



# Fairfield County Rising

*Connecticut's southwesternmost county offers a surprising mix of urban, suburban and rural options, from the classic backcountry north of the Merritt Parkway to the highly sought-after waterfront communities along the Long Island Sound.*

**O**n the border with Westchester County in the foothills of the Berkshire Mountains, Ridgefield has been an appealing retreat, about an hour north of New York City, for more than three centuries. 150 Oscaleta Road in south Ridgefield, on the market for \$2,950,000, is set on one of the highest points in the county, and offers 50-mile views from every room to the west of the Hudson Valley, including from the double-height glassed-in great room with pine log-lined walls and hemlock beams and columns, and from the infinity pool overlooking the valley. The 4.34-acre property was built in 1994 in the Adirondack style with specialty masonry by the current owner/builder, and is surrounded by mature trees and plantings, bordering on conservation land with six bedrooms and a detached guest/caretaker apartment above a heated

garage with a radiant-heat floor that can store, with the help of lifts, a total of 23 vehicles.

The current owner used the garage space for his extensive car collection. He also built a tennis court with a basketball area. "The current owners spend a lot of time outdoors and in the mountains, and they built a home you don't expect to find in this part of Fairfield County, which is mostly colonials," said Kathy Schmitt, sales agent with William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty. "The owners moved out of the house last summer to completely renovate it — with a new kitchen, new master bathroom and new hardwood floors — it has been completely done, and lovingly maintained over the years. They didn't move back in after the renovation, so it is all basically brand new — and in Ridgefield, you get the tax advantages of living on the right side of the state border."





Another unique home in Ridgefield, this one on 2.06 acres at 31 Green Lane, is set directly above a babbling brook. The three-bedroom, 3,464-square-foot home has more than two dozen skylights and plenty of decking, including a deck that accesses the front door. The property is set on a cul-de-sac, and abuts a nonbuildable parcel of open wooded space, so the owners feel the benefit of four acres. The stream runs under the extensive decking, and is visible below from a custom-built glass table in the great room — which also features a double-sided glass fireplace.

The modernist property, listing for \$925,000, is 15 minutes from the Katonah Metro-North train station. “I think of this as more of a weekend for a buyer looking for something strikingly modern and different,” suggested Melanie Shepard, sales agent with Douglas Elliman Real Estate, who is hosting an open house at the property on Sunday afternoon. “The stream runs underneath and through the house, literally. When you walk in, you see the double-sided fireplace in the great room, and then you can see the stream through the glass table. If the house is quiet, you can hear it running below. And with all the skylights, you never have to turn on the lights until evening — even when it is raining.”

The Pennoyer-Raymond-Smith House, built in 1790 at 183 West Road in New Canaan, and then rebuilt 30 years later, in 1820, after a fire, has been fully restored and improved by its designer-owner. The main five-bedroom home includes a handsome Dutch door, a speakeasy bar downstairs (originally a creamery) and a wine cellar. The kitchen opens to a sunken great room, with a bay window and steps down to a bar for coffee in the morning, and a second bar on the other side for cocktails in the evening. In the large living room, there is another bay



**OPPOSITE, LEFT:** Set on one of Fairfield County's highest points, 150 Osceola Road in south Ridgefield offers 50-mile views.

**TOP:** Built in 1790, the home at 183 West Road in New Canaan has been fully restored and improved. Photo: Michael Smith

**ABOVE:** The modernist property at 31 Green Lane in Ridgefield is set directly above a babbling brook. Photo: Douglas Elliman