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Home and Design: **Long Island**

# Homes for Healing

With the empathetic heart of a nurse and grounded mindfulness of a yoga instructor, interior designer **Laura Maresca-Sanatore** nurtures clients through thoughtfully tailored interiors.

Laura Maresca-Sanatore didn't plan to become an interior designer.

As a healthcare worker with a decade of experience, Maresca-Sanatore found her healing skill set best suited for doctors' offices. However, after starting a temporary job with an interior designer, she found the want and drive to learn this new world of interior design.

"Working with both patients and interior design clients involves listening with compassion," she explains. "Designers work with a client for maybe a year, and it can be a roller coaster. You need to be even and calm as you listen in order to find solutions."

After a decade of networking and learning from experience, Maresca-Sanatore started her own firm, LMS Design, in Southampton in 2017 with an approach that combines the lessons learned from immersing herself in the industry with her strengths in healthcare.

"I was taught in nursing school that you need to look at a patient holistically," says Maresca-Sanatore. "I look at interior design with the same broad spectrum,

factoring in interactions between client, architect, and contractor. Being a good listener without an ego allows me to step back with humility and navigate the process to make the collaboration as smooth as possible."

## Clearing the Air

Active listening involves taking the time to understand not only what clients want in a home but finding ways to elevate the space beyond their expectations. For the Cedar Point, East Hampton, project, Maresca-Sanatore and the LMS team collaborated with the homeowner to transform the space from dark and guarded to airy and inviting.

"This client has traveled a lot, so living full time out in East Hampton is a shift. He already knew what he liked and wanted the dark home to feel lighter and more open with an indoor-outdoor flow fit for entertaining," says Maresca-Sanatore.

Working with engineers and contractors to redesign the ceiling, the team added steel rods and shiplap to create a

tall, open room with texture illuminated by lights dropped at different heights throughout the space for drama.

## Interior Peace

If Maresca-Sanatore's background in healthcare gives her an upper hand when empathizing with clients, it's her work as a yoga instructor that helps her connect them with nature.

"Yoga is a huge part of who I am and how I interact with others," she explains. "The energy I bring to my clients sets the tone of our relationship. The less I say, the more I actively listen. There will be difficult days where something doesn't go according to plan, at which point I can take a breath to solve a problem with clarity."

The tranquility of yoga is found in the Cedar Point project's blend of indoor and outdoor living. White walls are warmed by vibrant pops of nature seen through the large French doors and windows, or in the greenery selected for the interior, which is juxtaposed by the bold colors of abstract paintings.

"Nature is so good for the soul. If I can create a space where you can sit to experience the feeling of being nurtured by nature, I know I've done my job," says Maresca-Sanatore.

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**LMS DESIGN**  
BY LAURA SANATORE

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