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# Beauty Mark

For the owner of a skin-care company, what could be more appropriate than the feminine, pretty results of the facelift on her Greenwich home?

Beauty entrepreneur Marisa Arredondo was first drawn to the traditional stone and shingle exterior of her Greenwich townhouse.



**PROJECT TEAM**

**Interior design:**  
Michelle Morgan Harrison,  
Morgan Harrison Home

**Architecture:**  
Anthony J. Tartaglia,  
Anthony J. Tartaglia  
Associates

**Builder:**  
Belpointe



**DON'T  
UNDERESTIMATE  
PRETTY.**

The word may have its detractors, but for Marisa Vara Arredondo, there couldn't be a better description of her new Greenwich townhome—which also happens to be the place where she successfully launched her business: Phace Bioactive, a pH-balanced skin-care line.

"There's nothing wrong with things being pretty," says Arredondo's interior designer, Michelle Morgan Harrison. The New Canaan designer harbors no fear about infusing her interiors with delicate charm. "It doesn't have to be formal, and it doesn't have to be precious. To me,

'pretty' means a lightness of color and a balance of feminine shapes as well as a lot of shine. My work has definitely been tagged as 'pretty,' but there are so many levels to what that means."

Arredondo discovered Morgan Harrison in the pages of this magazine and knew immediately that the designer's style reflected her own. After twelve years as a Wall Street analyst focused on the beauty industry, the Greenwich native purchased the 4,000-square-foot townhouse to serve both as a home base and an incubator in which to develop her skin-care line.

**ABOVE:** Just off the living room, a staircase winds up all four floors of the home, originally designed by architect Anthony J. Tartaglia. **FACING PAGE:** Designer Michelle Morgan Harrison introduced shine throughout the house, from the living room's crystal chandelier to the silver-leaf coffee table to the high-gloss finish on the home's moldings, stair balusters, and newel caps. A ceiling painted in Benjamin Moore's Mineral Ice draws subtle attention to its coffers.



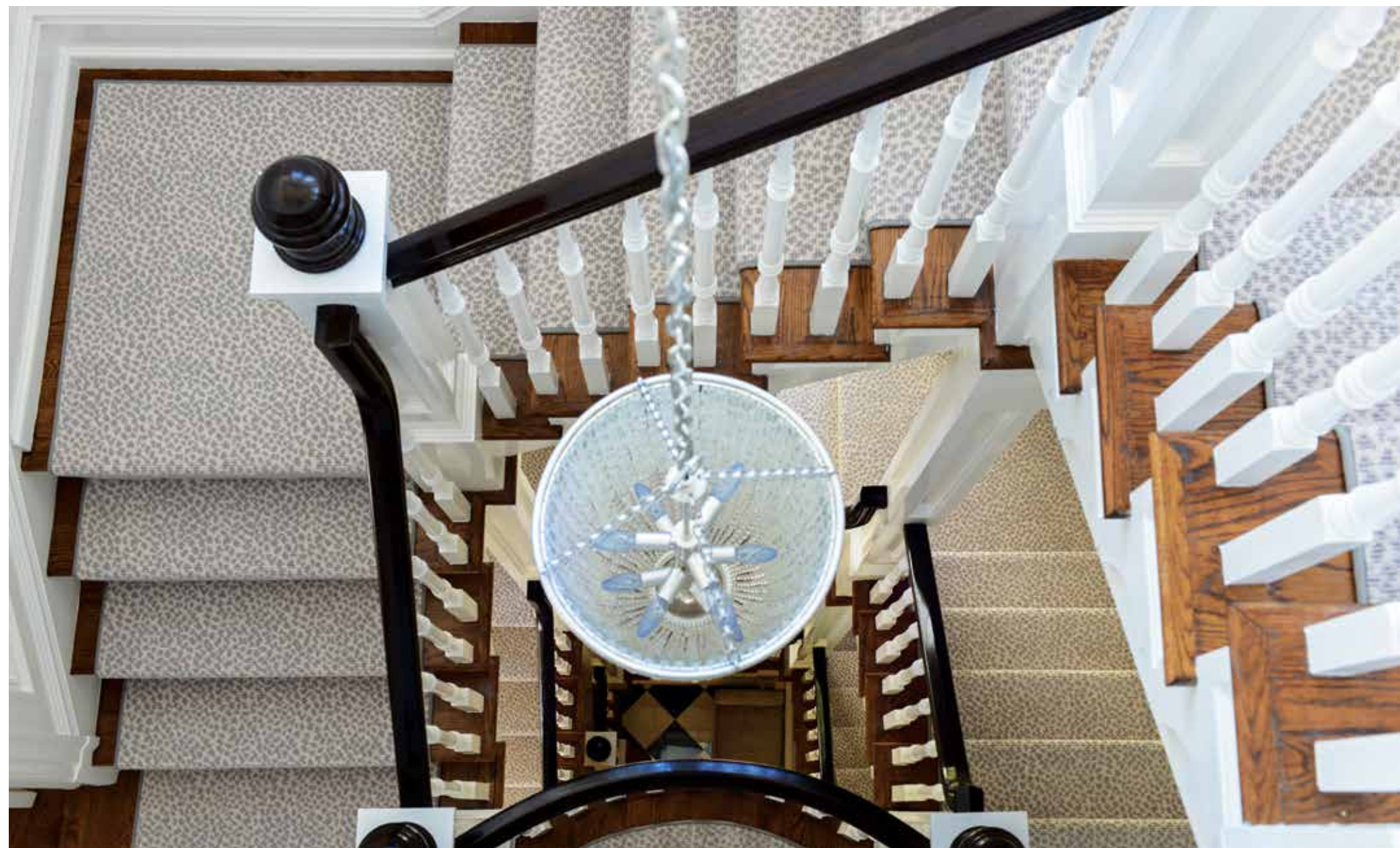
**ABOVE:** Only happy birds were allowed to perch on the dining room's custom Gracie wallpaper. The designer had the bar carts finished in silver to fit in. **FACING PAGE:** The dining room's delicate Dennis & Leen chandelier balances the heftiness of the moldings, but both share a sense of shine. In the living room, glistening nailheads and zebra fabrics add interest to the lounge chairs.

