

HAMPTONS

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OF GOODIES
*to give and
to get*

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HOME, JAMES!
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supernova James Pine

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To give the exterior of his East Hampton home a classic feel, James Pine added features like the columned front porch.



HOMIE, JAMIES!

Designer **James Pine** took a Hamptons fixer-upper and crafted the perfect antidote to city living—a stunning, six-bedroom estate complete with sprawling gardens.

by **John Loecke** photographs by **Marco Ricca**

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hen interior designer James Pine returned to New York after a six-year hiatus running an inn he owned and designed in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, he made a conscious decision to live primarily outside of Manhattan. “I missed New York, but I didn’t miss the crowded conditions,” he says. “In Pennsylvania, I had eight acres with animals and lush gardens. I didn’t want to give that up entirely. I simply wanted to return to my roots.”

So Pine and his partner, Hernan Arriaga, did what many New Yorkers have started doing: They settled into a small pied-à-terre in Manhattan, and began looking for a more permanent home in the Hamptons. “As a child, I spent many summers in the Hamptons,” says Pine. “When I started looking at houses it just felt like a natural place.”

The couple eventually settled on what Pine calls a charming fixer-upper in East Hampton. “It was a classic 1960s house with little character but lots of potential,” he says. “The structure was barely 1,000 square feet, but it was situated on two

and a half acres so there was plenty of room for gardens.”

And the gardens were one of the first things Pine and Arriaga tackled. “Many designers would have started with the house and then worked toward the gardens,” he says. “I did the opposite because I was always taught that the two are related. You can’t get the house right if you don’t first figure out the surroundings.”

So Pine and Arriaga spent many weekends hauling thousands of plants to rework the landscape. Among the outdoor features that Pine devised was an 8,000-gallon Japanese koi pond that can be seen from the kitchen windows.

Once the gardens were complete, Pine turned his attention to the house. He transformed what was essentially a three-bedroom cottage into a stunning six-bedroom Greek Revival, complete with a double-height columned front porch. “I’ve always had a mad fascination with Palladian architecture and Early American homes like Monticello,” says Pine. “I like that the style is simple but elegant, that it’s





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Designer James Pine and his menagerie of pets; instead of a formal entry hall, Pine designed his home so that the front door opens into the library; a paneled fireplace warms the home's front entrance. The andirons, which date to 1790, were crafted by an East Hampton ironworker and purchased by Pine at The Yard Sale in East Hampton.





sophisticated without being overly formal.”

So the original 1960s structure was encased in a colonial skin, a feat Pine achieved by extending the house in every possible direction. For example, the living room was expanded to create a combination library and entrance hall housing the staircase (modeled after one at Winterthur, the fabled du Pont estate in Delaware), as well as a second-floor master suite and several guest bedrooms.

“The only interior space that’s original to the house I purchased is the living room,” says Pine. But even that, he acknowledges, has been transformed. “I found these great old doors with chunky nine-inch casings at Irreplaceable Artifacts, a salvage shop in Harlem, and used them to set the tone of the space.”

For Pine, who has worked with fabled interior designers Carleton

“These are all colors that relate to plants that can be found in the gardens surrounding the house,” Pine says.

ABOVE: A black-and-white Pierre Deux Lafayette toile, gives the master bedroom a masculine feel. The room’s two-tone color palette is a favorite of Pine’s.

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP TO BOTTOM: The formal living room, one of the few “original” spaces in the house, features a back-to-back sofa designed by Pine. Instead of a formal dining room, Pine opted for an eating area adjacent to the kitchen. “I like to have company while I cook,” he says.

Varney and Juan Pablo Molyneux, transforming the finished rooms into cozy, comfortable spaces was a relatively easy task. The trick, he says, was thinking about how the house would be used throughout the year. As a result, you won’t find rooms done in the usual beige, blue, and white color palette. Rather, you’ll find a foyer that’s painted a rich brown, a living room with split bamboo in green grass wallcovering by Zoffany, and guest bedrooms in shades of red and blue. “These are all colors that relate to plants that can be found in the gardens surrounding the house,” Pine says. “They’re colors that, because of their connection to nature, feel good all year long.”

In keeping with Pine’s informal attitude, the house lacks both a proper foyer and a dining room. Instead, visitors step from the front porch into what Pine calls the library, a club-like space with plush seating and a paneled fireplace. And during the winter months, dinners that take







ABOVE: The kitchen features custom cabinets and plenty of room for Pine to spread out and cook. OPPOSITE PAGE: The red guest room was designed with Pine's nephews in mind. "I wanted a space that felt somewhat masculine," he says.

place outdoors in warmer weather move inside to a small eating area adjacent to the kitchen. "I like to cook, and I like having people around while I do it," says Pine.

The home's furnishings are a mix of antiques and Pine's own designs, like the living room's back-to-back sofa, a unique piece he created so that the room's seating arrangements would not have to be completely reworked with the seasons. "In the winter, we tend to use the side facing

the fireplace," he says. "But in the summer, the opposite side, which looks out to the gardens, gets more attention."

And the gardens, says Pine, are the home's *raison d'être*, regardless of the season. "There's not a room in this house that doesn't look to the outdoors," he says. "The view is as spectacular in winter as it is in summer. I wanted a house that was one with the landscape, and I think I got my wish."