

New England HOME

Celebrating Fine Design, Architecture, and Building

Cape
&
Islands

breathe easy

SUMMER

STARTS HERE



The house sits gently on its site, visually anchored by landscape architect Kris Horiuchi's design of native plants for soft texture, gentle movement, and year-round interest. **FACING PAGE:** A boardwalk leads to the front entrance, which offers a sight line through the house and out to the water. The bronze sculpture at the far end—a piece called *Grand Anima* by Italian artist Ugo Riva—stands in a corner of the glass-walled dining room.



Good Neighbors

A Martha's Vineyard home takes a gentle approach to honoring the property's past and ensuring its future.

Text by PAULA M. BODAH | *Photography by* MICHAEL J. LEE





The miniature compound consists of the flat-roofed garage, the main house to the right, and a separate structure to the left that holds the guest bedrooms. Architects Philip Regan and Tom Shockey designed the curved-roof buildings to suggest the longhouses that might have been built by Martha's Vineyard's original occupants, the Wampanoags. Weathered-wood siding and the zinc-coated copper roofing help the home feel as though it has stood here for generations.

It was no easy feat to convince the Martha's Vineyard Commission that a new house would be an improvement over the one that currently occupied the Aquinnah hillside. The wise people of the tiny town at the Vineyard's western edge place a premium on keeping their piece of the island from the ravages of overdevelopment, and it took months, recalls Philip Regan, a principal at Hutker

Architects, to get approval for the plan he and project architect Tom Shockey proposed.

"This property is very visible," he explains. "We took photos from various vantage points and compared it to existing photos to show the commission that the new house would stand out less than the structure that was already there, which had more height and a lot of white paint."

“We wanted to HONOR THE LAND,” the husband says. “We DIDN’T WANT a property that was INTRUSIVE to the EYE.”



ABOVE: The great room’s wall of windows keeps the focus on the water views. A curvy sectional sofa by Partners in Design maintains a low profile, while the graphic Kyle Bunting rug adds visual interest. The homeowner was closely involved in choosing the stones and their placement for the fireplace mantel. **FACING PAGE:** Pebble Pendants from Ochre, hung at varying heights, shine above the Asher Israelow custom table and Kelly Wearstler chairs in the stylish dining room.

The clients, who owned a nearby property and had long coveted this spot, were equally determined that their new home not mar the land’s natural beauty or disrespect its history as home to the Wampanoag people who had lived here for some 10,000 years before Europeans came long. “We wanted to honor the land,” the husband says. “We didn’t want a property that was intrusive to the eye.”

Scale, proportion, and sustainabil-

ity were top of everyone’s mind, says Shockey. “The property has 270-degree views of rolling hills, water, woodland, and the lighthouse,” he says, referring to the iconic Gay Head Light. “Our clients wanted to let the natural landscape dominate.”

The scheme that finally won over the commission consists of a series of low-profile buildings with contemporary silhouettes but with curved rooflines



“It’s a very
SITE-RESPONSIVE
APPROACH, much
like the traditional
camps. The SPACE
BETWEEN
buildings becomes
INTERACTIVE.”

—Architect Philip Regan



ABOVE: An oversized mask made of bicycle chains by a Korean artist makes a statement in a hallway niche. The stairs to the right lead to the primary bedroom. **LEFT:** Furniture maker Jeff Soderbergh crafted the powder room’s live-edge elm vanity. **RIGHT:** The emphasis on the outdoors continues in the kitchen, where walls of sleek white cabinetry are a quiet counterpoint to the color-filled gardens. A pair of islands, one sporting black granite and the other a satiny white Lapitec sintered stone, provide plenty of surface for prep and casual dining.



that suggest the longhouses often built by native peoples.

This is the owners’ primary residence, so they wanted a house that was small enough to feel cozy through the long Vineyard winters but spacious enough to welcome their adult children and the grandchildren the couple hope will come along one day. The architects’ clever scheme is a compound with a main house and a detached three-bedroom guest quarters. “It’s a very site-responsive approach, much like the traditional camps,” Regan says. “The space between buildings becomes interactive.”

Zinc-coated copper roofs and weathered-wood siding help the buildings nestle unobtrusively into the site, an effect furthered by Horiuchi Solien’s restrained landscape design that emphasizes low plantings of native materials to anchor and soften the buildings.

From the flat-roofed garage, a boardwalk leads to a breezeway-like entrance with glass doors at either end for a view

through to the water. “Phil and Tom created this experience where you’re really in the landscape,” the wife says. “I love pulling up to the house and seeing the ocean through the windows.”

A right turn from here leads to the main house, a modest 2,800 square feet or so that feels much more spacious thanks to its open floor plan and floor-to-ceiling windows in all the public areas.



Working with interior designers Mika Durrell (who has since left the Hutker firm) and Stacey Sarber, the couple outfitted the house with contemporary furnishings in a neutral palette, keeping the focus on the views outside and their treasured collection of contemporary art within.

Besides the commission and the homeowners, Regan and Shockey had to keep the neighbors happy, too. When Colin Whyte and his crew at Martha's Vineyard Construction Company were building the house, Regan recalls, they wrapped it in orange weather shield. "For a bit, it stood out like a pumpkin on a hillside, and people were upset," he says with a chuckle. "Now that it's complete, you almost don't know it's there."

And that's just the way the happy homeowners like it.

EDITOR'S NOTE: For details, see Resources.

RIGHT: Wraparound draperies with a sheer layer to soften the light and an opaque layer to promote sleeping late cover the main bedroom's two window walls. **BELOW:** White Beauty marble on the bathtub wall and the vanity adds a touch of luxe to the primary bath. **FACING PAGE:** A pair of mirrors by Rhode Island School of Design graduate Miles Endo serve their purpose without obscuring the views.



ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN: Hutker Architects
BUILDER: Martha's Vineyard Construction Company
LANDSCAPE DESIGN: Horiuchi Solien



A terrace, with its refreshing plunge pool and cushy outdoor furniture by Stephen Kenn, serves as a connection between the separate buildings and acts as an outdoor living room in the warm months.