

CHATHAM LIVING BY THE SEA



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A MAGICAL *Oasis*

Despite landscape and construction challenges, a dream team creates a spectacular waterfront home that echoes the character of the neighborhood.

BY CAROL K. DUMAS

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Stage Harbor is quintessential Cape Cod with its iconic lighthouse, silver-shingled waterfront houses and ubiquitous fishing and pleasure boats that meander easily out to Nantucket Sound and the Atlantic Ocean.

The gambrel-style Stage Harbor Overlook house, newly constructed within the existing footprint of the original structure, fits seamlessly into this tucked-away part of town. The homeowners were looking for classic Chatham architecture that would retain the character of the neighborhood, but at the same time, they also wanted a contemporary house featuring an open-concept interior and outdoor living spaces with a swimming pool, kitchen and fire pit.

The 5,000-square-foot home appears modest from the front, but the waterside expands to three levels with panoramic views from large windows, French doors, decks and porches. An open, light-filled interior is finished with finely crafted millwork and built-ins.

“From the street, it’s a story and a half, but the rear of the property unveils a dramatic two-story view, and the waterside unfolds nicely. The house doesn’t read as a ‘McMansion,’” explains architect Patrick Ahearn. “We always try to echo the context of a place.”

The steeply sloped site and a variety of zoning stipulations (because of the lot’s location within 100 feet of a wetland) presented challenges, but the constraints ultimately led to creative solutions that maximized the magic of this harbor-view oasis.

General contractor Doug Whitla of Whitla Brothers Builders led the building crew for this spectacular waterfront home featuring tapersawn red cedar roof shingles. The construction took about 14 months to complete and included snowy wintry months. “The site was pretty tricky,” says Whitla, who has worked on several Ahearn-designed homes.

Among the challenges for construction: the six-foot drop on one side of the pool that abutted conservation land and the huge steel frame required to support the three-story glass window wall on the waterside.

The Gambrel-style, newly constructed home built within the existing footprint of the original house, appears modest from the front, but the waterside expands to three levels with panoramic water views. The sloping lot presented some obstacles for landscape design, but designer Dave Hawk of Hawk Design came up with practical and aesthetically pleasing solutions.





The home's beautiful millwork and spectacular views inspired a neutral and fresh color palette with soft transitions.

As the design of the house was key to fitting in with the neighborhood, the landscape design needed to blend into the natural landscape. The sloping lot presented some obstacles for the landscape design, including getting from the front to the back easily, but designer Dave Hawk of Hawk Design came up with practical and aesthetically pleasing solutions. "The house was basically nestled into the slope," he says, "so the topography was challenging; it was a tight property with setbacks. But there is opportunity in any topography."

Hawk describes the overall design as a "cascade effect" in how the trees, grasses and shrubs—including roses, Rose of Sharon and hydrangea—flow from front to back. He chose native and non-invasive plant species in keeping with the coastal location. "It's sort of a meandering garden," adds Hawk, noting the handsome paths include



steps and landings from bluestone and Irish limestone.

Edson Eldredge of North Chatham Landscaping, who implemented Hawk's ambitious landscape design and who also maintains the property for the homeowners, echoed the challenging nature of the sloping site. In addition, the harbor location with its north winds presented a complex environment for landscape plantings.

"Dave Hawk incorporated some interesting and unusual plants," says Eldredge. "Some of my favorites were crepe myrtles that

bloom a stunning red in the fall; the weeping dogwood out front; and the river birch that screens the pool. I also liked the choices of grasses, butterfly bushes and the mass plantings of roses, all of which give color year-round, which was Dave's intent." *Continued on page 104*

Interior designer Liz Caan worked closely with the client to choose sea-inspired colors and materials, including woven raffia, sisal, driftwood, rope and linens. Above, the handsome paths include steps and landings from bluestone and Irish limestone, designed by Hawk Design.





The classic and timeless home showcases woven fabrics and well-made furnishings that offer durability for the clients' children, grandchildren and English Pointer, Lucy.



Caan used a capiz-shell backsplash behind the bar to evoke “a glam yet seaworthy moment” and added pops of pink in the family room and bedrooms.

The contemporary kitchen, designed by Venegas and Company, features Caesarstone countertops, custom tile, Sub-Zero appliances, a center island with seating and white Shaker-style custom cabinetry. A coffered beadboard ceiling creates a more casual, cottagey feeling. Prefinished white oak flooring with a gray finish recalls driftwood.

Unusual lighting from the Urban Electric Co. and Waterworks adds striking accents throughout the home. “They make beautiful lights in the USA that are cleaned-up classics, which is what I thought this home deserved,” says Caan. “It’s a classic home on the water, but we wanted it to sparkle a little bit and not be too cliché for its location. Sconces and picture lights throughout also give the rooms layered lighting that feels very cozy and adds ambiance.” ▲

The contemporary kitchen boasts Caesarstone countertops, custom tile and white Shaker-style custom cabinetry. Above, a Capiz-shell backsplash behind the bar evokes “a glam yet seaworthy moment,” says interior designer Liz Caan.



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Interior designer Liz Caan worked closely with the client to choose seaside-inspired materials—including woven raffia, sisal, driftwood, rope, linens and teak—and colors, grays and blues. “She had a vision for a very neutral and transitional home with some pops of color,” says Caan. “She has beautiful taste and wanted excellent quality as in woven fabrics, well-made furnishings and durability for their children and grandchildren. The house needed to be classic and timeless, yet not contrived and not stuffy.”

The home’s beautiful millwork and the spectacular view dictated a neutral and fresh color palette with soft transitions, Caan added. “We chose heavy Belgian linens, woven jacquards and durable indoor/outdoor fabrics to give the home the weight and substance it deserved while also being appropriate to the location on the ocean. Classic Roman shades and tailored drapes give privacy and soften the millwork while not obstructing the view.”



“We chose heavy Belgian linens, woven jacquards and durable indoor/outdoor fabrics to give the home the weight and substance it deserved while also being appropriate to the location on the ocean,” says interior designer Liz Caan, who added pops of pink in the family room. At right, a shell mirror adds a coastal feel to the entryway.



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