to it and wanted to preserve that.

Really? That's it?

I'll switch out the artwork once in a while, but the truth is, I don't really change much.

The only thing I did design-wise when I moved in was put up some wallpaper, and I fixed up the kitchen a bit. I kept the original cabinets from the 1930s, but I put in a new sink and new countertops. I use the cabinets to store my shoes.

Is your home a test-ground for other projects?

God, no! I designed it years ago and it still looks as new and fresh as ever, and I take that same approach when I work with my clients. I want to design something that will be with them for as long as it can. It has to be grounded in the architecture of the house and the lifestyle of the person. But I've never done a cottage except for mine. Still, it's the same principal I use in all of my projects: I did it once, I did it correctly; I loved it then, I love it now.

What's the oldest thing in this house?

You know what, I never switched out the dining room sconces. They came with the house.

Which piece has been with you the longest?

My childhood bedroom mirror, which I had repainted white, is hanging on a wall in the dining room. But the custom upholstery I did when I first moved in is still there. The Lucite table that I designed is here, too, and

so is my little dining room set from the 1950s that I had repainted.

Is there outdoor space?

Yes, the garden is lovely. I'm out there quite a bit in the summer. It's small but it has a lot of white flowers. I like the simple combination of green and white.

You've lived in a 1,300-square-foot space for almost fifteen years, but you design much larger homes. Do you ever think about going bigger?

People ask me all the time if I'll get rid of this place, but I never will. I have too many happy memories here. The design is definitely different than what I do for a lot of my clients. It has to suit the space.

Tell us about the artwork in the blue bedroom.

That is by Jeannie Motherwell, who I represent, so that's an important piece to me. She has a rich history in mid-century modern art. Her dad was Robert Motherwell, her stepmom was Helen Frankenthaler. The wallpaper behind it is Designers Guild.

What are the design "rules" you break in your own space?

I'm a goody two-shoes and I never break any rules—how is that? I just like things to be authentic for the space and have some meaning, and I make sure that whatever clients put in their home resonates with them and fits their lifestyle. Most of my »



Lynne describes the cottage as being almost like a bird-house. The entrance is elevated above the street, so even before visitors enter, they're already eye-level with the greenery of trees and chirping birds.

“What I **LOVE** about it is that it’s **AUTHENTIC**. It’s teeny-tiny, but it’s a real cottage.”

—LYNNE SCALO





Even with less than 1,300 square feet to work with, Lynne has put her mark on the historic house. Though she always kept the context and architecture of the space in mind, some things are just so Lynne: "The whole time I've been here I've never lit the fireplace," she says, "because I like how those shiny silver balls look!"







White is a peaceful color for Lynne. "I used the nice bright white matte paint, which people say you're not supposed to, but I did it because it feels cottage-y," she says. Her 1950s dining set was repainted white, too. opposite Though most of the house has looked the same for fifteen years, the mirror is new. "That's the one space I'll change out now and then," she says.



Her kitchen is small, but it doesn't matter much to Lynne. "I did fix up the kitchen a bit, but you'll laugh because I keep my shoes in the cupboard."



"Something about it is just really charming and easy," says Lynne of her home. The "magical" outdoor space features a simple plant palette of greenery sprinkled with white flowers, creating a peaceful atmosphere. "It's a very cheerful spot," she says.





It wouldn't be Lynne Scalo's home without a wallpaper or two. The feminine master bedroom has a flowered blue-and-white paper from Designers Guild, and a rug from Lynne's new line. She loves to keep photos of the people she loves in every room. "I love silver frames—of course," she says. The painting is by Jeannie Motherwell.







clients probably don't keep their shoes in the kitchen.

If—God forbid—this house caught on fire and you could save three things, what are they? My grandmother Grace's photo that I have in a silver frame, the photo of my kitty, and probably my car keys. Then I'd get out!
Anything custom in here?

The sofa, which I designed fifteen years ago. I designed the acrylic coffee table, too. The sisal rug is from my new rug line. I had a sisal before—but now it's my design!

If you had designed this home just a year ago, would it look very different?

No, and I'm serious! I've thought about changing things around. I've even brought different pieces in and then I think, no, just leave it. I know it's an unusual story, but it's the truth. The house has been the same exact way for fifteen years and it's going to stay that way for another fifteen. **am**

A corner of the living space has everything Lynne loves: "I like books, I like white, and I like art. And I like white books about art!" says the designer. But what does she like most about this house? "It's authentic," she says. "I try to bring a sense of authenticity to all my projects, because home is so personal."