

# New England HOME

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STYLE, SOUL, AND A LITTLE  
BIT OF SURPRISE

September-October 2023



Display until November 13, 2023  
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In this Welch Hill, Rhode Island, home, large communal spaces alternate with more intimate rooms like this library, whose bookcases are backed with an embroidered fabric from Schumacher that's also repeated on the pillows. **FACING PAGE:** Wave-like scrollwork adds a nautical touch to the entry hall staircase; the vintage table sits atop a rug from Landry & Arcati Rugs and Carpets.

# COMPOUND



# INTEREST

IN COASTAL RHODE ISLAND, A VACATION HOME FOR A PAIR OF SIBLINGS PROVES THE CLASSICS NEVER GO OUT OF STYLE.

*Text by FRED ALBERT | Photography by READ MCKENDREE*



CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: An outdated home from the 1980s was demolished to make way for this new Shingle-style house designed by Arthur Hanlon, Bayard Cutting, and Matthew Lopes of Shope Reno Wharton. Oak inserts installed in different directions animate the coffered ceiling in the dining room, where contemporary rattan-back chairs from Brooke & Lou are paired with flourny upholstered seats under a Visual Comfort chandelier; the art consultant was Hadley Powell. The library's book-lined window seat frames ocean views.



Taylor Swift may be the most famous resident of Watch Hill, Rhode Island, but it's architecture that first put this coastal enclave on the map.

Like Newport to the north, Watch Hill rose to prominence in the late nineteenth century as a summer playground for affluent East Coast families. But instead of building gilded marble mansions, they opted for rambling Shingle-style "cottages," establishing a housing pattern that continues to this day. So when a pair of longtime summer residents decided to build a vacation home for their two adult children next door to



their own waterfront retreat, there was little question what style it would be.

"They always wanted to have a sort of family compound," acknowledges architect Arthur Hanlon whose firm Shope Reno Wharton, tailored the 9,100-square-foot home for the couple, their son and daughter, and their respective partners. "Everybody really chimed in, which was challenging on one front, but great," he says. "It was truly a joint effort."

Working with Corinne Acampora on

the interior design and Michael Courtu on the landscape design, Hanlon sited the house to maximize the sweeping coastal views. A sinuous skin of yellow-cedar shingles hugs the walls and roof, swooping, flaring, and arching over dormers, porches, and bays. "Shingle has a lot of dexterity and depth," observes builder Adam Parker, who framed the house in engineered lumber (instead of conventional two-by-fours) to ensure it remained plumb in the face of punishing coastal weather.

Visual Comfort pendants illuminate the leathered-granite countertop on the kitchen's oak island. **FACING PAGE:** In the game room off the library, a custom table and Serena & Lily chairs rest on character-grade engineered oak from The Hudson Company.

“They always wanted to have a sort of family compound.”

—Architect Arthur Hanlon



ABOVE: Guest rooms are augmented by a bunk room over the garage, where a pair of Serena & Lily hanging chairs permit views in either direction. TOP RIGHT: To maximize storage, the steps double as drawers.



The traditional exterior conceals a contemporary floor plan designed for entertaining, with communal spaces that fit into one another. These are supplemented by more intimate rooms designed for conversation or contemplation. “There are usually so many people here, it can get very lively and boisterous,” concedes the daughter, a mother of three. “So there are times when it’s nice to have a little escape.”

Not surprisingly, the clients wanted the decor to have a coastal look, so Acampora leaned into a palette of blues, greens, and sandy colors, using durable performance fabrics whenever possible. “We wanted to be able to live in the

house and enjoy it, and not worry about wear and tear—while still having it be beautiful,” says the daughter. To add visual interest, the designer introduced texture through woven chairs and sofas, and used embroidered fabrics on pillows and even the backs of bookcases.

Leathered-granite counters add surface appeal to the kitchen, where white cabinets alternate with natural oak, and some of the doors are fitted with polished nickel mesh. Other fixtures and fittings are fashioned from unlacquered brass, which acquires a weathered patina in the salty air. “We love mixing metals as it gives more of a collected feel,” says Acampora.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE LEFT: Motorized ombre blackout curtains surround a window bay in the son's primary suite; the chandelier is from Visual Comfort. The ombre effect is repeated in the room's watery wallpaper. A girl's bedroom is bright and whimsical but sophisticated enough to age with the child. Vanities painted Benjamin Moore Gunmetal are paired with mirrored walls concealing medicine cabinets.



In the daughter's primary bedroom, muted seaside colors echo the exterior palette.

“We love mixing metals as it gives more of a collected feel.”

—Interior designer Corinne Acampora

A covered living space adjoining the pool features a sink and refrigerated drawers concealed behind sliding doors; showers and a bathroom are tucked in the rear. **FACING PAGE:** The pool and spa overlook the twelve-acre property, which includes a pair of ponds and views of the ocean beyond.



Primary suites for the brother and sister anchor each end of the house, while a luxurious bunk room surmounts the garage, wrapping sleeping kids in celestial curtains and ceilings covered with wallpaper clouds.

Coutu, assisted by landscape architect Michael Picard, screened the house

from the road with a blend of deciduous and evergreen trees. "They didn't want to do your typical Watch Hill privet hedge," Coutu explains. Native plants weave through the yard, playing off th untamed perimeter in a dulcet duet that Taylor Swift herself might appreciate.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** For details, see *Resources*.

**ARCHITECTURE:** Shope Reno Wharton  
**INTERIOR DESIGN:** Acampora Interiors  
**BUILDER:** Parker Construction  
**LANDSCAPE DESIGN:** Sudbury Design Group

