



Photo credit: The renovated barn is now the living room. Inset: A cozy sitting nook with a crackling fire, comfy pillows, and a view of the woods. Inset: A dining table set for a festive gathering. Photo credit: Stacks of books make casual browsing a quiet pastime. Inset: A dining table set for a festive gathering. Photo credit: A stack of books makes casual browsing a quiet pastime. Inset: A dining table set for a festive gathering. Photo credit: A stack of books makes casual browsing a quiet pastime. Inset: A dining table set for a festive gathering.

*as newlyweds,* Anne and Jim Hardy left the U.S. for the U.K. when Jim's work took them to London. Fourteen years and two sons later (Will is 12; Ned, 9), they returned to Anne's hometown in southwestern Connecticut to take possession of a 1782 blacksmith's cottage. Like many old structures, it had been long on charm but short on space. So, working with architect Deirdre O'Farrelly, they bought a c. 1850 barn that was shipped in pieces, reassembled and refurbished on-site, and connected to the cottage via a new addition. The cottage itself was honed to its stylistic bones. As Anne explains, "We wanted to achieve a feeling of simplicity and tranquility in this house, using natural materials and a mix of antiques and modern pieces." Designed to unify an open floor plan, the neutral color scheme also provides a soothing backdrop at Christmastime for wreaths, candles, and seasonal blooms. And when the Hardys decorate their tree, the ornaments that they have received as gifts remind them of special friends on both sides of the Atlantic.

