



The Finishing Touch

An architect welcomes the chance to take a Cape Cod home he designed to a new level of elegance, creating an extra-special family getaway.

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INTERIOR DESIGN: NICOLE KUCKLY PEREZ | LANDSCAPE DESIGN: KATHERINE FIELD

AN EXPANSIVE HOUSE DESIGN SENDS WINGS OFF AT FORTY-FIVE-DEGREE ANGLES, PROVIDING A FRONT FACADE WITH EMBRACING ARMS. THE SHINGLE STYLE, SO COMFORTABLE ALONG THE NEW ENGLAND COAST, IS ESPECIALLY ADAPTABLE TO SUCH A FRIENDLY DESIGN.

The best takes time, or at least a second look. Take this extraordinary house with its idyllic inlet/island vista, one of Cape Cod's bountiful and beautiful blessings. Built on a gentle elevation with views of water and marsh, the house reaches out to and blends with the land and waterscape. Two of the home's four wings encompass gardens and a swimming pool, creating a sheltered oasis billowing with colorful perennials. A gently sloping wood walkway leads to a dock, while the front facade is demure behind a privacy hedge.

Boston-based architect Thomas Catalano began building the house in 2005. For his first client, life changed, interest waned and the house was put up for sale. Though essentially finished, it didn't yet have the lovely, livable features it has now. A fence and a concrete slab surrounded the swimming pool, and the colorful, naturalistic landscape had yet to be planted.

The new owners, in search of a vacation home that would serve as a family center, saw not only the lovely location, but also the possibilities. "My husband grew up spending summers on the Cape, and we wanted to spend family vacations there," says the wife. "We wanted to be on the water, with a dock nearby where we could keep a boat. We also wanted a little town nearby, somewhere to walk to. When we found this, we knew it would be perfect."

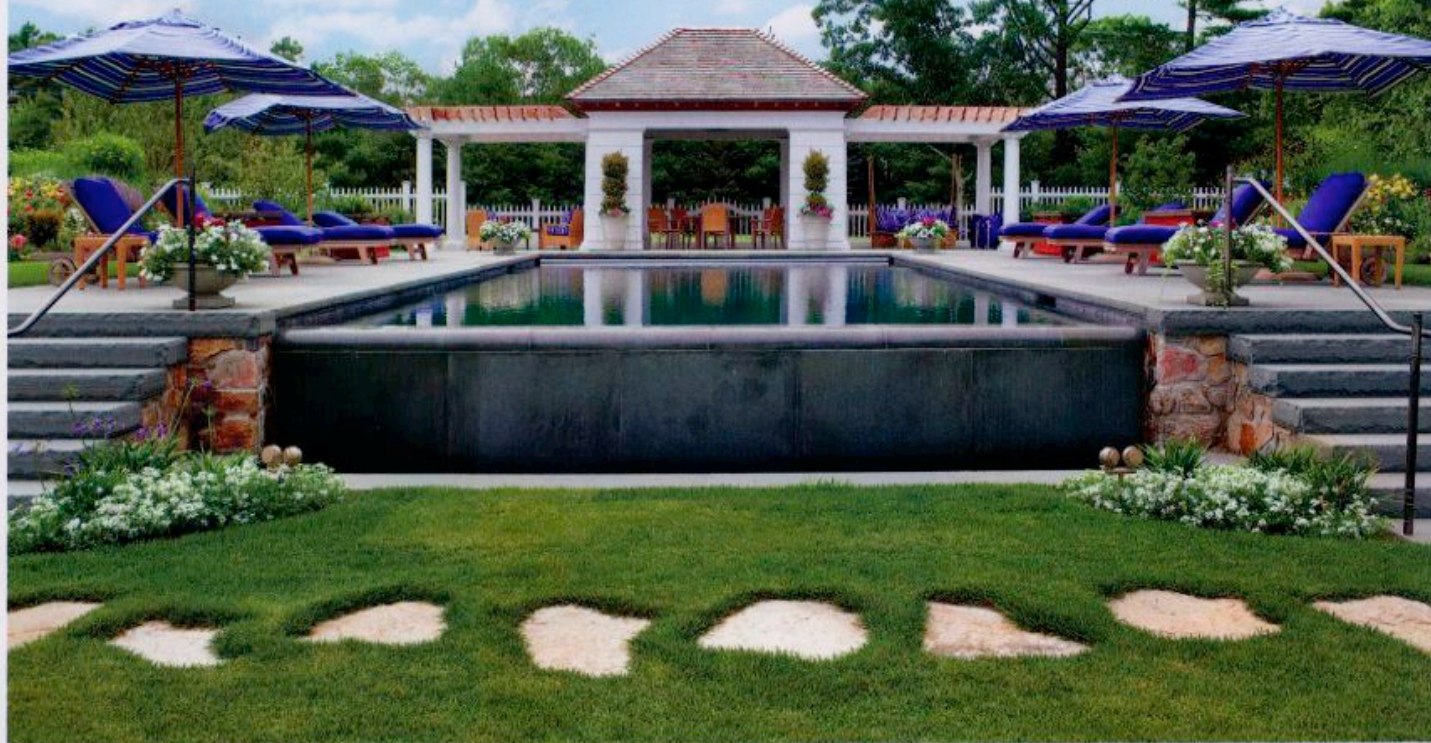
Catalano was delighted to be called back on the job to



