



WRITER AND PRODUCER MARGARET ZAINÉY ROUX
PHOTOGRAPHER WERNER STRAUBE



A PAINTER'S PALETTE

When the homeowner is a professional artist,
it's only logical that a classically appointed farmhouse
would include a fresh kick of color.

ABOVE LEFT Homeowner Barbara Cochran scored this vintage display case at an antiques shop then hand-painted the piece to complement the room's color scheme and set off her cherished collection of yellowware. **ABOVE RIGHT** When Barbara and husband George purchased the Michigan property, they built a new house but honored the past by retaining the three original barns and dubbing their place Three Barn Farm. Two of the structures are used for seed and equipment storage, and one is used as a makeshift greenhouse. **OPPOSITE** In the dining room, interior designer Elizabeth Drake paired fanback Windsor chairs with a custom-made oak table that can comfortably serve 10 or more guests. An abstract farm scene by Jean Jack is flanked by a pair of lamps made from vintage tractor wheels.



TODAY'S MODERN FARMHOUSE OFTEN HAS A NOTICEABLY NEUTRAL PALETTE OF CRISP WHITES AND QUIET SHADES OF TAN, GRAY, AND BLACK. But staying in the neutral zone wasn't an option for Barbara and George Cochran when they built their family's farmhouse on Michigan's Leelanau Peninsula.

"I appreciate that there is a sense of calm that comes from neutral interiors, but I couldn't live in a home without color," says Barbara, a well-known local artist. "I consider my home to be an extension of my artistic expression, and color is an essential element of that. It also makes me feel warm and happy on those cold, dreary days."

To help paint the picture of home, the couple called on interior designer Elizabeth Drake, who found inspiration not only in Barbara's vibrant landscapes but in Mother Nature's as well. Throughout the house, Drake employed a color scheme comprised of grassy greens, sunny yellows, sky blues, and a gamut of reds plucked from the barns and apple orchards on the property. On many walls, windows, and furnishings, bright textiles depicting flowers, trees, and a barnyard menagerie echo the bucolic beauty of the setting. Elsewhere, classic checks, including scaled-up buffalo checks, add to the country allure. The iconic tonal pattern, used in various applications and colorways, recalls the vintage linens and aprons commonly found in farmhouse kitchens while adding fresh graphic punch.

"Using bright, saturated colors and unique motifs gives the otherwise traditional farmhouse an edge and a sense of unexpectedness," Drake says. "Lighting fixtures in simple, sculptural forms also add to the modern vibe thanks to their exaggerated scale. But at its core, this is a casual, comfortable family home designed for the enjoyment of multiple generations, so we kept the look timeless and were careful not to stray too far from its roots."

In the living area of the sprawling great-room, whimsical modern style is on full display in fabrics with graphic, oversize buffalo checks and polka dots along with a bold floral pattern. Classic country elements—a vintage quilt used as a throw blanket on a wing-back chair, for instance—balance the contemporary features to achieve the fresh farmhouse style.





Antique and heirloom pieces from the Cochrans' former Federal-style residence in Chicago elevate the interiors by helping balance rustic with refined. They also bridge the gap between the contemporary appointments and the farmhouse's classic architectural framework, including white oak and slate floors, ceilings with wood beams, paneled walls, and massive fireplaces. Working with architect Jim Elkins, Drake designed six massive fireplaces to keep lofty rooms warm as well as visually and texturally interesting.

For the keeping room off the kitchen, Drake designed a fireplace that incorporates rows of square artisanal American tile in a quiltlike pattern for extra dimension. In the great-room, den, screen porch, and library, towering fireplace walls are clad with granite boulders excavated from

Lake Michigan. They're also outfitted with reclaimed wood mantels and chiseled bluestone hearths that work double-duty to provide seating and log storage. The fireplace in the primary bedroom also has a granite boulder fireplace, but it is topped with a custom feature of inset barn doors that open to reveal a television.

"George's idea of home is all about books and fireplaces," Barbara says. "We read all of our books and use all of our fireplaces year-round. Nothing here is just for show—it's made for real country living. When friends and family visit for the first time, they often comment on how inviting and authentic it feels for being new construction. For us, that is the ultimate compliment." □

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ABOVE LEFT Custom panels mimic traditional barn doors to cleverly disguise the refrigerator and deep freezer, giving an everyday appliance architectural interest. They're highlighted with a yellow Drake describes as "egg yolk." To offset the bold color, she used a wood stain on the island and crisp white paint for the perimeter cabinetry. **TOP RIGHT** Wainscoting in one entry is painted the same sunny yet sophisticated hue found in the kitchen. The bow-back Windsor bench and walking canes are vintage. **ABOVE RIGHT** A plush upholstered settee creates a cozy perch near the fireplace in the keeping room. **OPPOSITE** The keeping room, also called the nook, houses a built-in banquette suitable for intimate suppers and friendly board games. Blue Willow plates and Staffordshire dog figurines coupled with an antique corner cabinet give the space a subtle British accent. Large-scale buffalo checks on the walls lend graphic impact.





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—HOMEOWNER BARBARA COCHRAN

ABOVE In the laundry room, barn red cabinets and custom shelves with beaded-board backing offer stylish yet practical storage solutions, such as built-in kennels and deep basket shelves. The reds and golds of the GP&J Baker hen-motif wallpaper bring out warmer tones in the slate floors. **OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT** The library was designed exclusively for George, a voracious reader and avid book collector. One of Barbara's original landscapes rests on the mantel. **OPPOSITE, TOP RIGHT** A rustic pine console was turned into a vanity for the powder room. An antique mirror from the couple's former home hangs above it and ties into the gold leaf pears on the wallpaper. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM** The den's richly stained ceiling planks and beams lower the eye to a more human scale, and its painted wood paneling and burlap-lined walls add to the cozy factor. An heirloom oil portrait passed down from George's family hangs proudly above the fireplace that Drake custom-designed; it's made with granite boulders dug up from Lake Michigan and has a bluestone firewood storage bench at its base.



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ABOVE A screen porch off the entry overlooks the property. At night, the space is illuminated by the classic lantern with a custom red lacquer finish that gives it a contemporary spin. **OPPOSITE TOP** Creative application of Carrara marble tilework and a graphic floral wallcovering give the all-white bathroom drama and depth; the tone-on-tone palette keeps it clean and calm. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT** A sleek, oval soaking tub offers a modern alternative to the traditional claw-foot design. A bank of four-over-four double-hung windows balances the tub with classic farmhouse style. **OPPOSITE, BOTTOM RIGHT** Drake chose paisley block-printed bedding, buffalo check shades, and solid upholstery in lavender, a color that is frequently associated with relaxation. The tiered chandelier and canopy bed help deflect from the towering height of the natural-finish plank cathedral ceiling.