

# CTC&G

Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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# ARCHITECTURE!



# ONE OF A KIND

Art and grandeur happily coexist in a  
magnificent country estate

BY ALEXA STEVENSON | PHOTOGRAPHS BY DURSTON SAYLOR

AS SEEN IN  
CTC&G  
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**Modern Meld**  
In the family room, a Minotti sectional sits on a rug from Palace Oriental Rugs. The chair and coffee table are through Poliform. See Resources.





Everything in my life seems to happen by default,” says Dinyar Wadia, principal of Wadia Associates. “I found my wife by default, I became a college boy by default, and this project is no different. The clients happened to see work of ours in New Canaan, and, when they were looking for an architect, the wife reminded him to look up the name he had scribbled down and kept in his wallet.” The family was living in a comfortable house in Fairfield County but wanted an upgrade—and less noise from the Merritt Parkway. The site of the new property was on a lake, yet “the first time I saw it,” says Wadia, “I didn’t realize there was a lake in the back.” The existing house also had a conservatory in complete shambles, and when the client asked Wadia if he would keep it or knock it down, his answer—keep it—clinched the job.

When discussions started about the style and size of the house, Wadia took them to a French Country home he had recently completed. “She fell completely in love with it,” he notes. “She said: ‘I want to do that house, but completely different.’” They wanted classic and beautiful, but they didn’t want anything typical or cookie-cutter. Recalls Wadia, “One of the first things she asked me was: ‘What’s one thing in town that no house has?’” He responded, tongue firmly planted in cheek: “a moat.”



**Bring On The Charm**  
(CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT)  
Landscape design is by Conte & Conte. A bridge was designed to connect to the two spaces of the house instead of creating another box. The greenhouse conservatory’s oculus windows overlook the

pool; arched doors off the kitchen have retractable screens. A covered patio with a fireplace is furnished with RH’s Malta Teak sofa, chairs and coffee table. Wadia’s housewarming gift to the clients was putting a garden in the greenhouse. *See Resources.*



With the existing house also came a walled garden, which became the central focus of the living room. The front entrance—accessible via bridge and over a moat—with a white quartzite floor and fireplace, is slightly off center with the main staircase sitting off to the right. “Most people have the staircase as the main part of the house,” says Wadia. “We didn’t want to do anything typical.” The focal point on the first floor is the living room with views of the garden to the front and of the lake in the back. Wadia Associate’s Director of Interior Design & Decoration, Saranda Berisa, placed Holly Hunt’s circular Omnibus sofa in a vivid blue in the center of the room. “They don’t follow the mainstream edit,” notes Berisa. “Everything reflects the way they want to live. They wanted color and vibrancy with function. The sofa draws your eye into the center of the room, and also works for how they entertain. The clients didn’t want multiple seating arrangements—this is a family that wants everyone to congregate together.”

On the same side of the house are the kitchen, the dining room and a lacquered red bar that has a door to the pantry in the back. The dining room verges on grand, but the light fixture—illuminated glass drops dripping down from the ceiling—draws your eye. Subtle texture on the wallpaper and red upholstered chairs around an Italian table make it feel inviting and cozy. “People come to visit the house and consistently say that it feels intimate in some instances and has a sense of grandeur in others,” says Wadia. “Even though it’s a big house, it feels like home, and that is the decoration and the detail.”

Across the entryway, is a family room, study and library. The double-height study is paneled in mahogany but does not feel dark and foreboding. “It’s all in the detail and skill,” says Wadia. “Without detail it would be sterile and antiseptic. The paneling, custom moldings, colors and plaster scale the space.”

Like Wadia himself—he describes himself as “Half of me is all fun, and half of me is all business”—the 30,000-square-foot house is both formal and whimsical, plus it reflects the spirit of the family that lives there. Their collection of artwork lends personality, and at times humor, to the residence. “We like to add little bits of surprises in our work,” says Wadia, “but these clients love to surprise us right back.” 🌟





**Invitation  
To Lounge**

(OPPOSITE PAGE)  
The living room's round sectional is through Holly Hunt. The ceiling fixture is through Dennis Miller, and the coffee table is through Minotti.

**Study Hall**

(RIGHT) Another light fixture from Dennis Miller hangs in the mahogany-paneled study. The coffee table is through Kathy Kuo Home, and the desk was found on 1stDibs. See Resources.





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**Simplicity Rules**  
(OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP) The kitchen was intentionally left classic and subdued so it would never feel dated. The pendants are through Visual Comfort & Co.; the counter stools are from Serena & Lily.

**Perfect Fit**  
(OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM) Nella Vetrina table and chairs anchor the dining room. The sideboard is through B&B Italia.

**Gather Round**  
(THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT) The breakfast nook sits underneath the house’s turret; the table and chairs are through B&B Italia. The bar is lacquered in Fine Paints of Europe Rembrandt Red and has a door in the back that leads to the pantry. The wine cellar vestibule has fixtures from Visual Comfort & Co. The benches were found at Church Antiques. See *Resources*.





**Devil's In The Details**

(THIS PAGE) Wadia designed the house so that the stairs were off to the side. Intricate millwork on the balustrade keeps it classic.

**Sleep Tight**

(OPPOSITE PAGE) A Holly Hunt bed in leather sits on a rug from Palace Oriental Rugs in the primary bedroom. See *Resources*.

