

# New England

# HOME

Connecticut

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

## *Easy Elegance*

Finding just the right balance of style, sophistication, color, and comfort



# Woman's Intuition

Beyond her keen eye, a designer's talent for sensing her clients' true desires helps her create a Greenwich home that's posh and glamorous, but family-friendly, too.

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“Timeless but also livable and fresh,” is how designer Lynne Scalo defines the elegant living room and its medley of handsome textures. Silver sconces flank a piece of contemporary art, while a more classic painting and a rustic mirror hang nearby—a perfect example of the designer’s keen eye for mixing and matching.





**T**he level of activity that four young children, four dogs, and four cats maintain deserves its own label. Simply defining it as lively doesn't do it justice. To look at this home, though, you'd never guess such an energetic company resided within. And that's what makes this tony Fairfield County nest extraordinary. Greenwich-based interior designer Lynne Scalo has forged a haven for the family that suits their refined aesthetic and, at the same time, serves them well. "Good design is never about objects," explains Scalo, who also heads an eponymous design atelier. "It's about creating a whole that fits your clients' lifestyle."

To that end, the decor is stylish, but long-wearing to such a degree that no one panics when a dog claims the sofa or a child leaves a Hansel and Gretel-like crumb trail. "There's a lot of intuitive sense involved with being a designer, and I think I've been blessed with that," says Scalo. "You have to understand what

 **ABOVE:** The living room's polished-metal mirror adds another jolt of interest, as does the sculptural lamp. **FACING PAGE:** The home's classic architecture serves as a timeless backdrop for a beguiling range of styles and eras, beginning with the entry's vintage scone and Oly chest.






your clients need and what's most important to them."

For this well-traveled husband and wife, a family-friendly home translated into one filled with their books and art. Scalo cunningly arranged space for both. Books line up in the study and the family room, encouraging the children to read, too. And paintings appear throughout, beginning with the lofty entry where a large oil-on-board claims notice. Incorporating art makes any nest personal. But Scalo—who has a fine-arts background—also believes that, where kids are concerned, being surrounded with art fosters a lifelong interest.

Walk about and it's obvious her juxtapositions are also artful. Consider not just the

 In the family room, Julian Chichester shelves provide a home for a growing collection of books and mementoes. In addition to providing light, the stylish metal lanterns hanging from the ceiling help unify the space. **FACING PAGE:** The dining room's leather-upholstered seats are favorites with Scalo, who labels them her "Prada chairs, since they're sexy like high heels."

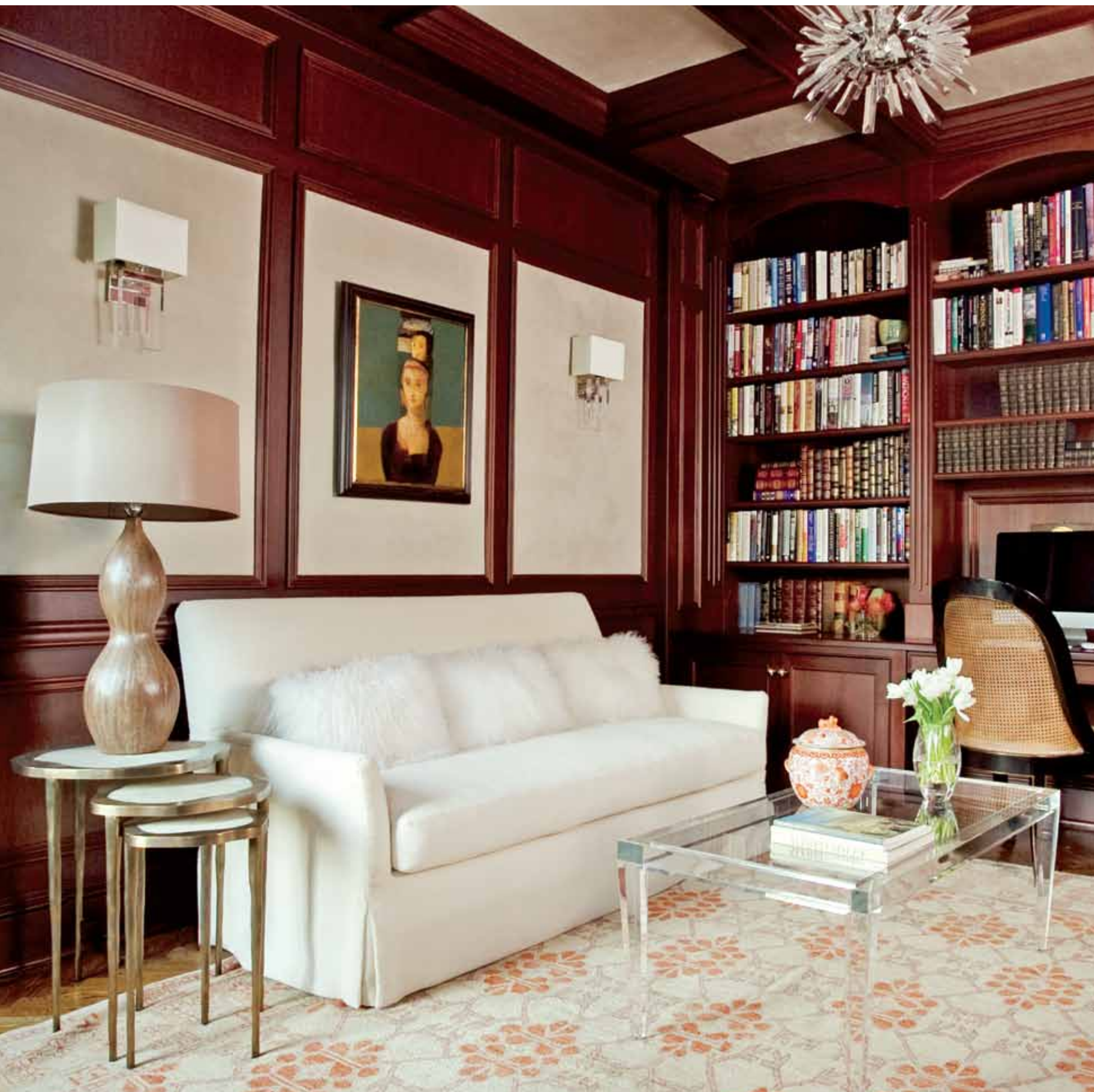
entry's modern painting, but also its French rock-crystal chandelier. Both, Scalo says, are unexpected counterpoints to the old-school parquet floor. But then, so is leaving the staircase in this Georgian-style house uncarpeted. Undressed, the handsome architecture stands out and "the stairs become more interesting—more sophisticated, minus pretension," the designer says.

