

THE BIG EASY

The owners of this Hamptons home worked with designer Robert Stilin to evoke the kind of informality that invites guests to put their feet up

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EXTERIOR
Box hedges in rustic
planters and slatted
wooden loungers
hint at the relaxed
nature of the house.
Source similar **chairs** at
Adirondack Outdoors

Skyfall, like the film it's named after, is a house that evokes a spirit of adventure – and there's a touch of Martini-fuelled decadence thrown in for good measure.

The Bridgehampton property, which is owned by Kevin Menard, a herbalist and homeopath, and his partner David Lawenda, a media executive, is a playground for sports, dance parties and long indulgent dinners. Continually bursting with family, friends and several dogs, there is never a dull moment.

The house was realised after the couple decided a renovation of their former property would be too costly and swooped in on the opportunity to build afresh on a two-and-a-half-acre plot overlooking polo fields and pastures. Having met and befriended the interior designer Robert Stilin at a favourite restaurant 20 years previously, Kevin and David were in no doubt as to who to appoint to orchestrate their vision. Along with Robert, a team including architect Martin Sosa, landscape designer Chris LaGuardia and contractor Tom O'Donoghue was also assembled, collaborating for 18 months before breaking ground. 'The house is one I could see myself in,' says Robert. 'David and Kevin's and my tastes are so simpatico that the creative process was very natural, flowing and fun,' he adds.

The priority for the house was for it to 'celebrate life'. 'Kevin and David have worked hard and have always loved to share their success with their large families and friends,' says Robert. 'They use their house a lot, inviting their extended families to stay. With Kevin working from home and David travelling, Skyfall has become their main base all year round.'

The property, which Robert describes as a 'Hamptons slash American country farmhouse', has been designed to be welcoming and warm with the kind of informality that invites guests to put their feet up and help themselves to drinks. 'We wanted it

to be beautiful and comfortable with natural and organic fabrics and rugs,' says Robert. 'And while it has elements, such as the reclaimed oak beams and cabinets, that throwback to an old country house, it also feels modern and fresh.' A flowing and open floor plan with plenty of communal spaces mean there's room for large quotas of guests.

Robert's signature combination of richly upholstered furnishings and expertly chosen antiques invites both artistic appreciation and deep relaxation. White Shiplap on the interior walls recalls traditional New England techniques as well as acting as a fitting backdrop for Kevin and David's art and photography collection. 'As a collector myself, it's always a joy to work with clients who are passionate about art,' says Robert. Contrasting with the crisp white walls and gentle linen curtains are pockets of darker colours that encourage rest after a high-energy day out by the pool or playing football. 'I'll often choose materials with a patina to them to give an instant history and sense of comfort,' says Robert. 'When everything in a house is new and perfect, it feels cold and unfriendly.'

Externally, the house reaches out to its soft lawns with a series of covered porches and balconies. 'The pool house with its bar kitchen is a great place to congregate during the day,' says Robert. 'Kevin and David are athletic guys and the whole property gets used for sports. Skyfall conjures up the imaginary classic American summer.' Resonating strongly with Robert's ideology of designing houses that are well-used and well-loved, the vigorous and joyous life in this corner of the Hamptons is a testimony to its owners' original creative vision. 📷

■ Skyfall is just one of the 15 projects featured in the new book that chronicles Robert's career – *Robert Stilin: Interiors* by Robert Stilin, photography by Stephen Kent Johnson (£50, Vendome Press)



STAIRCASE
The house may be a new build, but the shiplap gives an instant sense of history. Nkuku sells a similar reclaimed bench



HALL
A stable door allows a greater connection to the front garden and view of the polo fields beyond. Mazandaran wool kilim rug. Marc Phillips Rugs



HALL
Robert likes materials with patina. 'If everything is new, it feels cold and unfriendly,' he says. Source a similar antique pastry table at 1stdibs



FORMAL SITTING ROOM
One corner is dedicated to socialising as the owners want their home to be well-loved. Banquette in Dresden Blue linen by Rogers & Goffigon



FORMAL SITTING ROOM

A convex mirror brings contrast to the squares in the new coffered ceiling, while sheer curtains add a delightful lightness to the space.

Mid-century Italian **mirror**; Hans Wegner Papa Bear **chairs**, source similar from 1stdibs. **Curtains** in Rex linen in Chalk, Calvin Fabrics



INSIDER INSIGHT

Robert Stilin shares his lifestyle and interior design vision

MOST SUCCESSFUL PART OF THE PROJECT

The house just flows. Naturally and gracefully and functionally. It's so comfortable.

BIGGEST INDULGENCE The basement. It has two en-suite bedrooms, a billiard room, lounge, wine cellar and gallery.

OBJECT YOU'D NEVER PART WITH A mounted industrial lens on a stand that sits on my desk in my bedroom in New York and was given to me by my ex-husband.

SECRET ADDRESS Marche Paul Bert and Marche Serpette at the Paris Flea Market. I shop there six times a year.

GO-TO COLOUR When in doubt, paint it white. But I also like the dark, moody colours and greys we've used in this house.

WORDS TO LIVE BY I want to create houses that are real, that are lived in and really used. You shouldn't be living in your house afraid that you're going to ruin something.

FAVOURITE INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT The dealer and decorator Francesco Paolini, @frapln

KITCHEN

Robert and the owners wanted a 'Hamptons slash American country farmhouse feel'.

Vintage industrial enamel shade hanging **lights** can be sourced via Robert Stilin on 1stdibs. Find Belgian fossil limestone **worktops** like these at MKW Surfaces. Nkuku's Narwana leather round **bar stools** are similar



BEDROOM

Dark cossetting colours evoke a restful feel and set off the rich tonality in the wood furnishings.

Wall in *Witching Hour*, Benjamin Moore. Source a similar modernist **desk** in the style of Charlotte Perriand from 1stdibs



LANDING

Bold art from the owners' collection brings a contemporary element to the traditional wood-paneled walls.

The **photograph** is *Muhammad Ali, Fist & Arm, Chicago, 1977* by John Stewart



MASTER BEDROOM

Space was made for a sitting area by the fire.

Volcano Bali jute **rug**, Merida; with red and natural Beni Berber **rug**, Mario Bellini **footstool** for B+B Italia in Indigo **velvet** by Rose Tarlow



MASTER BATHROOM

Chicken wire, black metal, marble and dark hardwood finishes combine for luxury and practicality.

Voltaire **bath**, Waterworks. Source a similar 1950s wire **waste basket** in the style of Adnet from 1stdibs



MASTER BEDROOM
Monochromatic details are lifted by the jewel tones of the rug and brights in the artwork. Contemporary painting by Jackie Saccoccio. Custom bed in Bolgheri linen in Navy, C&C Milano