

Written by **Meryl Schoenbaum**  
Photography by **Jacob Snavely**  
Redesigned and styled by **Curated Nest Interiors**  
Contractor: **DTF Rosemount LLC**

# Livable LUXURY

A design team turns a classic Colonial home into an imaginative, multifunctional modern farmhouse fit for a family.

The homeowners wanted a light and airy basement—a design challenge for any basement. The Curated Nest team installed wall-to-wall carpeting for warmth and comfort and layered a light-blue rug on it to define the 1,400-square-foot space and make it cozier. Since the owners wanted the space to function as a secondary family room, an oval-shaped ottoman doubles as a coffee table. Covered in plush fabric with no sharp edges, it's safe for when the kids are running around. The two outdoor chairs with rope backs are upholstered in durable fabric, and their cream color adds to the light and airy quality of the basement.





## The new owners

of this Center Hall Colonial were head over heels in love with its bones, but knew they were in over their heads when it came to making the four-bedroom, four-bath home sophisticated yet fun and functional for their family, which included three very active little girls. The couple hoped to remodel and redesign it with modern farmhouse styling and wasted no time in contacting a firm to help them achieve their desired look and feel. As luck would have it, they not only contacted but connected with a design team that went above and beyond their dream-home requests: Curated Nest Interiors. With their company's motto of "livable luxury" in mind, the homeowners were confident that Curated Nest could reimagine, remodel and redesign their current home to be the dream home they desired.

"We began working with this client during the pandemic, when they moved from New York City to the Westchester suburbs," says Lina Galvão, cofounder of Curated Nest.

**"Our goal was to infuse modern farmhouse design features into this Colonial home."**

This view of the foyer spotlights its grand, curved staircase. "My favorite thing is that the flooring is easy to maintain, clean and gives a cool pattern to the space," Lina says.



The staircase was completely renovated with remodeled stairs and railing, the floor was replaced, the space was painted, and the lighting and furniture were updated.



The basement is very large at 1,400 square feet. "Most of it is a playroom, but we didn't want it to feel like a Gymboree, so sectioning it off was important," Lina explains. The major design upgrades to the basement included replacing the acoustic tile on the ceiling with sheetrock to make it look more family friendly.



*above, left |* The handrail and newel posts on the staircase were originally a dark red oak color; they are now a light white oak with streamlined posts. The balusters and spindles were replaced with black iron for a modern industrial accent. The design team had the treads refinished and added a runner for safety and acoustics. The flooring is porcelain, not marble, for cleanability and durability from tracking in the mud, snow and slush that often occur in the Northeast, Lina says.

*above, right |* This space in the basement contains everything needed for little girls to play dress-up, including wooden racks of clothing, a full-length mirror, whimsical wall hangings and cozy carpeting.

"They were overwhelmed with their new home, which was huge in comparison to their city apartment. Both furnishing and renovating it would be a challenge for them given their busy work schedules as lawyers and three kids under the age of five. They knew they would need the help of a professional, and when they reached out to Curated Nest, we knew it was a good match. We worked on this project in two phases: first, we tackled the mudroom, eat-in kitchen, foyer and basement remodel; then, a year later, we worked on the primary bedroom, the family room and the 'momcave.'"

#### FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The design team's first impression was that the Briarcliff Manor Colonial's living spaces, built in 1993, were stuck in the 1990s. "It had only undergone minor changes, mostly maintenance-related. It still sat in full '90s glory!" recalls Erin Coren, Curated Nest cofounder. "The finishes and style were dated; the floors were an unsightly vinyl in the foyer, and the lighting was heavy and overly traditional. Both our team and the homeowners recognized that it had great bones and a functional layout, but it needed a full style overhaul. The basement was finished but in dire need of renovation and modernization."



The kitchen's breakfast nook is a fun spot designed for the family to enjoy their meals as well as each other's company.



## Carving Out a Breakfast Nook

Curated Nest cofounder Lina Galvão discusses how her design team incorporated a cozy gathering spot for the family to enjoy their first meal of the day—and how you can too.

The home begged for a fun and functional space to serve as the family's eat-in kitchen. "The breakfast nook in the kitchen is where the family of five gathers for most of their meals," Lina says. "We designed a breakfast nook to provide ample space for them, with a banquette for the kids to pile on."

The chairs are a modern interpretation of Windsor chairs that are often seen in East Coast farmhouses, Lina says. She points out that the chair backs relate to the staircase railings'

clean lines for a cohesive design.

The color palette of the breakfast nook coordinates with the light blues, bluish grays and greens found throughout the house: The cushions are light blue in the nook as well as in the basement. The light blue-gray with green accents also appears in the foyer tile.

