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what a pro knows

PRODUCER TO THE STARS SANDY GALLIN REVEALS HOW HE TRANSFORMED A SAGAPONACK HOUSE IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE — AND HOW HE'LL DO IT AGAIN

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Puppy Love | Sandy Gallin with his Boston terrier (PREVIOUS SPREAD, LEFT). **Kick Back** | A deck (PREVIOUS SPREAD, RIGHT) shaded by wisteria—a major selling point for Gallin. **West Coast Kitchen** | Parts of the kitchen (LEFT) were designed and built in L.A. and shipped to Sagaponack. **High Beams** | The living room (BELOW) shows traces of the Long Island barn-style architecture that inspired architect Scott Mitchell. The white slipcovers on the sofas are removed to reveal a Ralph Lauren tweed during cool months. **Water Bodies** | An innovative man-made pond (OPPOSITE) makes room for a swimming pool. See Resources.

"A PRODUCER CAN'T PRODUCE in a vacuum," declares Sandy Gallin, sitting in the living room of his Sagaponack home. If there's anyone who can make that statement, it's him. Gallin knows what it takes to make great things happen. A film and television producer, he is also responsible for managing the careers of some of the most talented superstars (Dolly Parton, Michael Jackson, Barbara Streisand, Nicole Kidman, Whoopi Goldberg) of our time. "I know talent and what to do with it," explains Gallin, adding, "I know how to make someone a star and sustain it." The same holds true for his other passion: finding houses and redesigning them.

It's late July and he informs me it is moving day in Malibu. What? Yes, he has just finished his most recent production, House number 31 or 32. "But who's counting?" he laughs. His first house redo, in Beverly Hills in 1970, kicked off his obsession with the makeover process. Since the first, they've all been winners, including this current 6,300-square-foot, 14-acre spread, one mile from the beach.

He bought this house in 2001, describing it as "very ordinary." Essentially everything that existed was taken down. Everything, that is, except a hearty wisteria vine wrapped around a small trellis off the original living room. "I bought the house for that wisteria," says Gallin, who really bought it for the land and the location.

And, now that it is perfect—Gallin spends a lot of time and effort (call it post-production) ironing out the kinks,









getting each house to where it's perfect—he's looking to sell, as he usually does. But he's ambivalent about selling this one. "There's something special about it—I really do love it here," he admits.

So how does a producer/mogul/entertainment executive redo so many houses at the rate of nearly one per year? It's all about assembling a winning team, with Gallin at the top, of course. For the last three houses, including this one, he worked with Los Angeles architect Scott Mitchell, who designs according to Gallin's vision. "Sandy is totally hands-on. He lays out the program very clearly," Mitchell says. Another key player is the builder.

Every good producer needs an alter ego, and Gallin has found his in

Albino Martinez, an L.A. builder who has built every one of his houses. "You know how Richard Pryor is a comedy genius, and Barbara Streisand is a vocal genius and Mike Nichols is a directing genius?" He asks rhetorically. "Well, Albino Martinez is a genius at building. He's not only better than anyone else, he's 10 times faster." This house was completed in 11 months from the start of construction to move-in day.

Not only did Martinez supervise the project from L.A. (phoning local builder Bob Plum daily at 5:30am—west coast time) he also built components long distance. Working with Mitchell's drawings, the bar, kitchen cabinets and fireplaces, for example, were built elsewhere and shipped here.

This house is smaller and simpler than most Gallin has done. It's also less glamorous. "I wanted to create a farmhouse that looked and felt as if it was old," he explains, "not one that had just been redone." The rooms are not excessively large, yet they are totally updated with modern amenities.

For the interiors of his renovations, Gallin is involved with every decision. He labors over details as a musician would the notes of a musical score. It's what helps create the distinctive look of the house. Here, reclaimed floor-



Afternoon Light | A family room (OPPOSITE) offers dazzling wrap-around views of the pond. **Bath Luxe** | An antique towel rack (TOP LEFT) stands near a steam room/bower complete with Waterworks fixtures. **Retreat in White** | An April Gornik painting hangs above the guest bed (TOP RIGHT). **Landing Library** | The landing's train station bench (RIGHT) is from Amy Perlin Antiques, NYC. See Resources.



boards and beams from an old New England barn lend an aged look. Something else he tried for the first time: crisp white slipcovers. Come Labor Day they are removed, and tweed upholstery creates a warmer palette.

In the kitchen, marble countertops are designed with a deep beveled edge to contain spills. Another idea, having wood stacked in a huge pile in the kitchen, was achieved with a custom iron rack made by a local metalworker. The wood, stacked eight feet high, at times resembles an art installation.

There are no window treatments because, he says, "If you have total privacy, beautiful views and gorgeous landscaping, what do you need window treatments for?"

Gallin says he always wanted a pond. However, even he never imagined one with a pool floating in it. That was Mitchell's romantic fantasy, and he had to work equally hard to convince Gallin, as he did the town of Southampton, that it could work. "He fought me on it," recalls Mitchell, "but finally I said, 'Look, if you want something memorable and unique, do this.'" Gallin recalls how he questioned the concept. "I figured if it had never been done before there might be problems with it." Once completed, the pool-in-pond became the talk of the Hamptons cocktail party circuit.

"We did a re-vegetation program around the pond to bring back native plantings," explains landscape designer Jane Lapin. Now, wild grasses, bayberry and black-eyed-susans create a natural effect. White pine, native oaks and maples were also planted, sometimes intentionally placed in unexpected spots, again to make the landscape appear natural.

Can Gallin kick back and relax here? Well, yes and no. "I may have to start another project out here," he concedes. "I'm definitely going to start to go crazy in a few months if I don't have a house to work on." ●

Marsh Haven | Rattan furniture (ABOVE) is grouped around an outdoor stone fireplace for multiple-season entertaining. **Make Way For Ducklings** | Local vegetation (BELOW RIGHT) was planted around the pond by landscape designer Jane Lapin. Wildlife soon followed. **Placid Waters** | On the water, a canoe (OPPOSITE) is at the ready for a quick paddle. See Resources.



