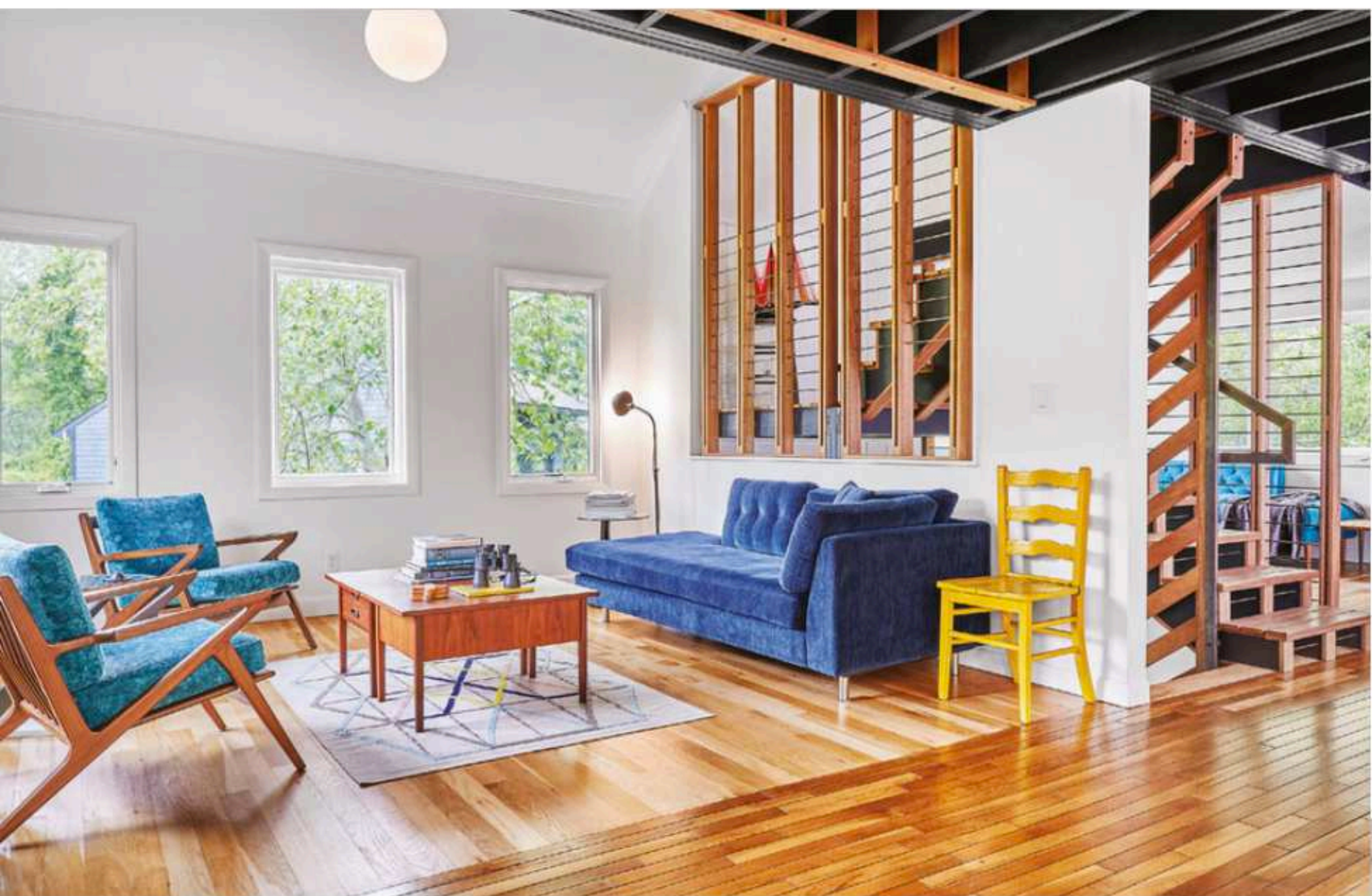


Modern Marvel

A rural home goes from meh to modern with some artistic vision and a little sweat equity.

