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At Home
Paper Chase
 Interior designer Meg Braff shook her stately nineteenth-century Newport getaway out of its slumber with razzle-dazzle color and vibrant wallpaper.
 By **Megan Fulweiler** Photography by **Nat Rea**



Braff's paper selections, clockwise from top left: Scalamandre's Shanghai, Harwood by Cowtan & Tout, Jardin Chinois Red by Waterhouse Wallhangings, and Farrow & Ball's Plain Stripe.

The street is lined with handsome homes. Still, the one Braff (facing page), her husband, Doug, and their four young boys inhabit could be the most appealing. Even passersby detect a difference. No stereotypical decor behind these doors, the facade seems to suggest. Instead, are rooms that lend themselves to family life, friends and time off.



Quiet Riot

Braff's penchant for color and wallpaper energizes the three-story house and keeps the vacation narrative going. So great is her wallpaper passion, she recently launched her own line, a revival of Philip Graff's designs from the '70s. "We've freshened it up and given it a whole new look," Braff says (visit megbraffinteriors.com for a peek). To allow the eye a rest — something Braff claims is also necessary — the airy living room (left) gets its punch from red Chippendale chairs and an antique Chinese carpet. Paper reappears in the library across the hall (above). A far cry from Bob Collins's large-scale Chinese Lattice pattern found in the master dressing room (right), Farrow & Ball's more subdued blue stripes conjure a bookish mood without a twinge of stuffiness.



Too comfortable to be a mere dressing room, the spot also serves as the couple's TV room and office. Photos of America's Cup Races speak to the home's location. The punchy paper was chosen for its fresh, summery tone. Since they're not in residence all the time, Braff felt free to push the limits with whimsical patterns throughout.

Newly added French doors and multiple windows scoop in plenty of light for the breakfast room and kitchen.



Table Manners

A fancy-pants brunch or cereal with the kids, the breakfast room (left) goes either way. Formerly a porch, the space is clad in tan on white wallpaper (Java Java by China Seas), which suits the antique bamboo dining chairs and farm table. Not always red, Braff painted the chandelier to give it more personality. And talk about sensible: the carpet is stain-forgiving, indoor-outdoor.

The nearby dining room's (bottom, right) scenic chinoiserie wallpaper is teamed with woodwork painted Farrow & Ball's Blazer, a megawatt hue that modernizes the lofty room. The oversize beaded chandelier is contemporary and light years more festive than the usual crystal.



Today's kitchen inhabits a space formerly occupied by a bedroom. Plain cabinets, a subway tile backsplash and wood floor are classic unfussy components that will never lose their charm. The architect-designed island is topped with durable Caesar stone.



Green Acre

To increase summer living space and ease al fresco dining, the owners added a deck (right, with the boys and mom). Swathed in grape vines, the pergola provides shade and helps cool indoors. Of course, the garden has the designer's touch, too – ribbons of blue hydrangea set off the red outdoor furniture.

Across the yard, the carriage house's multi-purpose room is rainy-day central, party-place and game room all in one. "In winter I park my convertible inside," Braff says, "but come good weather, it's another story." Hordes of family and friends drop in often, and no wonder. Braff's welcome is every bit as warm and spirited as her decorating. **R**