Lina says the client, a busy attorney with kids, didn't want the kitchen space to be a visual assault; she wanted it to have a relaxing, zen-like ambiance.

The table is expandable, with two leaves to have room for entertaining the kids' friends and guests. The benches provided an opportunity for additional storage underneath.

On the wall, paper art with layered cutouts in modern shapes contrast with the geometry of the window, Lina points out. The design adds motion to the space and ties into the arched windows in other areas of the house.





The basement includes a teepee reading area for the kids. The client's mother was in publishing, so she has beautiful children's books. "We wanted to create a moment where the books were displayed for the girls to want to pick up a book and read it," Lina says. She adds that the client loves the abstract art painting of a woman holding a baby from when she was pregnant with her first daughter.

**opposite |** The reimagined and redesigned basement features a cool and collected craft area for the clients' kids. It includes a custom-made table with kid-sized chairs. The Curated Nest team designed built-in storage for arts and crafts materials with ample bins and drawers for organized storage.

The design team knew that installing architectural elements would transform the living spaces by adding textural dimension to the styling. "Architectural features were especially important to get the style we wanted," Erin says. "For example, we did a board-and-batten application on the wall in the double-height foyer and shiplap accents in the mudroom, primary bedroom and basement. We also added beams on the ceiling in the family room and laundry room in the basement to give the house typical farmhouse architectural features."



### REIMAGINED REMODEL

The scope of Curated Nest's involvement in the project started from the ground up and entailed much more than styling the modern farmhouse décor. "Curated Nest coordinated all aspects of the remodel, from start to finish," Lina explains. "We selected all the finishes and collaborated with the contractor to execute the project on time and on budget. Our team produced all the necessary drawings, such as floor plans, elevations, and millwork details, as well as paint, lighting and flooring schedules. Our goal was to infuse modern farmhouse design features into this Colonial home. Luckily, we had great natural light and ceiling height to work with as well as a dramatic, double-height stone fireplace in the family room."







Lina says the previous layout wasn't working to have a laundry in the mudroom because there wasn't enough room for all the family members' clothing, so the laundry was moved to the basement (this page), which made the mudroom very functional for them. Each member of the family now has a locker and a drawer there. The shiplap detail on the wall adds to the farmhouse feel. The flooring is porcelain tile for durability and ease of cleaning. Modern farmhouse elements include the cool-gray colored flooring and the black door. The cabinetry houses custom shoe racks.

### NOT YOUR BASIC BASEMENT

The clients wanted their three daughters to have a special place of their own where they could play dress-up and perform, dance, dream and create—and the Curated Nest team had lots of fun flexing their creative muscles while designing it. "In the 1,400-square-foot basement remodel, we encased a floating staircase to create zones within the large open space," Lina explains. "This led to a 'secret room' under the stairs intended for imaginary play and custom cabinets for arts and crafts storage. All materials and designs considered the kids and family living. The basement was an epic playroom full of fun details, including a secret room, a climbing wall, a reading nook and a dance room. The rest of the home took into account storage, durability, cleanability and ease of use."

### CREATING A COMMON GROUND

Lina and Erin wanted all the interior spaces to look and feel connected, so some of the tried-and-true tools they pulled from their designer's toolbox to achieve that aesthetic were a common color story and durable, comfortable furniture, finishes and fabrics. "We used a cohesive color palette throughout the home with neutrals and soft blues, and family friendly materials and finishes," Erin explains. "We took our cues from the homeowner, who gravitated toward relaxing nature tones in blues and greens. She loves muted blue-grays and soft sagey greens. We brought these tones into all the spaces we designed to keep the palette and styling cohesive. Furnishings were selected for quality and comfort, and a consistent materials palette meant that the client could use throw pillows and accessories in any space."







This is another zone in the basement. Lina likes it because it had a higher ceiling to create a climbing wall for the kids with a pretty floral mural behind it painted by Sabrina's Murals ([sabinasmurals.com](http://sabinasmurals.com)).



Under the stairs in the basement, a kid-sized secret room behind a Dutch door provides a place for the kids to foster their imaginations. It includes a play kitchen and a small table and chairs. "We didn't want to spend money on wallpaper there, so we used wall decals in the shape of ice cream cones," Lina says.

The idea was to bring that cozy and understated modern farmhouse look in the soft goods while allowing the architectural elements to bring major style definition and visual interest. We designed the architectural elements, like wall details and built-ins, to have clean lines and soft whites and oak tones, which are easy to live with and don't feel too precious. The result was that nothing looked unapproachable, and you can tell that a real family lives there."

**SEE SOURCES, PAGE 113.**