

Home Sweet Home

Maintaining family continuity is a focus for LaPlante Construction-SV Design new build.

BY JANICE BEETLE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARINA PORL



The rear exterior of the LeStages' home is a combination of architectural and natural delights. The rooftop deck at top left offers views of the river below, and the spacious patio offers glimpses at wildlife in the native meadow designed by Blue Flax.



This Andersen gliding patio door unit has aesthetic charm that welcomes one in and then allows ample light and views outside. Lanterns by Nauset Lantern Shop enhance the Cape Cod look and feel.

Andy LeStage's ties to Orleans go back generations. Summers were spent in a cedar-sided home on his parents' property, located on a hill overlooking the river that gave the family a place to fish, swim, boat and explore.

Several years ago, he and his wife, Maria (pronounced "Mariah"), decided to build on a parcel of land next to the home Andy grew up in and where Andy's brother lives now; the property was part of the family compound and gave the brothers the chance to also be neighbors.

The new homestead—created by SV Design and Laplante Construction—gave the LeStages the chance to pass on the joy of Cape Cod river life to their two children and future generations.

The family can see Andy's brother's home and the river from the backyard, where a native meadow is frequented by dozens of species of birds, and the stunning river greets them whether they sit outside on the patio or in the kitchen, dining area, and living room.

RESOURCES

Builder:

Laplante Construction, Chatham
laplanteconstruction.com

Architect:

SV Design, Chatham
svdesign.com

Landscaping (design):

Blue Flax Design LLC, Harwich Port
blueflaxdesign.com

Landscaping (installation):

Outerland, Mashpee
outerland.co

Cabinetry:

Vartanian Custom Cabinetry, Palmer
vartaniancabinets.com

Exterior Lighting:

Nauset Lantern Shop, Orleans
nausetlanternshop.com

"I love the way the house lives," Maria says, and Andy agrees, saying, "The flow of life through the house works really well."

The LeStages particularly enjoy that the home scales easily—up or down—depending on how many people are in it. Over Thanksgiving 2023, extended family visited. They've hosted a cocktail party for 40 people, and for much of the year, they live in their home alone. "It doesn't ever feel too big or too small," Maria says.

Getting started

In 2020, the LeStages connected with the architecture and interior design firm SV Design and Sean Henry, a senior project manager who works out of the company's Chatham office. They shared their vision for a classic Cape home with an open design, office space for each of them, ample views of the river that leads to Little Pleasant Bay, and the flexibility to grow from three bedrooms to five—with an additional two-bedroom guest house, if needed.

"They gave us the parameters and also valued our expertise in what we do with design," Henry says, explaining that SV Design's associate of interiors, Lindsay Goode, also entered an iterative process with the LeStages, bouncing ideas back and forth and guiding them through the interior design.

The kitchen features Vartanian Custom Cabinetry, quartz countertops and a teal glass backsplash, above right. Below, wide plank white oak flooring is a highlight throughout the home, such as in the dining area, which comes alive with views of the patio, meadow and river beyond.





The LeStages were not afraid of color. The bold blue found in the kitchen extends to the bar cabinet in the living room and commands attention. The bar countertop is black walnut plank.

In 2021, the vision and design were clear, and the LeStages reached out to Bill Laplante, president of Laplante Construction in both Chatham and East Longmeadow, to bring it to life. The couple was living in Hingham, and Laplante came recommended by a fellow gym member in casual conversation.

After viewing Laplante's home in Orleans, which was built by Laplante Construction, the LeStages brought the firm on board. "It worked amazingly well," Andy says. "Maria and I have built additions on previous homes, but this was the first time we did a ground-up construction. It worked as we hoped, with the architect and builder working together to deliver the dream home."

