# ANNAPOLIS
## HOME

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**COASTAL COMFORT**
**THE MISUNDERSTOOD FLOWER**

**RESTAURANT REVIEW:**
**O'LEARYS SEAFOOD**

# Coastal Comfort

## ON BETHANY BEACH

The dimensions of this huge Nantucket-inspired beachfront home are downplayed in spaces designed to feel personal and comfortable.

BY DYLAN ROCHE  |  PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANA HOFF

This spacious vacation home has a mindful mix of private and common spaces.

Weathered beams on the ceiling add a traditional coastal ambience. Shades of blue in artwork and accessories ensure warmth.



A cozy seating area has a window wall that opens to an expansive deck and endless sea.

An unusual staircase is both modern and coastal, with nautical wiring and white woodwork recalling a lighthouse or lifeguard stand.

V acation homes aren't the same as full-time homes. Nobody knows this better than those professionals who make these homes a reality. They have to create spaces that feel inviting for owners and guests alike, that serve multiple generations, and that can be as accommodating for large groups as they are cozy for just a few people— while providing multifunctional gathering places for all the activities vacationers want to do.

"In a beach house, you have to think about a lot of different scenarios," says Marnie Oursler of Marnie Custom Homes. "Who's going to occupy the house at the same time? … How do you separate people to give them privacy but then also give them communal spaces where everyone can be together and be comfortable?"

This was a challenge Oursler stepped up to when she began work on a project in Bethany Beach, Delaware. The Nantucket-inspired beach house—which combines traditional architectural elements with more contemporary ones for a style Oursler describes as coastal modern—entails six bedrooms, an expansive kitchen, a family room, a large deck, a screened-in porch, and what's known as the observation room overlooking the beach from the top floor.

A butler's pantry is equipped with a full
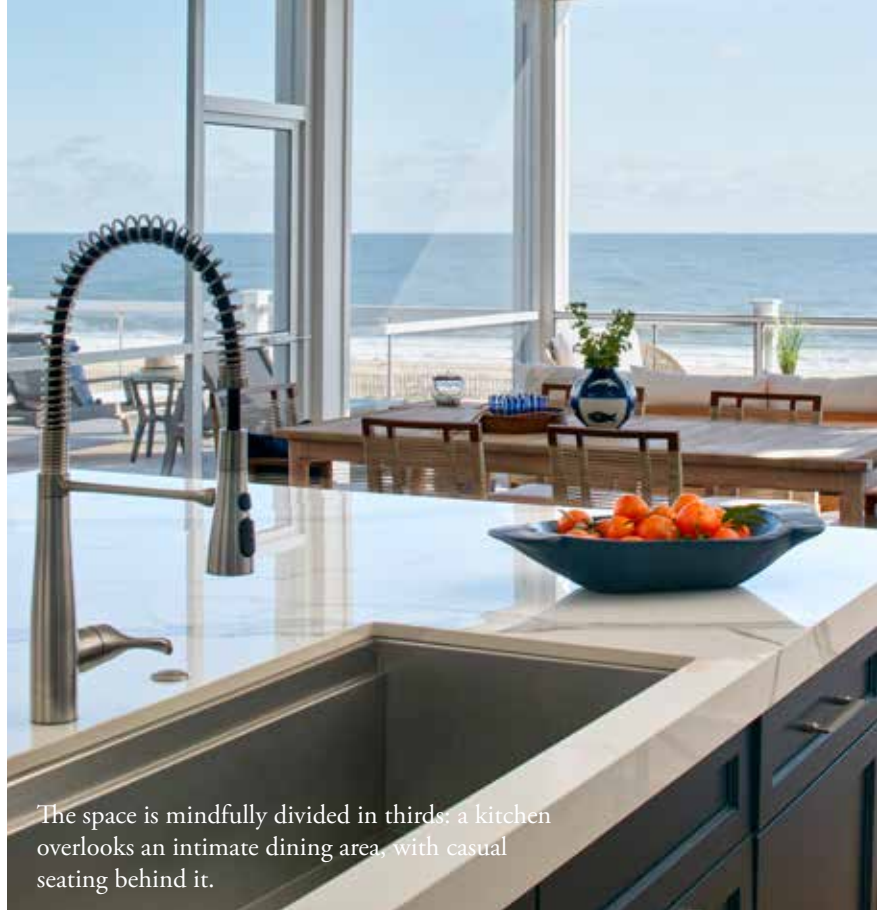bar for entertaining.

To create this balance of community and privacy, Oursler worked with architect Aga Sokolow of the Bernardon firm to design a layout where the common areas flow easily from one to the other while plenty of individual guest rooms give people time apart. By putting the rec room on the ground floor away from most of the bedrooms, the layout allows people to stay up late socializing (or get up early) without disturbing the sleep of others in the house.

Of course, one clear priority emerged when it came time to build—maximizing the view. "They wanted to be able to see the ocean from the front door," Oursler says. The home boasts expansive floor-to-ceiling Anderson 400 windows in every east-facing room, as well as LaCantina doors. Much of the detailing draws on coastal elements: natural wood flooring, exposed beams made to appear weathered, light colors, a stone fireplace in the family room, and a kitchen island in a statement shade of nautical blue.

Stephanie Simmons of Karen Renée Interior Design, Inc. used these elements for inspiration as well. "In creating the design, I kept the oceanfront location in mind," she says. "They wanted to incorporate different shades of blues, from navy to accents of aqua. I selected natural linens and textures. I sourced furniture with a relaxed coastal vibe and a focus on comfort."

Décor throughout the house calls to mind natural elements you would see walking along the shoreline. The chandelier from Serena and Lily in the foyer incorporates seashells. Tables and chairs from brands including Palecek and Arteriors are made from wicker, grass, or natural wood. Even the artwork reflects beach life: from the contemporary piece hanging over the fireplace in the family room to the surfer paintings in the observation room on the top floor. Elements of surprise pop up throughout the design, from the geometric pattern on the host chairs in the dining room to the metallic-finished nightstands in the master bedroom.

In the great room, Simmons started her design based on textiles—specifically, the navy and cream pillows and sofa upholstery from Lee Jofa and Fabricut. This seating is arranged for gathering while still enjoying the room's breathtaking ocean view. To give the room some warmth while still maintaining the white walls the owners wanted, Simmons chose Pearly White by Sherwin-Williams, which she describes as a "warm white."



The space is mindfully divided in thirds: a kitchen overlooks an intimate dining area, with casual seating behind it.



A vaulted ceiling with windows beckons natural light into the generous bedroom.

The kids' room has four bunk beds. Each nook has drift wood panels for books, art and nautical lighting.

If the purpose of a beach house is to accommodate many people under one roof at the same time and offer them the utmost in comfort without taking them too far away from the natural scenery they came to be a part of—well, this team made that vision a reality. AH

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