

# THE villa RENEWED

This house in Greene County, New York, has been faithfully restored, from its foundation and structure to exterior elements and trim inside. The house had suffered from neglect and then, in 2011, from the devastation of Hurricane Irene. With an L-shaped footprint, the big house boasts 10 bedrooms.

The building probably dates to ca. 1836, though the Italianate touches may have come a bit later. It's a country example of a Tuscan Villa—defined by the boxlike symmetry, a heavily bracketed cornice, and the belvedere on the roof. (That “cupola with a view” historically was used as a viewing pavilion. It is also a passive ventilation device.) Like this house, many Villas have a front verandah.

A rear ell had been constructed on stilts, without the basement that supported the front section. “It was so cold in that part of the house!” says Sarah Blank, the interior designer who worked with the family to design the kitchen and furnish the interior. Excavation, structural work, and new mechanical systems preceded final design of rooms inside.

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1



2

## 1. A WELCOMING ENTRY

A new mudroom connects the back door to the kitchen. The antique settee came with the house. A Dutch (split) door is versatile, controlling egress and ventilation; it complements the simple battened wainscoting. The pine wide-plank floors are original.

## 2. COUNTRY COLORS

The homeowner chose the charming scheme: yellow for the body color, blue for shutters, white for trim, a red accent on the front door. It's a cheerful, American version of Italian stone colors. Calming all the gingerbread, white for the trim shows later Colonial Revival influence.



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### 3. STYLE MARKERS

Original trim remains on the porch, corners, cornice, and belvedere (its finial, visible in an archival photo, long ago went missing). Note the delicate columns and carved capitals, spandrels and brackets, and dentil mouldings. Louvered wood shutters are properly installed to be functional.

