

# house tours



It's a map of  
Block Island!

“Come on over!”

The more the merrier at this Rhode Island home  
that's built for guests and good times.

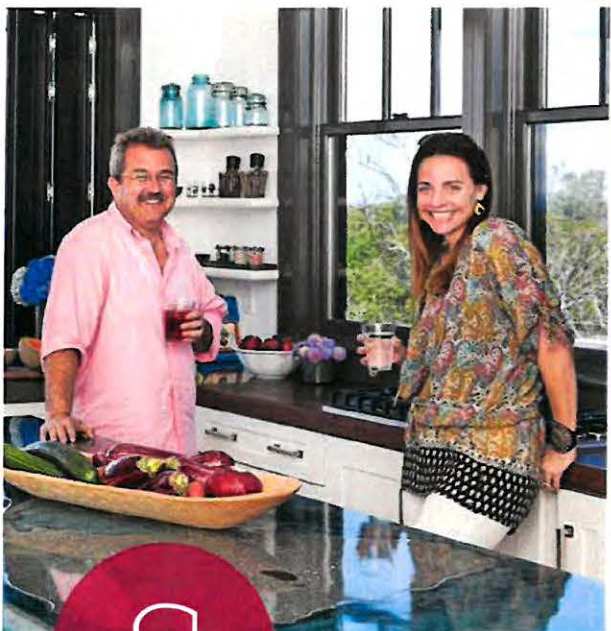
Karen and Brian  
McMahon at their home  
on Block Island, RI



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### exterior

The house looks sprawling, but it's actually a moderate 2,499 square feet because of local regulations that limited its footprint. To guarantee they made the most of every inch—and got as many ocean views as possible—the McMahons asked Boston architect Jeremiah Eck to outfit the three-and-a-half-story structure with multiple decks that seamlessly transition to the indoor living areas.



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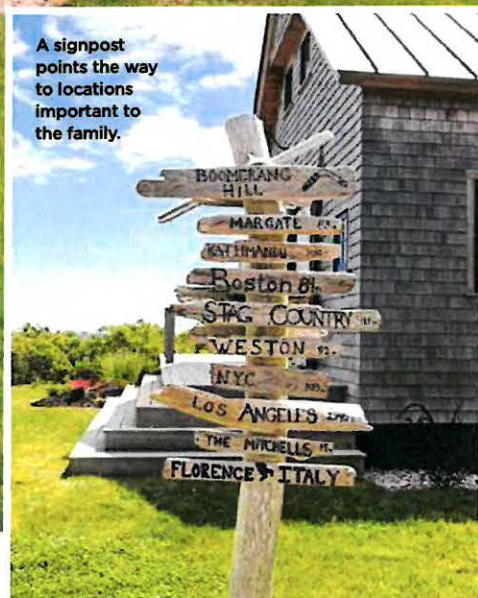
ummer is busy season for Karen and Brian McMahon. As soon as temperatures start rising, the couple welcomes a steady stream of visitors to their home on Block Island, RI. "Around June we hear from friends we didn't even know we had!" says Brian. Not that the McMahons are complaining. From the moment the couple broke ground on the cedar-clad house five years ago, they dreamed it would be a destination for them and their grown sons, James, Matt, and Kip. Fast-forward a few years and extended family and friends have joined the party, regularly filling the home's five bedrooms and detached eight-bed barn. Says Karen, "We're so fortunate to have this place. We want everyone to experience it."







A signpost points the way to locations important to the family.





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Mini barn doors  
built from salvaged  
wood slide over  
the TV.







## living area

"It reminds me of standing on turf, watching the boys play sports—plus, it's indestructible!" says Karen of the "area rug," a patch of faux grass she scored for \$99 at Costco. Because they're covered in bleachable slipcovers, the Crate & Barrel sofa and chairs are equally durable. The patterned ottoman is from Target, and the stools, which double as a coffee table, are from the Brimfield Antique Show in Massachusetts.






## back deck

To blur the line between the kitchen and the deck, architect Jeremiah installed a NanaWall folding window and designed a wood bar that's an extension of the kitchen counters. Visitors can perch on the custom-built stools and chat with whoever's in the kitchen.





The large round pendants are made from metal upcycled from old wine barrels.

## kitchen and dining area

If guests come indoors, it's usually to congregate in the kitchen, which features white Shaker cabinets, concrete counters, and an island clad in salvaged barn wood and topped with colored concrete. "We're always making, serving, or eating something," says Karen. When the rare sit-down meal happens, it takes place at the zinc-and-wood dining table from Brimfield. The slipcovered chairs are from IKEA.



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“This happy greeting sets the tone for every visit.” —KAREN



## entry

The narrow weathered wood table with a metal base—"I bought it at a flea market, but it looks like it came right out of somebody's workshop," says Karen—holds potted plants and baskets with extra linens. She found the metal "HI" letters, which sit right inside the front door, at a Connecticut antiques center. Mounted to the wall are vintage copper downspouts, more flea market buys.





## reading nook

There's no better place to take in the house's amazing views of the Atlantic Ocean than from this glassed-in hideaway. Perched at the top of what the McMahons call their lighthouse tower, the room—with its window seat topped with a fuzzy fleece cushion—was built for lounging. "It's my curl-up-with-a-book space," says Karen.





“We call the house Boomerang Hill because we hope once you visit, you’ll always come back.” —KAREN

### sleeping loft

Because it's not uncommon for the McMahons' sons to invite 20-plus friends for the weekend, they built a barn on the property and packed it with beds, futons, and beanbags. The decor is simple—just rag rugs and piles of Pine Cone Hill bedding. “The kids cram in here to watch TV and hang out,” says Brian.



## guest bathroom

A simple distressed wood vanity and metal medicine cabinet, both from Restoration Hardware, keep the focus on the stained concrete floors. The secret to their unique green hue? Miracle-Gro. Karen realized the granules were just the right color, so she asked that the plant food get mixed into the concrete. "Needless to say, everyone thought I'd lost my mind with that request!" she says.



## guest bedroom

Each of the guest bedrooms is decorated with an accent wall of reclaimed barn wood as well as Pine Cone Hill sheets and a wall-mounted crate for storage.

The mattresses are cushy Tempur-Pedic models. "We decided to be decadent and indulge our visitors," says Karen.