From the start, Arredondo was impressed with the downtown development's traditional Shingle-style exterior and interior details that included classical moldings and coffered ceilings. The cluster of eight homes had been built in 2007 by Belray (now Belpointe) of Greenwich and designed by Westport architect Anthony J. Tartaglia. In his design, Tartaglia incorporated many of the graceful details of the early twentieth-century Shingle-style homes that once occupied the site. In addition to stone chimneys and bracketed eaves, each townhouse has an imposing four-story stair tower. "I wanted to create something as impactful to the street as those old houses were," he says.

Inside, rich architectural details evoke an elegance Tartaglia describes as "backcountry Greenwich," particularly on the main floor, which holds a living room, dining room, kitchen, and pantry. A lower level offers a gym, media room, full bath, and laundry room. Two bedrooms reside on the second floor, with a spacious office suite on the floor above. In addition to the stair tower, all floors are connected by an elevator. "It was pretty," Tartaglia said in describing the interior architecture, unaware of how well that unassuming quality would delight the home's new owner.

The architect's details were intact when Arredondo purchased her town-





house in 2013, but the inside had been painted in dark beiges and solemn grays that took little advantage of the wealth of natural light. “It was not friendly; it wasn’t warm, it wasn’t inviting,” Arredondo recalls. “The bones of the house were really good. It was just a matter of making it feel like an expression of me.”

To capture that expression, Morgan Harrison needed only to meet her client. As a former fashion editor at *Elle* magazine and a senior editorial director at Saks Fifth Avenue, Morgan Harrison is particularly attuned to how her clients’ everyday appearance reflects their personal style. “I always take cues from how people dress,” she says. “Marisa has beautiful, excel-

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lent style—very chic and very pretty. You could see from her shoes and her handbag there’s a certain look and feel to how she presents herself. I think we were able to capture that.”

Arredondo agrees. “It’s what I dress like—it’s me,” she says of the muted tones, tailored details, and personal touches Morgan Harrison worked into the home. “That’s something Michelle is really great

at. She has a minimalist elegance that’s clean and luxurious, but she really tailors it to her clients.”

To anchor the living room, the two women worked together to design a custom Tibetan rug of ivory wool with silk detailing in blue, lavender, and mauve. A baby-blue wing chair and a pair of tufted lounge chairs introduce a feminine mystique with their sinuous curves and nail-

**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** The random dots in the Stark stair runner meander from the lower level to the fourth-floor office. A once-dark powder room got a light and bright makeover with Gracie wallpaper, marble floor tile, and a lighter-than-air Lucite vanity from Waterworks. Morgan Harrison gave the kitchen some pop with a globe light fixture from Remains, fresh window treatments, and new hardware.



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heads that skirt the pieces like a string of silver pearls. On the lounge chairs, Morgan Harrison paired a solid fabric in front with a silvery zebra print on the back for an effect that’s at once tailored and playful. Silver surfaces throughout the room: in the sofa pillows, the silver-leaved legs of the wing chair, and the Chaddock coffee table, also wrapped in silver leaf. A scattering of Lucite accent pieces—including a favorite game table Arredondo brought from her New York apartment—enhances the room’s overall shine. So does the ultra-high-gloss white paint on the molding and the sparkling crystal chandelier by Aerin Lauder—a piece Arredondo initially resisted as too dressy. “Michelle pushed me a little on that, and I’m glad she did,” she says.

Still, Morgan Harrison was careful not to over-glam. She restrained the palette, allowing only subtle shifts in color. “It’s not necessary to have a riot of things attacking you,” she says. “There’s nothing

wrong with ‘pop’—deepening a color gives you a sense of layering and interest—but I never use color jarringly.”

Her soft touch is showcased in the bedrooms, where she radically lightened the blush tones she chose for the walls (Benjamin Moore’s Kitten Whiskers in the guest room and Farrow & Ball’s Caluna in the master). “Pink and lavender are two colors that can be very in-your-face,” Morgan Harrison says. “You sample them and they look fine, but on the walls they can get very bright and candy-like.”

The walls of the dining room, on the other hand, are not intended to recede. Here, Morgan Harrison used a custom wallpaper by Gracie that reflects both Arredondo’s memories of her childhood home and the joyful outlook she embraces today. The two settled on a chinoiserie pattern of birds alighting on trees, and then carefully edited out the birds that looked too aggressive. “I only wanted lovebirds,” Arredondo explains. “I wanted

to have that loving energy in my house.”

For Arredondo, a positive, stress-free home means more than a pleasant place to eat, sleep, and entertain. It has also to be a place where she can let her entrepreneurial energies take flight. “My surroundings really impact my ability to think clearly and be creative,” she says. “This is a very special home for me. Being in these rooms played an instrumental role in making my dream a reality. It’s a part of my history.” ■

**RESOURCES:** For more information about this home, see page 142.

**CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:** A Barbara Barry chaise offers an alternative lounging spot in the guest room. The room’s quiet palette is brightened by a mirrored chest and a bamboo-framed mirror. Comfortable simplicity reigns in the master bedroom, where delicate night tables from Worlds Away flank the plush upholstered headboard.