

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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Anjelica Huston
at Her California Ranch



LEFT: Architect Oscar Shamamian, of Ferguson & Shamamian, collaborated with New York-based interior designer Victoria Hagan on an 8,000-square-foot, Shingle Style summer house overlooking the water on Nantucket for a couple and their three children.

OPPOSITE: Light floods through dormer windows into the double-height stair hall. The area rug and runner are from Elizabeth Eakins. Sconces, Stephen McKay. **BELOW:** Paneled walls and a beam ceiling add texture to the living room. The sofa fabric is from Robert Allen.

A New England Calm

SUMMONING TONES OF SKY AND SEA FOR A NANTUCKET RETREAT

Architecture by Ferguson & Shamamian/Interior Design by Victoria Hagan

Text by Wendy Moonan/Photography by Scott Frances





Luminous. Serene. Relaxing. Elegant but informal. Sophisticated but youthful. Understated. How do you create a place with such magical qualities?

First you find an interior designer who appreciates the locale as much as you do. Then you hire the right architect.

This is what one smart American couple did in 1999 after buying seven acres on the waterfront on Nantucket, the island off the coast of Massachusetts. They were living in London but knew they would be returning to the States and wanted a house on the island they had visited for years. “We were looking to the future,” the wife recalls. “We always felt very good on Nantucket and knew it was the kind of place my three kids

would want to come to as they got older.”

It took them a year to find land opposite the harbor. “I don’t like to look at the sea when nothing is on it,” the wife explains. “I like to see movement on water—boats and people and activities.”

When they first saw a 1970s ranch house on a bluff on the outer harbor, it was not love at first sight. “The house was so ugly,” the wife recalls. “When the realtor drove up, I asked, ‘What are you doing?’ I didn’t even go in, but when I walked behind it and saw the harbor, a warm feeling came over me.

“At first my husband said, ‘Are you kidding?’ but he agreed to tear down the house after he saw the views.”

The couple immediately called Victoria Hagan, the New York interior designer



LEFT: “An old ship light isn’t necessarily something that every client would agree to have in their living room,” says Hagan. The Elizabeth Eakins rug was customized by the designer. Nanz hardware on doors. Fabric on bobbin chair, Chelsea Editions. Ralph Lauren pillow stripe.

ABOVE: “The cabinetry breaks the wall into five sections,” Shamamian says of the area that separates the living and dining rooms. **TOP:** The dining room. “The clients entertain in a casual way,” says Hagan. “I tried to capture their lifestyle. It isn’t about the furniture,” she adds.



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who had done two previous projects with them. Hagan knows Nantucket well, having vacationed there all her life.

"This is a close family," she says. "I knew the house was going to be about family and Nantucket. This is not the Hamptons. It was important to capture the spirit of the island in an understated way."

Hagan recommended Ferguson & Shamanian, a 63-person New York architectural firm known for its rigorous Neoclassicism. She had previously collaborated with partner Oscar Shamanian, and they have great respect for one another. "It's wonderful when you can work with an architect from early design development through to the finish," Hagan notes. "It's the formula for success."

After studying Nantucket's vernacular architecture, Shamanian designed a Shingle Style structure with gambrel roofs. "This is not a copycat house," he says. "We had a 30-foot height limit, and gambrel-roof houses hug the ground."

He calls the house's entrance side "its restrained public front." The central block has wings perpendicular to it, each different, to look like they were added later. To cut down on the massing, the central block has gabled dormers; the wings have shed dormers. "Even though there is a certain formality to the architecture, this is not a formal house," Shamanian says.

This becomes clear when you open the front door. The entrance hall is T-shaped and

The kitchen, where the family takes most meals, "has the charm of an older house but with a modern emphasis on the relationship to the outside," Hagan points out. The faucet is from Waterworks. Sub-Zero refrigerator. Viking range. Pot filler, Chicago Faucets. Nanz hardware.

OPPOSITE: The master bedroom. Hagan paid particular attention to the corresponding heights of the oak side table and the bed. "The most important consideration is how the little things click," she says. "And combining the old and the new." Chelsea Editions Duvet cover fabric.

BELOW: An alabaster light fixture crowns the master bath. "It emits a beautiful, diffused light," Hagan says. Waterworks tub and tile. BOTTOM: A pair of Doric pilasters framing a recessed opening and a slightly flared façade characterize a secondary wing, which abuts the pool area.



provides views in three directions. Directly ahead, through the living room, one sees the harbor and a lighthouse, a deliberate Shamamian move. To the left is the way to the dining room and kitchen; to the right, the stairs and hall to the billiard room and guest wing.

The interior is elegant, quiet and straightforward. "Victoria appreciates rigor in architecture; she likes symmetry and rhythm," Shamamian explains. "Because the architecture is restrained, it's important that it read well. Doors are pushed up to the vertical limit to make the space appear taller. Both doors and windows were de-

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