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A foundation of white makes a small loft feel luminous and airy

Photography by Mark Lohman, styling by Fifi O'Neill, courtesy of CICO Books



Artful Living

Despite its tiny footprint, a Newport loft has everything this creative family needs

By Fifi O'Neill

Bernadette Heydt personifies the saying “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.” Her late grandfather was a prominent contractor in New York City and one of the main contributors to building several of the Big Apple’s most iconic landmarks. Her admiration for those accomplishments, combined with growing up alongside her father’s love of restoring unique properties, led her to her passion. “I knew interior design was what I wanted to pursue after years of witnessing my father’s appreciation for how architectural design can be both beautiful and functional,” she says. But it wasn’t until she was

19 and living in Italy that she decided to pursue her passion and enroll at the acclaimed Istituto Lorenzo de’ Medici in Florence, where she received her bachelor’s degree in interior design.

Fast-forward to 2013 when Heydt, who owns Heydt Home, an interior design firm, and Heydt + Mason, a full-service creative agency, and her Italian-born husband, Andrea Pietrangeli, a videographer, moved back to the States to pursue their careers. Shortly after they settled in Newport, they purchased a property composed of three buildings dating back to the early 1800s. Throughout the years, the complex has served

Above: Despite its compact size the mood of the living room is one of serenity, uncluttered simplicity, and cohesiveness. Built-in niches and shelving allow for tidy displays. Bernadette chose bamboo shades for the windows for texture and privacy but also to bring a coastal vibe into the space. Beautiful raw materials like the original beams and wide plank pine floor speak of the loft’s historic charm and character.

Photography by Mark Lohman, styling by Fifi O'Neill, courtesy of CICO Books.



The kitchen and eating area's sober furnishings sustain the prevalent airy design established in the adjacent living room, and help keep the space orderly. With its clean lines and organic wood, the handsome dining table Andrea built is the focal point of the space. The chairs that once belonged in the waiting room of a 1960s New York City advertising firm are Bernadette's favorite pieces. She had them re-covered in a performance fabric that facilitates everyday use. A leather pig (another 1980s piece from Abercrombie and Fitch) brings a bit of levity to the decor. The butcher-block island is another of Andrea's creations, which he crafted from white oak.

DECORATE



A pair of pedestals signals the entrance to the master bedroom. The ladder-like stairs lead to two small rooms, one Andrea's office, the other Bernadette's studio. A 15-foot plank bridge links the two spaces, making the trek from one to the other a bit daunting for the uninitiated

various functions, but it was originally used as horse stables and storage for their carriages. Today, craftsmen, painters, sculptors, and photographers call the lovingly renovated compound home.

Despite its tiny footprint, the loft Heydt and Pietrangeli designed and share lives large and well. Built on a foundation of white, the space feels luminous, light, and airy. And though the floor plan is wide open, it emanates an intimate vibe. "After many years of living in Europe, a large home didn't seem

like a necessity," Heydt explains. "Considering the space is only 700 square feet, the key goal was to keep the layout open and only add walls where it was absolutely necessary while keeping functionality, balance, proportion, and scale in mind."

Inspired by her years abroad, Heydt wanted to incorporate the crisp white stucco look seen in the homes of southern Italy. "We had to be strategic with the layout and maximize the use of space, so we built shelving into the walls to add storage, and in doing so we were





Photography by Mark Lohman, styling by Fifi O'Neill, courtesy of CICO Books



Find more inspiring spaces in Shades of White: Serene Spaces for Effortless Living by Fifi O'Neill, photography by Mark Lohman, CICO Books. Available October 12.

able to achieve the Mediterranean feel we were after,” she says. Her creativity comes through in her European minimalist yet cozy approach, the neutral backdrop, and by relying on natural materials like wood and leather to add texture and warmth. “I love mixing modern clean lines with vintage or worldly items,” says Heydt. “The marriage between the two aesthetics brings out an authenticity that is both elegant and unique.”

The idea of living in a tiny home can be intimidating, but when everything you own serves a purpose and is used on a daily basis, and when it means you display only meaningful pieces, the tradeoff is worth it. “Designing a tiny home requires thoughtful solutions in order to fit all the utilities that a modern home demands,” Heydt concludes. “Yet there is nothing we lack that a 2,500-square-foot home has – maybe just fewer rooms to vacuum!”

Left: High above the main living areas, the couple set up two small rooms where they can pursue work and hobbies. White walls bounce the light harnessed by several skylights. Wood beams add definition and warmth.