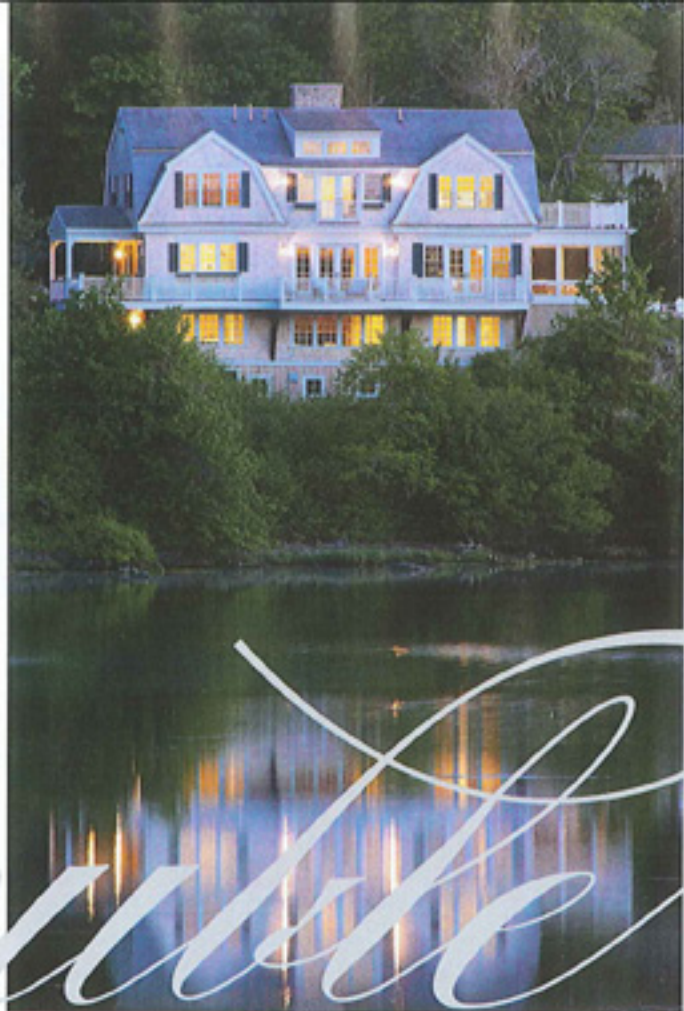


southern new england

HOME

YOUR GUIDE TO EVERYTHING HOME





double Vision

An architect blends **historic character and modern convenience** in a seaside Cohasset home.

It was first described as a "paradise of all these parts" by Captain John Smith, who discovered "Quonahasset" in 1614. And it's easy to see why any voyager would be enamored with Cohasset, a sea-view-laden locale on Massachusetts' South Shore. Shipbuilding and mackerel fishing were prominent industries in the 1800s; then, in the early 20th century, wealthy Bostonians began discovering its charms and, over time, built impressive summer retreats.

Similar to the Bostonians before them, Patrick Ahearn's clients were drawn to Cohasset's history, its quaint village center, its accessibility to Boston, and most of all its water views. The full-time professionals and their young daughter wanted a change of pace from living year-round in the city and found the perfect property set along Cohasset's Little Harbor.

BY JENNIFER SPERRY • PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG PREMUR



This page; top: French doors can be thrown wide open to enjoy the view. Bottom: The front of the home. At left: The dramatic hallway. Far left: A view of the home from the water.

Love at first "site"

"They immediately fell in love with the site's potential," says Ahearn, whose firm, Patrick Ahearn Architect, specializes in historically motivated architecture and interior design. "The project was a major remodel. We took the property's existing home, which was sited in a hollow, down to the first-floor deck and built on the old foundation. We filled in the old home's first floor so the new house starts where the existing second floor used to be."

Thanks to the site's natural slope combined with careful grading, the primary entrance presents a more modest one-and-a-half-story home but stretches to a full three stories on the rear water-facing side. "As the land drops down, each level has access to outdoor space," describes Ahearn. "It's a gambrel shingle style home," he continues, "with the traditional New England look of a seaside country cottage."

A two-story entryway, awash in light from a clearstory window and clad in full-height wood paneling, greets visitors. The kitchen, dining room, and living room line the first floor's waterside. Antique pine floors with an English chestnut stain unify the living spaces. The kitchen boasts country elements such as a farmer's sink with an English country faucet and countertops of sea foam green honed "Costa Esmeralda" granite. A bead board ceiling as well as the island's turned legs and solid mahogany top add to the room's farmhouse feel.

At right: Walls of windows and a coffered ceiling add drama to the living room. Below: A custom-built headboard provides storage.



The dining room's focal point is its walk-in fireplace and the living room layout also centers on a fireplace, topped by an inset flat-screen TV and flanked by built-in bookcases. French doors open out onto the first-floor's wraparound waterside porch. Also off the living room is a spacious screened-in porch, one of the owners' favorite gathering places. Thanks to its outdoor gas fireplace, the space can be used for a full three seasons if not longer.

Making the bed

Upstairs, the master bedroom takes advantage of expansive water views. A built-in cabinet does double-duty: It provides storage while also acting as a headboard, positioning the bed as close to the room's water-facing windows as possible.

The daughter's bedroom occupies the waterside's second gambrel and benefits from similarly unique ceiling lines as well as wraparound views. In between the two bedrooms is the owners' office, a light-filled space topped by a clearstory dormer window. Its Romeo and Juliet balcony faces Little Harbor.

With graceful proportions and fine craftsmanship, this shingled home is new structurally but its character dates back decades ago. "The idea was to make it look like it was built at the turn of the century," explains Ahearn. "We thought of our design work almost like a renovation—we wanted to revive the architectural history still on display up and down Cohasset's coast." ■ **HOME**