add some finishing touches. "We installed a higher level of architectural millwork in the form of moldings and trim," he says. "We created a kitchen island, a new kitchen backsplash, beadboard ceilings in the kitchen and family rooms and wainscoting throughout. Best of all was the way the homeowner asked us to finish what is now the screened porch, but which, until then, had been just four columns at the corners."

"It is our favorite room," the homeowner says, "a pavilion where we eat, the ideal indoor/outdoor room."

THE SWIMMING POOL EXISTED WHEN THE FAMILY BOUGHT THE HOUSE, BUT AFTER THEY ENGAGED LANDSCAPE EXPERT KATHERINE FIELD, IT BECAME THE CENTERPIECE OF A LUSHLY BEAUTIFUL OUTDOOR LIVING SPACE.



Catalano describes the house as "a butterfly—a Shingle-style house with four wings." The screened porch forms one of those butterfly wings; others comprise the garage, a guest room and the kitchen. The architectural configuration provides each room with beautiful natural light and views while allowing privacy in many parts of the 7,000-square-foot house. Guest rooms above the garage, for example, feel far from the hubbub of the kitchen, dining room and family rooms, which form the core of the house.

Interior designer Nicole Kuckly Perez worked closely with the homeowner to give the home its classic island feel. "She and I had worked together at our primary home, so she understands my taste, my likes and dislikes," says the homeowner. "I'm very opinionated!"

The homeowners wanted an informal but elegant house," says Kuckly Perez. That relaxed yet stylish sensibility begins just inside the front door where a two-door white-painted country chest stands under a mirror framed with a wealth of starfish. Against a pale blue wall, the ef-

THE SCREENED PORCH IS A FAVORITE DINING SPOT. FACING PAGE TOP: IVORY INLAY ENCIRCLES THE FORMAL DINING TABLE. FACING PAGE BOTTOM: THE KITCHEN IS COMMAND-CENTRAL DURING BUSY, GUEST-FILLED SUMMER DAYS.





THE COLOR BLUE IS A TIME-HONORED FAVORITE ALL OVER THE WORLD; ON CAPE COD, IT IS ICONIC IN A BOLD PLAID. RIGHT? A GARDEN GATE CROWNED WITH A PERGOLA LEADS FROM THE LUSHLY PLANTED POOL AREA TOWARD THE PATH TO THE DOCK.

fect is charming, classic and as natural as if it had just blown in off the beach. "Blue is the color of Cape Cod," the homeowner says, "and so we created an elegant Cape Cod interior where blue is the dominant color and Cape elements are everywhere."

In the family room, a fieldstone fireplace lends casual charm. Chairs and a sofa boast a design in crewel embroidery that recalls eighteenth-century Cape Cod cottages, echoing the blue elements found throughout the house and communicating comfort in all seasons. "We use this house all year round," says the homeowner. "The last few

years we've been here for Thanksgiving and Christmas. So it's important that the interior is cozy and warm all year, not just in summer."

What many families might have turned into a stiff, formal living room just inside the front door became the billiard room. "We sit in the family room and in the screened porch, and we didn't need another room with more seating," the homeowner says. "We use the pool table all the time. It's a great activity that draws the generations together."

too tunnel-like. Now it's soft and dreamy."

A son's bedroom, however, is the essence of Cape Cod in crisp blue and white, with a lighthouse lamp and nautical accessories. A guest room indulges in a gentle blue floral scheme. "Her attention to detail is exquisite," Kuckly Perez says about her client. "She has impeccable taste, and she truly could have done this by herself. What a pleasure it is to work with someone like that."

Newport, Rhode Island-based landscape architect Katherine Field designed the home's surroundings, turning the swimming pool into an outdoor living area where flowers bloom almost constantly. Her lush plantings include hydrangeas, butterfly bushes and Russian sage, softening the strong architectural elements and creating a complete environment. "We planted a lot of native plants like clethra and bayberry between the water and the edge of the area governed by environmental protection," Field says. "I love the native plants, and these are especially fragrant, making the walk down to the water an experience of scent as well as views."

Besides being a family vacation home, the house is a gathering place for friends. Guests of all ages fill the rooms all summer long, yet the house never feels crowded. And when guests depart, the house still feels warm and welcoming. It does all the things we wish our homes would do, and it does them all beautifully. **NH**

RESOURCE For more information about this home see page 140.

