Building a home is similar to setting the foundation for a lasting relationship. You need a little give and take, a healthy dose of respect and a shared vision for the future. It's hard work, for sure; but if you're lucky, it becomes a labor of love, and that is exactly what it was for the architect, interior designer and builder of this stunning estate in North Haven, New York, where a pair of happy homeowners—a retired energy company executive and his wife—are now enjoying the spoils of the dedicated trio.

Roslyn-based architect Matthew Korn assembled the team, introducing the clients to New York-based interior designer Scott Sanders, who had plenty of experience working on Long Island as well as in East Hampton, where he also has a home. “He listened and he cared,” says the client of the designer, who in turn sums up his recipe for success. “The most important thing when building a house from scratch is to have the team in place from the very beginning,” Sanders explains. “If you are missing any of the essential components, you won’t be able to get the best house possible.”
Though the home is on the water, interior designer Scott Sanders didn’t want it to read as a typical beach house, opting to create an all-seasons look in the great room with matching O. Henry House sofas upholstered in rich striped fabric from Michael S. Smith.

Thomas Abraham, the Huntington-based builder, added: “Everyone did their job and did it well. We used the latest, greatest materials and systems, from geothermal heating and cooling to the American granite and cedar shake siding on the exterior.”

The homeowners’ close involvement at every stage of the process was also a major factor in having the home be exactly what they wanted, from its look—a beautifully updated Shingle-style house with floor-to-ceiling windows facing Long Island Sound—down to the stipulation that the sofas would have no loose cushions and could stand up to the hijinks of kids, three dogs and two cats. According to the couple, their dream was to create “a warm, welcoming place where everyone could have a room and be comfortable.”
The elegant double-pedestal table from English Country Antiques is the centerpiece of the dining room and gains some much-needed levity from the powder blue Harlequin fabric on the Quadrus Studio chairs. The oversize hanging lantern from Dennis & Leen completes the look.

So, Sanders decorated the rooms to be traditional in feeling while keeping the overall look clean and colorful. For all the spacious rooms on the ground floor that are open to each other—a kitchen, breakfast room, dining room and living room—Sanders chose a backdrop of neutrals, a decision that came in handy as the wife had a predilection for the color red. “We brought in elements of red and burgundy to be striking, but not overwhelming, in the stone of the kitchen backsplash, the floral fabric on the Roman shades that is repeated on the chair cushions in the breakfast room, the striped wallpaper, and the throw pillows in the living room,” says the designer.

The hardwood floors throughout and the large expanses of glass prompted Sanders to choose rugs and wallcoverings that introduce pattern and texture into the rooms. “We used a lot of grass cloth because I feel it’s important in a new house to add elements to make it feel cozier,” he says. “Plus, the grass cloth makes a nice connection to the landscape.”

**DINNER PARTY**

The elegant double-pedestal table from English Country Antiques is the centerpiece of the dining room and gains some much-needed levity from the powder blue Harlequin fabric on the Quadrus Studio chairs. The oversize hanging lantern from Dennis & Leen completes the look.

**STYLE SELECTION**

Finished in a delicate white glaze, this handcrafted ceramic serving piece is a distinctive addition to any table setting. *Bella Bianca* pitcher, $162; arteitalica.com
The master bedroom takes inspiration from the water views with subtle shades of blue and green appearing on the Ralph Lauren bench at the foot of the David Iatesta bed, on the delicate motif of the Patterson, Flynn & Martin rug and on the two tabletop Vaughan lamps.

He also worked with New York artist and stylist Sean Mellyn to choose objects and artwork that completed the overall feeling of a gracious and well-appointed, but not formal, interior that was only made possible by challenging some of the homeowners’ preconceived notions.

“I tried to suggest things they wouldn’t have thought of on their own,” Sanders says. Encouraging them to embrace a newfound open-mindedness was key. “Scott helped me pick things I would never have chosen by myself,” the wife says. “He helped push me out of my comfort zone, and I’m so glad he did.”

Echoing the bedroom’s calm feel, the master bath aims for complete relaxation with a deep tub surrounded by a sand-looking Crema Marfil and matching floor tiles from Chelsea Arts. Roman shades from Quadrille boast a turquoise damask pattern for a bit of fanciful flair.