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The THRILL *of the* HUNT

At his home in rural Millbrook, decorator Darren Henault enjoys a world of discovery—both indoors and out

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICK HALES

The Morsey Set
Riders meander through the woods at the start of Darren Henault and Michael Bassett's annual foxhunting party in upstate New York. See Resources.





the SETTING

An allée of stone spheres leads toward Henault and Bassett's house (THIS PAGE TOP LEFT), which is sited on a hill on a former Christmas tree farm. An outdoor fire pit (TOP RIGHT) and buffet table (BOTTOM LEFT) are ready to receive riders after the hunt, including Masters of Foxhounds Dick Verrilli and Nancy Stahl (MIDDLE RIGHT). "It's important to say good morning to the masters before we head out," says Henault. "It's a nice mix of formality and informality." The same approach works in the living room, where a contemporary photograph by Trine Sondergaard offers stark contrast to a pair of stools covered in a Clarence House brocade (BOTTOM RIGHT), and a carved horse sculpture accompanies two Napoleon III wing chairs covered in a Highland Court striped cut velvet from Duralee (OPPOSITE PAGE). See *Resources*.

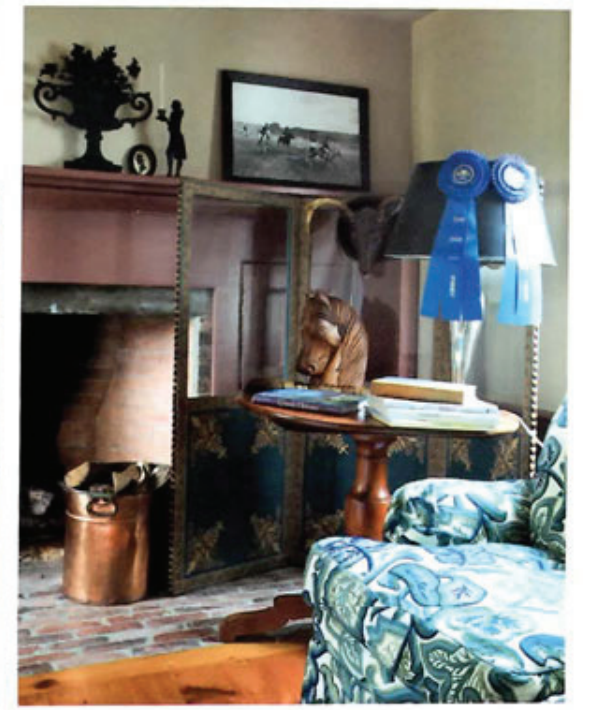
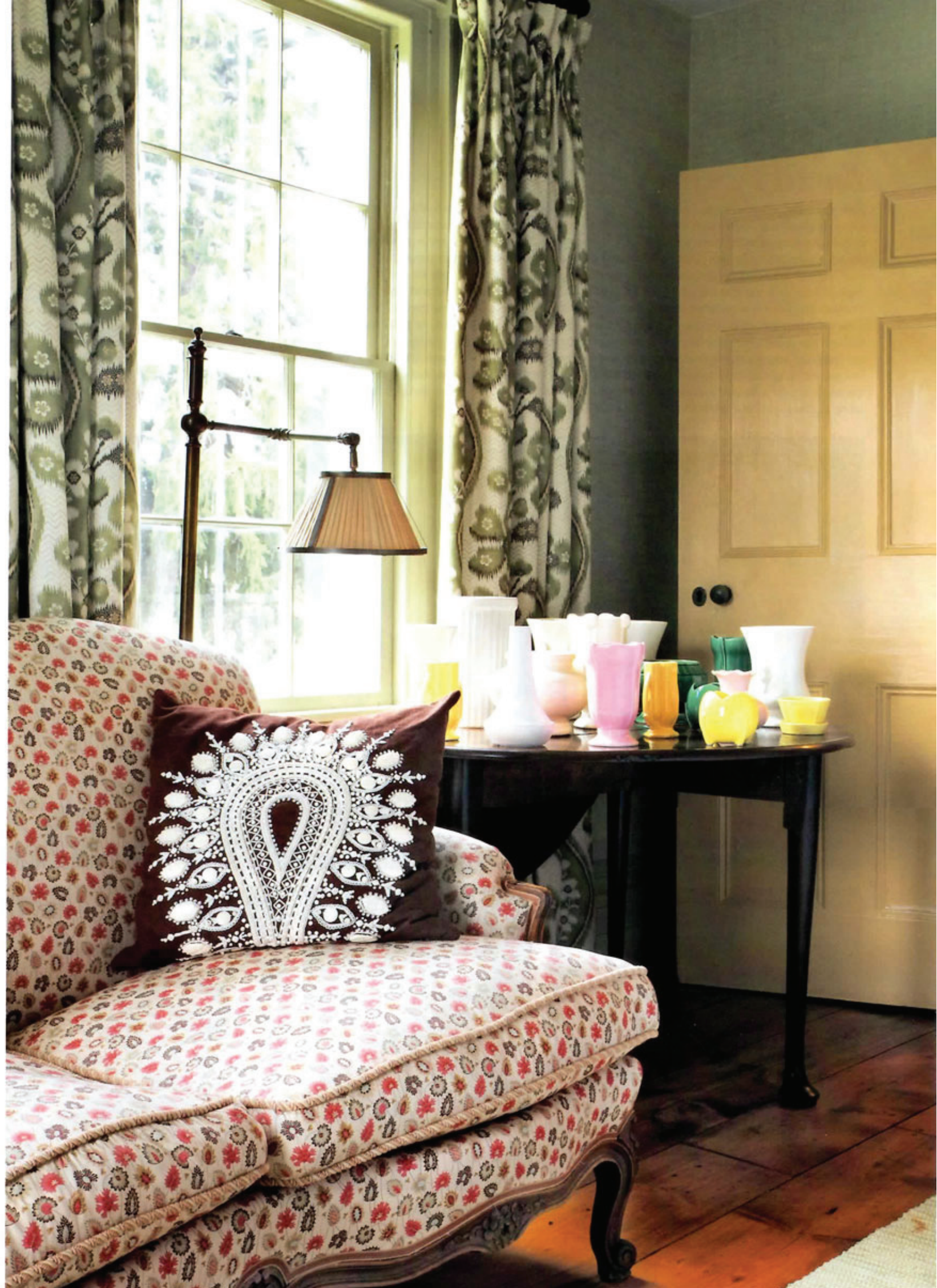