In addition to her finely honed mixing and matching, Scalo reinterprets and enlivens classic designs like a magician. The Asian-inspired coffee table in the sunny living room, for example, is reinvented with a brass base and a celadon shagreen top. The tufted eighteenth-century English-style sofa, which might have come across as stuffy and staid, is clad in a sumptuous velvet Scalo labels "mouse-colored." And let's not overlook the quintessential colonial-style wing-back chair. Dressed in creamy leather, it's anything but prim. Even the chandelier steps it up, marrying Murano glass with gold for a hint of sparkle—another signature Scalo touch.

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In the room's adjoining window-lined sitting area, there's a similar inspired referencing of historical design, with a pair of elegant French settees. Scalo gave the duo a contemporary demeanor by covering them in unassuming Belgian linen. "If it had been a floral pattern it would have been like the overdressed woman who shows up for the party," she says. "Sometimes less is more."

A straightforward sisal-weave rug pulls the large-scale living room together, and since the space opens to the dining room, Scalo wisely used the same floor covering there. The designer paired the traditional double-pedestal dining table with curvaceous leather chairs. A geometric console doubles as a buffet table for

parties. The glamorous Murano glass chandelier that hangs above the table has an oval shape, Scalo points out, chosen to keep things a bit less predictable.

Not that anyone would ever use the word *predictable* for anything Scalo does. Under her watch, even a space as well-used as the family room has distinction. Along with the books, there's a conglomeration of global treats. African juju hats hang by the hearth, a Brazilian sculpture guards the corner, and an antique Oriental rug softens the floor. Small details—merlot-colored tapers in the mantel's candlesticks, for instance—add finesse and boost functionality. Seemingly hands-off, embossed leather pillows have a metallic face. "They're luxe, but kid-proof," says Scalo with glee.

The nearby paneled library was comfortably New England-like, Scalo felt. But to better fit the owners' preferred palette of primarily warm tones mixed with some cool, and to lighten the mood, the designer mounted a handful of pale suede panels to break up the dark walls. "It had to be just the right number," she recounts. "Too

Scalo designed the striking chandelier of iron and quartz that hangs in the breakfast area. **FACING PAGE:** A contemporary chandelier and an acrylic coffee table are fun contemporary notes in the paneled library. The rug adheres to the owner's preference for elements that incorporate warm and cool colors, while the Osborne & Little sofa fabric speaks to the pale suede wall panels.





***“I saw this room as a retreat. I wanted my clients to feel enveloped and safe,” says Scalo.***

many and it would have looked like a checkerboard.” In the evenings, hip acrylic sconces cast extra beams for bookworms.

As much a curator as she is a designer, Scalo carefully edits every space and keeps the measure of sophistication high. Being practical, she notes, doesn’t mean abandoning good design. Just look at the breakfast area, where a

Saarinen-esque tulip table crowned with a granite top suits morning cornflakes or an intimate, late night feast of champagne and leftovers. Midcentury-style chairs with pebbled-leather seats scoff at spills.

Never wavering from her posh but understated route, Scalo decked out the powder room with a timeless toile wallcovering and English sconces. It’s the same approach she took with the kids’ rooms (each contrived to age along with its owner) and master suite. “I went with calm, soothing colors because I saw this room as a retreat,” the designer says about the master bedroom. “I wanted my clients to feel enveloped and safe.” Indeed, the shelter bed with its nail-

head design is a stunning bastion of security, while twin English-style chests designed by Scalo afford plenty of room for essentials.

Fifteen years as a designer, it’s clear, has sharpened Scalo’s talents. But along with her artist’s eye there’s also the affection she feels for her clients. It’s not enough to give them just stellar places to live. Scalo’s work conjures “soulfulness,” she says. In other words, hers are rooms that reflect with myriad nuances the individuals who occupy them. As a result, her clients feel truly at home, and what could be better than that? •

**RESOURCES** For more information about this home, see page 130.

**☀️ CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** Camel, navy, and cream are colors a young boy can happily grow along with. A black-and-white palette streamlines the compact powder room. A smoky-colored Phillip Jeffries wallcovering and a soft Merida rug enhance the master bedroom’s cocoon-like ambience.