

Decor Maine

ISSUE NO. 4

LIVING BEAUTIFULLY IN MAINE

A Water's Edge
Home in
Cape Porpoise
(hello, roof deck!)

AROUND THE
STATE IN

17
GALLERIES

The **ART**
Issue

An Art-Filled
Abode on
Rackliff
Island

Plus!
Kathy Bradford,
Ann Craven,
& MORE...



Taking Her

Long admired for her work on New England's coast, Linda Banks turns inward, designing for herself at this Falmouth escape

WRITTEN BY **BRIAN SHUFF**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **FRANÇOIS GAGNÉ**



Designer and homeowner Linda Banks curls up with Beasley the dog in vintage chairs reupholstered with star embroidery. **OPPOSITE:** View from the entryway. Character-grade oak flooring by Distinctive Tile of Portland, Maine.

Own Advice



INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE
& DESIGN
BANKS DESIGN ASSOCIATES

BUILDER
J. POWERS CONSTRUCTION

CABINETRY
TIDEWATER MILLWORK

The Art TV by Samsung features a beach scene of Côte d'Émeraude. The previously flat wall was transformed with the installation of an electric fireplace and mantle. **OPPOSITE:** Detail of a Paris map. Linda drew inspiration from the map's palette, highlighting celadon greens, powder pinks, and pale smoky blues.



“I tell all my clients they should use what they love in their home, and everything will go together,” says Linda Banks. Embarking on the design for her own Falmouth retreat, a cozy 925-square-foot condo she calls the Glam Pad, Linda decided to key in on her personal history with luxe European aesthetics.

First traveling to the continent as a student in 1978 (she studied architecture in Copenhagen), Linda was immediately enchanted—in particular by the chic and understated design impulse she found widespread in France. “That year abroad turned into a lifetime of summers on the Île de Ré, garden tours in England, and house tours in Italy,” she says. It also spawned an incredible collection of French and French-inspired art, for which the Falmouth space provides an ideal backdrop. “It really is filled with the most edited version of my favorite pieces, my most cherished antiques, and a very intentional compilation of accessories,” Linda says. “My goal was to make this an itty-bitty capsule of my love affair with France.”

A 1732 map of Paris became crucial. Hanging now at the far end of the kitchen, the piece was originally purchased at a Connecticut tag sale of the retired US Ambassador to France. “I like to start with a driver,” Linda says of her process. “Something that creates the palette, suggests the mood, whether it be a rug, a painting, a favorite piece of art or photography—something to set the tone.”



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1. Bedpost finial in chalk white. A weathered finish incorporates a subtle coastal note. **2.** View of Paris map from kitchen to breakfast area. **3.** Miniature papier mâché globe. Travel is an enormous influence in all of Linda's designs, not only the Glam Pad. **4.** Custom V-groove cabinetry and floor-to-ceiling larder by Tidewater Millwork. Mirrored doors on the larder enlarge the space and help reflect natural light. **5.** Bathroom with brass accents. We love the industrial chic wall-mounted faucet. **6.** Self-service bar on an antique waiter's tray stand. A nod to the wonderful cafes and bistros of Paris. **7.** French porcelain pierced compote. **8.** An architectural rendering of the Fontainebleau.



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"For me, designing an interior must be intuitive," Linda says.

In the Glam Pad, the map is the driver. “Also, I love the Marie-Antionette painting [left of the living room sofa],” Linda says, “but my primary focus was the map, which has celadon green, powder pink, and pale smokey blue. It completely informed the colors for the project.” Indeed, these tones reflect back often, notably in the kitchen, where Linda bucked trends and opted for a subtle blue on the cabinetry. “Back in the early ’90s it was fashionable to paint all interior trim and kitchen cabinets light blue. Now everyone does their island black or white. But I’ve never gotten tired of the blue. This is the third pale blue kitchen I’ve done for myself. It brings me peace and joy.”

In addition to its tightly curated artwork, the space underwent elaborate renovations. “Beforehand, the whole place was a mini dollhouse of compartmented rooms,” says Linda. “The only walls I left intact were the four on the perimeter. Everything inside was taken down and reconfigured.” This rework allowed for an open plan between the kitchen and dining area, and opened the home’s formerly choked-off entryway. “The foyer had no windows,” Linda recalls. “It was long and dark. But now that I’ve removed that wall, when you enter from outside the living room is wide open.”



“Weathered brass appears on drawer and cabinet pulls, lighting fixtures, backplates, and frames, evoking old-world elegance.”



Further touches throughout allude to Linda’s time abroad. In much of the kitchen, counter-to-ceiling English tile finished with delicate hand stenciling takes the place of upper cabinets. Weathered brass appears on drawer and cabinet pulls, lighting fixtures, backplates, and frames, evoking old-world elegance. “I love the touches of glamor associated with the comeback of brass hardware,” says Linda. And lastly, perhaps most personally, the living room library table is strewn with vintage air mail envelopes, letters sent and received by Linda and her classmates during their junior year abroad, almost fifty years ago. “There was no text messaging, no emailing, and all my university friends were on study abroad programs,” Linda remembers. “We wrote each other like mad. We were seeing for the first time all the architectural wonders of Europe.”

The spirits of those wonders permeate Linda’s home. It’s hard to imagine a more ideal hideout for when her primary residence books for rental. The condo’s Franco-centric bent allows Linda to daydream. “The Glam Pad feels like the apartment in Paris I never bought.” ■

LEFT: The counter-to-ceiling English tile is hand-stenciled. **ABOVE:** Linda’s personal vintage air mail envelopes from her school days.