

The design inspiration for the lounge was the oil painting above the mantle of an English hunting scene, purchased by Tom at an auction. Felipe chose an equestrian plaid wallpaper by Mind the Gap for the ceiling, then color-drenched the walls and trim in a warm, earthy green to create a rich backdrop for their furniture and accessory collections.



The Fishers' Cavalier King Charles Spaniels, Sofia and Stella, greet guests in the entry hall, where a vintage rug from Felipe's former condominium accents the original heart-of-pine wood plank floors. Felipe found the antique brass and onyx candelabra in Palm Beach many years ago. Through the front door, the sidewalk is lined with 100-year-old boxwoods.



SENTIMENTAL STYLE *in* SALISBURY

A Charlotte couple refreshes a historic home, creating a welcoming weekend retreat for hosting family and friends

ARTICLE BY CATHERINE RUTH KELLY
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Tom and Felipe Fisher stand on the porch of their home, the John Knox house, built in 1871 and situated on a prominent street in Salisbury's West Square Historic District.



Cheerwine and Food Lion are two significant claims to fame for the small town of Salisbury, N.C., just a 45-minute drive northeast of Charlotte. But it's also known for its commitment to historic preservation. Many historic homes and landmarks are showcased every year during the Historic Salisbury Foundation's annual OctoberTour. It was during this tour that Felipe and Tom Fisher first set foot in the John Knox House, an Italianate Victorian-style home built in 1871.

"I immediately fell in love with the house," says Felipe. "Little did I know at the time, it would eventually be ours."

The Fishers, who live full-time in an Eastover condominium in the heart of Charlotte, both relished the idea of owning a peaceful weekend retreat to escape the city's demands. They had just finished touring a mountain house when they received a phone call from a realtor friend in Salisbury, who told them the John Knox house was about to hit the market.

"Tom was skeptical that I would agree to buying it, but the architecture and the beautiful energy of the home completely reeled me in," Felipe says.

Tom Fisher is a native of Salisbury and still has many family members and friends there. As the Fishers considered their options, they realized the Salisbury home checked the most boxes for their second-home goals. They closed on the house in May 2024.

"Tom loves architecture, and I am passionate about interior design," says Felipe. "This was the perfect way to merge our interests and also have the opportunity to see family more often."

Felipe was born in Colombia but immigrated to Charlotte with his parents and brother in 2000. He pursued a career as a professional dancer, which took him to New York, Los Angeles and London, and later inspired him to co-found the popular and successful annual fundraiser, Dancing with the Stars of Charlotte. Four years ago, Felipe started an interior design business. He has tapped into those skills as he and Tom have lovingly updated the interior of their Salisbury home.

"We inherited a lot of furniture from Tom's grandparents and incorporated it into each room," says Felipe. "We both love traditional furnishings and antiques, but mostly we appreciate the sentimental value. We wanted to use meaningful pieces."



In the morning room, a cow painting that Tom bought at a Salisbury estate sale hangs above a Baker sideboard, another Fisher family heirloom. A pair of Jonathan Adler floor lamps adds a modern flair to the vignette.

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Tom and Felipe relax with their Cavalier King Charles Spaniel in their living room, a favorite gathering place for coffee, cocktails, charcuterie, or card games. The vintage settees belonged to Tom's grandparents, while the outlandish cowhide rug came from Felipe's native country, Colombia.



In the dining room, the custom-made table, which was in Tom's grandparents' breakfast room, features a built-in lazy Susan. The oil painting, also from Tom's grandparents, reflects the English garden theme of the Cole & Son wallpaper. Jyle



The previous owners did an extensive renovation in 2002, restoring the house to its original grandeur. They had kept it in good condition since then, so there was no need for structural updates. Felipe and Tom focused on making cosmetic refreshes such as paint, wallpaper and light fixtures throughout the house.

Inspired by the English gardens surrounding their home, Felipe selected a lush landscape mural wallpaper by Cole & Son to wrap the walls of the dining room. An antique chandelier from Tom's grandparents illuminates the space where the Fishers frequently gather guests around their heirloom dining table, which was also passed down from Tom's grandparents. Felipe paired the table with Klismos chairs from his old condo, masterfully mixing the old with the new.

"I really like the juxtaposition of the antique table with the modern chairs," Felipe says. "It is one of many examples in the house of our love of tradition, blending with our modern lifestyle."

Felipe continues the thoughtful layers and eclectic mix throughout the home, reupholstering vintage settees from Tom's grandparents in the living room and lacquering a pair of antique barley twist tables in the lounge to inject a fresh finish on traditional furniture. Almost every piece has a special story behind it, and the effect is a warm, welcoming abode saturated in sentimentality and style.

"It is a privilege to be a good steward of this historic home," says Felipe. "We are enjoying creating new memories and traditions here with our family and friends."

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Felipe created a soft, serene oasis in the primary bedroom, layering neutral fabrics in a variety of patterns and textures to envelop the space. The four-poster bed and nightstands are by Woodbridge Furniture. The wingback chair belonged to Tom's grandparents.