By **Dana Laverty** Photography by **Angel Tucker**





Joshua Deaner almost didn't buy the property that became his family's swanky and inviting vacation home.

It was a little bit out of their price range and needed a lot of work to boot. (The contemporary split-level was built in 1980 with the decor to match.)

But he loved the location, down a dirt path in quaint Little Compton, surrounded by 2.4 acres of verdant lawn, trees and shrubbery, and the garage would make the perfect studio for his fine art photography practice. Plus, his wife and teenage son already loved the tranquil locale.

"We'd been coming to Little Compton for years and always just felt like it was kind of going back in time to this beautiful, quiet, serene area," says Deaner, a Providence-based artist and realtor. "The air just smells different here."

They bought the home in October 2018 and embarked upon a yearlong extensive renovation project, ripping out carpeting, tearing out dated cabinets and bathroom fixtures, painting walls in gleaming shades of white and hollowing out the main staircase to create an airy, museum-quality showpiece of metal and teak.

The shabby home that had sat on the market for six months morphed into a sleek haven of modern design, art, found treasures and fun pops of color, filled with all of today's cutting-edge conveniences.

An avid collector, Deaner strategically placed antiques, family heirlooms and conversation pieces throughout the space. The door to the downstairs bathroom, for example, involved a five-hour roundtrip drive to Mongers Market in Bridgeport, Connecticut, while a ladder from his grandfather's hardware shop shares space with a cobalt loveseat from Joybird.





OPENER PAGE: Joshua Deaner enjoys listening to music on the Marantz 2230B receiver and Technics SL-1300 turntable. **OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP:** A seating area flows easily into the dining room; a nine-foot table has seating for ten. **THIS PAGE, FROM TOP:** Knife molds from Brimfield and an antique scale line the kitchen counter, while a motley collection of chairs — some found on the side of the road, some from Deaner's brother, some from his old office — invites diners to gather; the renovated staircase.



“I love mixing cool and funky with nice and refined,” he says. “But I didn’t want this to be so stuffy with a \$3,000 credenza that nobody could really put their feet on. But I also wanted something that wasn’t just going to IKEA and buying boring things. Sometimes you don’t have to spend more money if you can put the time and sweat into it and have a good eye.”

The clean, European-style kitchen has a full island with seating, plenty of light, a gourmet Bertazzoni stove and — perhaps coolest of all — a sheet metal backsplash that will change over time as it’s exposed to water and air.

“So as it gets wet, it kind of tells a story and over time it evolves,” Deaner says.

The adjacent dining room — which has seating for ten — flows into the open living area, where guests can gather with cocktails and nibbles and move easily from one space to another. And with four bedrooms — including a master bedroom with soaring cathedral ceilings — there is plenty of space for family and friends to gather,

especially during these fleeting summer months.

A downstairs play/TV area is the perfect spot for kiddos to hang during a rainy day, with board games and toys, loads of room to run around, a chalkboard and a fifty-five-inch TV. Deaner enhanced the backyard with a new fire pit area, spacious deck and propane grill.

