

# Decor Maine

ISSUE No.1 2026

THE KITCHEN ISSUE

## The Art of the Kitchen

FIVE CULINARY SPACES,  
*beauty meets utility*

### A Study in Maine Living:

EFFICIENCY *meets* ANTIQUE CHIC  
*on the* BLUE HILL PENINSULA

### *Scandinavian Serenity*

**IN A BRUNSWICK HOME**

*shaped by* LIGHT AND LANDSCAPE

*A fresh take ON A*  
**PORTLAND CLASSIC**  
HIGH-PERFORMANCE  
*in an* 1860s HOME

*Plus!* **HARBOR HISTORIC**  
DRY DOCK'S REVIVAL HONORS  
PORTLAND'S MARITIME SOUL





Dark Yakisugi siding (cypress charred by Cinder Wood Products) makes for an approach that is all drama. **OPPOSITE:** Genuine industrial crates repurposed into deepset, handleless drawers.

# COOL SUMMERS, SNUG WINTERS

Energy efficiency meets antique chic  
on the Blue Hill Peninsula

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*construction* **MURUS SIPs** *windows* **NEUFFER WINDOWS & DOORS**  
*flooring* **CAPOZZA FLOOR COVERING CENTER & ATLANTIC HARDWOODS**





# Everyone on Instagram wants to know about the tile on this Blue Hill home's masonry heater.

**"IT'S THE NUMBER ONE QUESTION PEOPLE ASK,"** says homeowner and designer Anya Kassoff. (The tile—just FYI—is an assortment of blue and white hand-painted designs from Tabarka Studio. Pattern: Maghreb #10, 11, 12, 13, 14. It also doubles as a backsplash in the kitchen.) But perhaps more noteworthy than the tile itself is what the tile adorns.

"Masonry heaters are unfortunately still uncommon here in the States," Anya says. Her childhood in Russia, however, left her well-aware of the heaters' efficiency and versatility. "Beyond being beautiful, it's incredibly functional," she

Mix-and-match backsplash tile patterns, as well as the range hood's wooden trim, enhance the home's rustic motif. **OPPOSITE:** Mixed-material island by Alex Antonyuk.







Not your typical repurposing. These vintage metal display cabinets (Anya's finds) have been fully incorporated into the kitchen's cabinetry program. **OPPOSITE:** The heart of the home, a masonry heater by Temp-Cast. (Temp-Cast specializes in kits that can be installed by any contractor, or even a skilled homeowner.)



says of the home's Temp-Cast model. With just one to two fires, a masonry heater emits enough consistent warmth for an entire house for up to twenty-four hours. (Anya likens the temperature to a hug.) It also has a heated bench and an oven that can be used to cook or keep food warm, again using only those one to two fires.

"I would say our masonry heater is the single most important feature of the interior," Anya admits. "One of my main objectives with the house was to make sure we stayed warm during the colder months without breaking the bank on heating."

To this same end, Anya incorporated structural insulated panels into her design, as well as energy-efficient

windows. "Large-scale windows were non-negotiable," she says. "We wanted plenty of light and forest views. But not just any windows would work if we also wanted to achieve a climate-neutral home." Ultimately, she landed on European tilt-and-turns from Neuffer Windows & Doors. (Like the masonry heater, Anya recalled tilt-and-turn windows from growing up overseas, where the style is more common.) "They're truly in a different league," she says. "Once you've experienced life with them, it's hard to go back to other windows."

A home, of course, is much more than the sum cost of the energy required to run it. Beyond her focus on a house that held reasonable temperatures for reasonable prices,





Masonry heaters are popular in Russia, but less so in North America. "It's a true centerpiece," Anya says.



Another killer chandelier to add to the collection and a floor-to-ceiling bookshelf to match the windows.



Notice the brass kick plate from an old door, revamped here as a bathroom sink backsplash.



# “I basically let my ‘finds’ guide my design choices.”

— ANYA KASSOFF

Anya wanted a space that felt lived-in from the start. “I put a lot of effort into making sure the place didn’t feel like new construction,” she says. Antiques play a big part in achieving this effect. “I basically let my ‘finds’ guide my design choices,” Anya says.

And the finds are stellar, often delightfully repurposed.

In the kitchen, factory crates from the General Radio Company serve now as spacious drawers, and industrial metal display cabinets have been framed with the same facing as a built-in shelving system for seamless incorporation. The custom island, too, is a found materials gem. “That was scrap wood meant for a bonfire,” Anya says. “Alex Antonyuk, our very creative woodworker, brought my vision to life by blending the wood with a leftover piece of marble from the countertops. The right stain tone and layers of texture came together to make the island look one-of-a-kind.” Other highlights include: a brass toe-kick plate (from the base of a door) turned backsplash in a downstairs powder room, and in particular, we are loving the vintage chandeliers and lighting fixtures throughout, a collection that blends era, region, and style with elegant cohesion.

No antique in the house, however, lives a more striking second life than the Eastern European dough bowls Anya nabbed at an architectural salvage shop and retrofitted into bathroom sinks—a single in one upstairs bedroom, and a double vanity in the primary suite. “I’d seen people turn them into sinks before online,” Anya says, “but the ones I found had slightly different shapes, which made them more special. I couldn’t resist.” Converting each wooden bowl into a functional plumbing appliance was a matter of waterproofing the wood—tung oil, followed by several layers of spar oil-based polyurethane, the same material used on boats—then fabricating custom

**OPPOSITE:**  
Beautiful open  
shower with  
microcement walls,  
and a tub from  
Vintage Tub & Bath.





“We wanted plenty of light and forest views. But not just any windows would work if we also wanted to achieve a climate-neutral home.”

— ANYA KASSOFF

Large scale windows were a non-negotiable priority. The energy-efficient panes come from Neuffer Windows & Doors in Germany.







Circular windows are notoriously tricky to frame, but the effect is lovely. "They're one of those timeless elements," says Anya.



**CLOCKWISE, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Bed by One Kings Lane; An elongated dough bowl turned primary bath dual vanity (Drool!); Polished concrete floors by Capozza Floor Covering Center and striking mismatched vintage lighting; Rustico Tile & Stone flooring plus a view that would have us in that tub permanently.





brackets to secure the bowls to the wall. Beard Fire Metalworks (based in Ellsworth) handled the latter. “They also drilled precisely-sized drainage holes to accommodate our fixtures,” Anya says. “It proved to be worth the effort. We love how they turned out.”

The home contains more than enough considered detail to fill this issue, but we would be remiss if we did not take a peek outside at the extraordinary Yakisugi exterior crafted by Jesse Paquin of Cinder Wood Products. Yakisugi (also: shou sugi ban) is a Japanese technique by which the surface of cypress boards is intentionally charred for a texture that is both water-resistant and drop-dead-sexy.

“I decided on Yakisugi fairly early in the process,” Anya says. “I wanted a natural material that would suit our forest setting, and Yakisugi felt like the perfect fit, not only for its beauty, but also its longevity.” A year and half after install, the boards got treated with black pine tar and purified linseed oil. “It’s a Scandinavian method for preserving wood,” Anya says. “It’s not traditionally Japanese. But I wanted to preserve the deep black color and the distinctive ‘alligator skin’ texture, and this treatment did an incredible job of just that.” Killer. Inside and out. ■



“Built-ins really help create a lived-in look,” Anya says. “They solve a lot of our storage needs and also give us cozy window seats.” **OPPOSITE:** Charred Yakisugi siding was chosen not only for its beauty, but also its longevity. If properly maintained (Anya uses a Scandinavian treatment of pine tar and linseed oil) the Japanese siding can last northward of 80 years.

