

LUXURY

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5. EAST HAMPTON, NEW YORK

Sq. Ft. of Home: 6,800 **Number of Bedrooms:** 6 **Sq. Ft. of This Bedroom:** 1,200 **Most Romantic Feature:** Use of black **Adjacent Spaces:** Master bath and dressing room **View:** Peconic Bay and Shelter Island in winter; green lawn and stands of oaks in other seasons **Design:** Mark Zeff, markzeff.com

"There's something sexy about black," believes designer Mark Zeff. Who would challenge his assertion after experiencing the master suite at Blackbarn, his Hamptons home? Aside from achieving a wholly intriguing new take on the vernacular barn architecture of the East End, Zeff explains that coating the wood in this night shade "takes the material's grain and color out of play, leaving the simplicity of people's bodies silhouetted against black. It also highlights the view." Black cowhide rugs and black-patinated Dutch antiques from his native South Africa heighten the mood. Adding voyeuristic titillation, he notes, is an enormous walk-in shower. "You're divided from the rest of the room by only a thin glass wall," he says. And because it occupies the entire floor, the room feels secluded. The success of Zeff's aesthetic has spawned a Blackbarn real estate development project, a Manhattan restaurant, a just-released book, and, next year, design stores in Brooklyn and SoHo. >