the FEAST

After the meet, riders changed from their jackets—either black or “pink” (actually scarlet), depending on how many years they’ve been hunting—to freshly pressed tweeds for a buffet lunch prepared by the Farmer’s Wife in Ancramdale, New York. “Everything we wear serves a purpose,” explains Henault, “although the men are definitely bigger peacocks than the women.” Hot oyster stew, squash pistachio popovers, smoked pork loin, and mulled cider took the chill out of the air for guests including Willem de Vogel and Bob Thomas (BELOW LEFT) and Miriam Eaves, Pat Ike, and Marion de Vogel (BOTTOM CENTER). “I grew up riding horses and prefer hunting to show riding,” Henault adds. “You’re galloping through the woods, jumping fences, coming upon stunning vistas at every corner. It’s exhilarating.” Not surprisingly, equestrian themes appear throughout his home, including the second-floor hallway (OPPOSITE PAGE), where a French love seat bought at auction at Christie’s sits on a striped runner from Patterson, Flynn & Martin. The woven floral curtain fabric is Clarence House’s Hastings in Red. See *Resources*.

- Warm mulled cider with dark rum
- Mustard-glazed smoked pork loin stuffed with Swiss chard and kale
- Oyster stew
- Tea sandwiches of Vidalia onion and pimiento cheese
- Salad of shaved Brussels sprouts, apple, fennel, celery root, and cinnamon vinaigrette
- Squash pistachio popovers
- Caramel apple cupcakes
- Pumpkin crumb cheesecake bars
- Tartlets of poached quince and whipped mascarpone





the HOST

Decorator Darren Henault (TOP LEFT) and his partner, Michael Bassett, have created a warm, welcoming home for their two daughters and frequent weekend guests. The walls in the master bedroom (ABOVE LEFT) are covered in a Chelsea Editions check; the desk here and the dresser in the guest room (ABOVE RIGHT) are both from Lief in Los Angeles. Sheers in both rooms are from Kravet. The library's sofa (TOP RIGHT) is covered in a Travers crewel. The dining room table is surrounded by antique chairs from Neo Studio (BELOW LEFT). In a corner of the living room (OPPOSITE PAGE), a collection of pottery complements a Travers floral on a French love seat. See *Resources*.