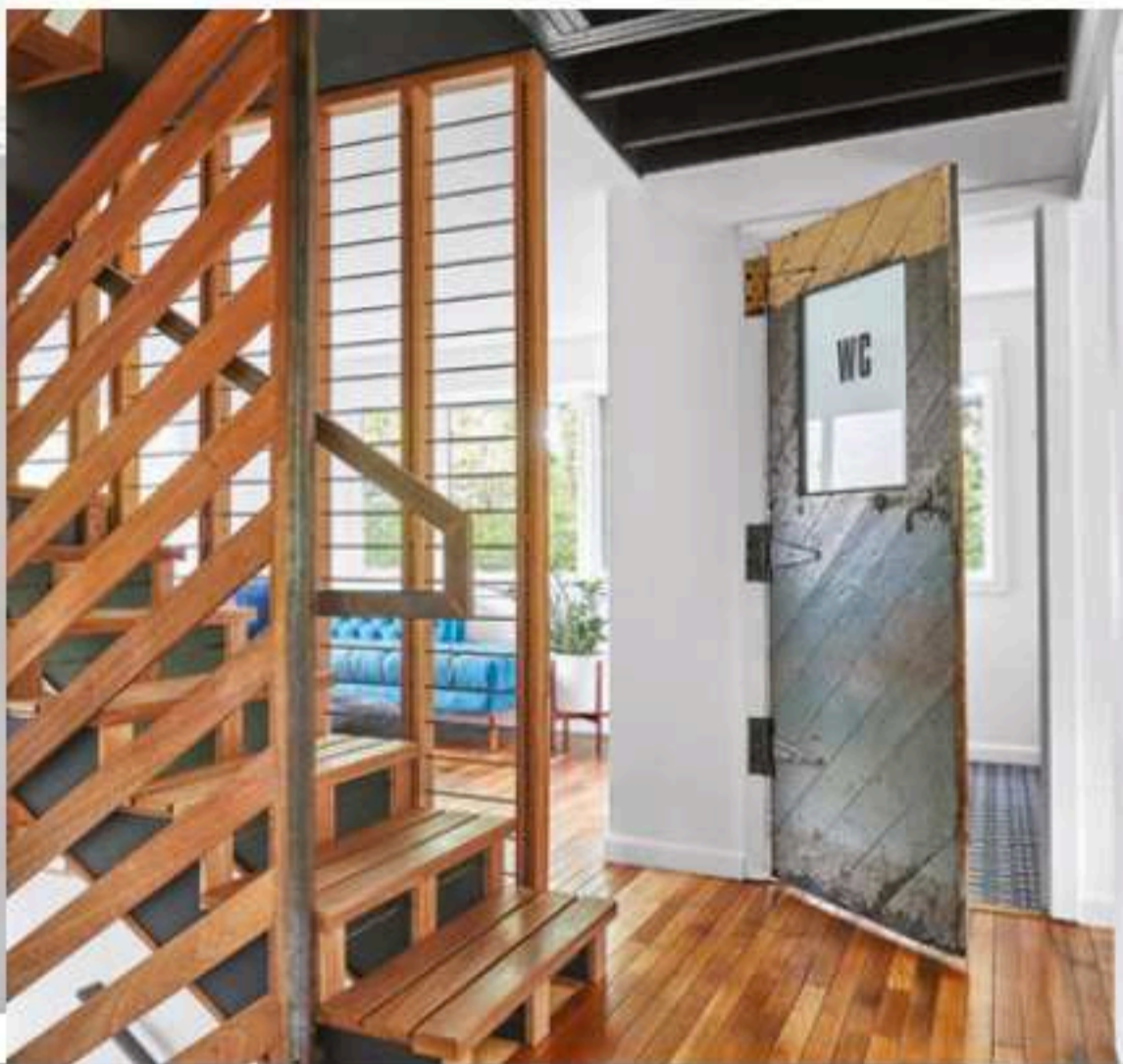
The family takes full advantage of the property in the summer, staying for weeks at a time, hitting the beach, enjoying the fresh air and ample yard, taking nature walks or just chilling and listening to music on the turntable. They’ve even celebrated New Year’s Eve there for the past four years.

When they’re not using it, the property is available for rentals on Airbnb at littlecomptonmodern.com. Deaner hopes to someday pass the home along to his son, so he can make the same sort of memories with his family that the close-knit Deaner clan is making now.

“Just the thought of him coming here with his friends or his family and having those memories of, ‘Oh yeah, my dad used to do this or that’ here,” he says. “That’s really exciting for me.” **R**



OPPOSITE PAGE: The spacious backyard and fire pit/grill area. **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Controls for the first-floor television are cleverly tucked away into an adjacent bathroom closet; the downstairs bathroom door came from Mongers Market in Bridgeport, Connecticut; one of the home's four bedrooms.



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