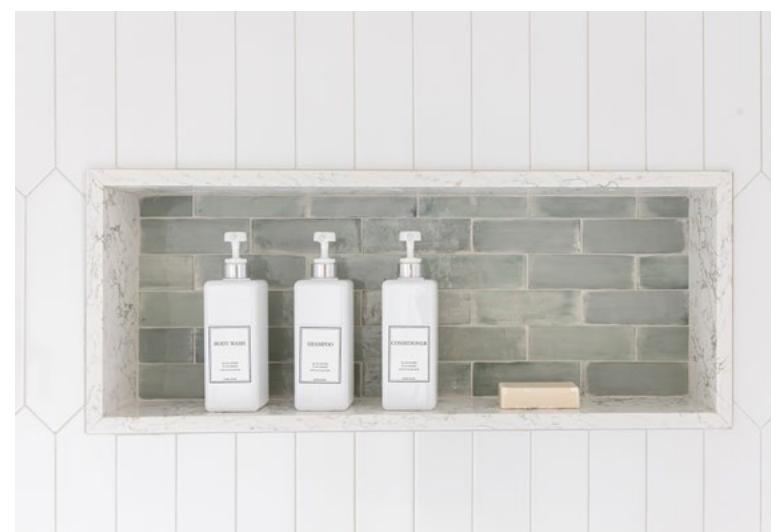
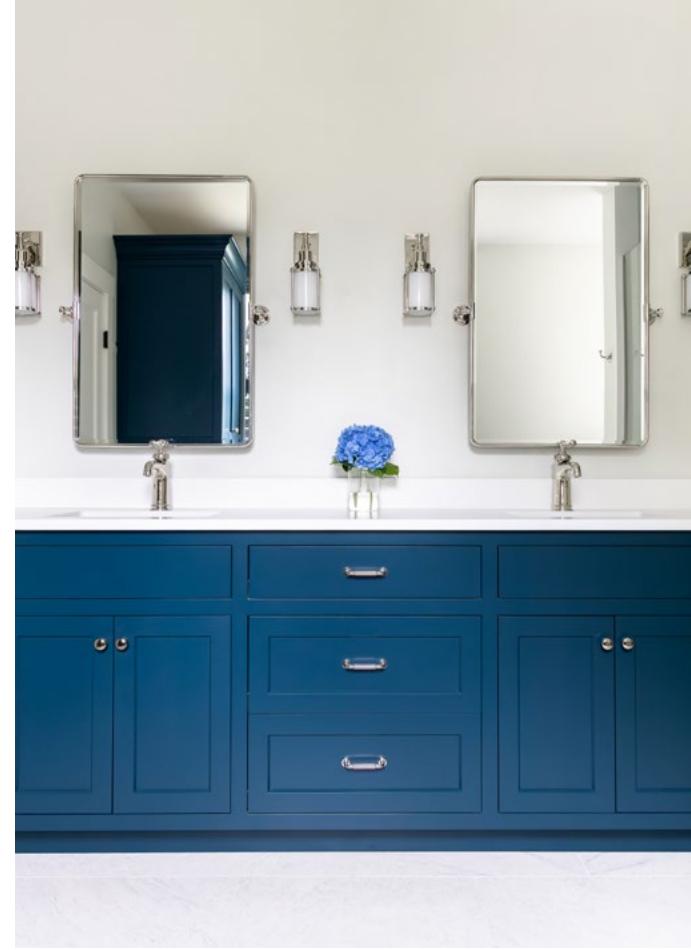
Design flair outside the home includes classic exterior lighting sourced by The Nauset Lantern Shop in Orleans, landscaping in the rear by Blue Flax Design of Harwich Port, and a Nantucket-style dormer over the front door.

The open floor plan and plentiful windows by Andersen let light and beauty inside the home, where you'll also find Vartanian Custom Cabinetry in the kitchen, wet bar, and bathrooms; quartz countertops; frameless glass shower doors with porcelain tile; and a custom-built white oak staircase.



The custom-built window seat calls one to sit and gaze out the window, read or nap. Below, the living room as seen from the kitchen; highlights are the built-in bookcase, cove crown molding and fireplace with travertine stone surround.





Clockwise from top left: the LeStages' choice of bold blue extends even into the master bath and is a highlight of the shower, which has one glass accent wall with cascading shades of color and an Oasis frameless door; a porcelain tile niche inset in an upstairs guest bathroom; more blue paired with a whimsical wallpaper in the downstairs bathroom; and the Vartanian cabinetry in the master bath.

Laplante says the LeStages' color selections help the interior shine. "They weren't afraid of color," he adds, pointing to the stunning teal glass backsplash in the kitchen, the deep-blue cabinetry of the wet bar in the living room, and the ombre tile that fades from deep blue to white in the master bath.

The importance of communication

The LeStages moved from Hingham to the Cape and were living in another family home after their project broke ground. Maria works in marketing, remotely; Andy had recently retired from commercial real estate and investment management, and in 2023, he bought a Budget Blinds window coverings franchise in Dennis.

Their lifestyle made them available to their architect and builder as the project evolved.

Laplante says he and his team stayed in contact with Henry and the LeStages, working through various changes and making materials choices as needed. That communication, he says, is critical.

Just inside the front door is an entryway with recessed panel wainscot and an ambiance that lets you know you're on the Cape. Below, the front of the home features Nantucket style dormers, double-dipped white cedar shingle and a mahogany entry door.





Blue Flax designed the rear garden, which is full of native Queen Anne's Lace, Black-Eyed Susans, and other native plants that attract many species of birds.

"There must be a very, very close working relationship between our team and the customer, and the communication is the absolute most important part," Laplante says, noting that oftentimes—but not with the LeStages' job—"We might discover a technique, a design detail, or a material we're not comfortable with. We bring that up, and we talk to the customer about that. We talk to the architect about that."

One major detail that did change in the plans for the LeStages' home was that there was originally a step up from the main home to the rooftop deck; the couple preferred it to be level, so the plan was tweaked, taking depth from the garage ceiling.

"It was a great example of that collaboration—fixing something in the field," Andy says.

Taking in the out of doors

Henry says the site of the home sits on a previously untouched wooded lot. Site constraints were defined by the winding river and conservation restrictions. A number of

invasive species were removed, which made it easier to also remove many trees in poor condition.

Blue Flax oversaw the restoration of the property along the riverbank. In addition to serving as a liaison with the Orleans Conservation Commission, Blue Flax landscaped the rear garden, which holds Queen Anne's Lace, Black-Eyed Susans, and other native species. In the front of the home, traditional hydrangeas and ornamental grasses were planted by Outerland of Mashpee.

"We spend a lot of time on the patio," Maria says. "We try to eat outside. We sit in the Adirondack chairs and hang in the hammock. I could watch the river all day, and Andy's a big birder."

Both LeStages appreciate the respect the Laplante team offered during construction. "Working with Bill and Rich Walz, our project manager, was wonderful. They treated our home like they were building for themselves," Maria says. "They were thoughtful, respectful. They took care. It was just incredible."



PHOTOGRAPH: MARINA PORN

Joy for the generations