

# NJ Home

JUNE/JULY 2024

**HAMPTONS STYLE**  
IN FRANKLIN LAKES

**LIVINGSTON COLONIAL:**  
FROM DARK AND DATED  
TO LIGHT AND TIMELESS

**BEACH HOUSE BECKONS**  
IN BAY HEAD

## MAKING A SPLASH

**KINNELON DREAM HOME  
CHANNELS MOUNTAIN RESORT**

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# JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER

*Without compromising on style or detail, the design process for a new-construction Bay Head beach house meets an aggressive deadline.*

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Previous page: Light and airy yet casual and sophisticated—that's the coastal style Bay Head homeowners pursued for their new beach house. This page: The bar is one massive piece of millwork that was both a challenge and priority to reuse. Opposite page: In the dining room, Visual Comfort's Talia chandelier creates a bubble effect.





**T**HERE'S ONE TELLTALE SIGN OF DIEHARD JERSEY SHORE enthusiasts: They can't miss a season. And so it was that Little Silver-based Insabella Design kicked off a massive design project in Bay Head working against the clock. The family had surrendered their summer home to the triple threat—demo, reconstruction and redesign—around Labor Day 2020, determined that come Memorial Day, they'd be back to the beach.

"When you have a beach house, you only have four or five months to really soak it in, so that's why it was so important," explains the lady of the house. Since its purchase some five years ago, the ocean-vista retreat has defined summer for the homeowners and their four

children (ages 20 to 30 years old), and they didn't want to break tradition.

That gave Beth Insabella Walsh, IIDA, ASID, CID, and her design team just 150 days to get the job done. The family "did not miss a season," affirms Walsh, adding that neither did they compromise on the sophisticated, casual style that graces each room kissed by nature with Atlantic or Twilight Lake views.

These longtime Shore aficionados had started renovating two years prior, but now dared to dream big. They worked with Walsh and Morristown-based Peter Dorne Architects on a new beach house and third-floor addition with seven bedrooms (more than double what they'd had before), nine



bathrooms, enlarged family and living rooms, a workout room and more.

Why the change? With four children and potential grandkids, expansion made sense, explains the homeowner. And then there was the question of structural stability. “That really was the decision maker,” she says, since the pilings could only be tested through excavation.

Warm and welcoming, with a cedar roof and natural shingles, the colonial-style refuge today is a testament to Dorne and Walsh’s industriousness. Organization was key as Walsh salvaged the reno’s almost-new fixtures and furniture for her environment-conscious clients. As COVID cut short supplies, Walsh relied on custom work—like the living room’s coffee table with a Jersey coast nautical map. This land of harsh elements carries its own threats, which she addressed with hardy features such as wind-resistant lighting. Indoor-outdoor fabrics are a common thread for longevity—and easy care, while another constant is wide-plank maple flooring from Floors by the Shore.

Back in the living room, two seating clusters fit many occasions—watching football or the view, say, with swivel chairs that maximize movement. “We wanted something kind of classic but also upbeat,” Walsh says of the occasional punch of color. With much being salvaged, Walsh did not have a clean slate as in most new construction, so she reupholstered in the redesign’s “fun” spirit. Geometric patterns add up to interest in the Kate Spade embroidered draperies and sophisticated wool rug.

Setting the stage for cocktail hour, an old-world-style backsplash with antique mirror highlights the illuminated bar area, which shines with high-gloss butcher block,

The kitchen’s blue-and-white linen stools, all custom, share the dining room’s affinity for bamboo, while polished nickel in the pendants and other elements reflect “the best finish for the beach,” Walsh says.





while cabinets sparkle with gold and crystal. For a serenade with that martini, the man of the house worked with Infinite AV of Little Silver on ceiling-hidden speakers, adding to the home's Lutron smart technology.

The dining room's sensation—by a Philadelphia mill worker (and relative)—is a spalted maple table with diversity “your eye is drawn to,” Walsh says. Chosen for cheeriness, yellow accents the bamboo-frame chairs and herringbone rug, and for a “hidden surprise” even the welts of the barrelhead chairs. White-on-flax draperies introduce waves—this is the Shore, after all—in an Anna French for Thibaut fabric. Thibaut also inspired the Cape May weave grasscloth in natural colors.

Sure, the kitchen can satisfy a hungry crew—even extended family—but its style says sophistication, with Christopher Peacock's custom paints: classic white for cabinets and blue gray for island base. “We want that classic look, timeless design,” says Walsh, noting with appreciation how blue-and-white marble countertops imitate ocean waves. With waves of its own is the Tribeca subway tile backsplash. The emphasis on local craftsmen led to Amore Design Factory—known for its Ground Zero plaques—and a standout range hood with polished metal.

In the family room, the couple's sectional redone in canvas dictated the size of the space, Walsh says. To give furniture a new scene, Walsh created a “beachy feel” with shiplap





Left: The family room gains a beachy vibe from shiplap walls, while shades of coral evoke the tropics. Right: It may be tucked away under the stairs, but this powder room is hard to forget with its orange-red walls joined by pops of navy.





walls and a KingsHaven exotic wood chandelier. Coral in the two-barrel swivel chairs by Royal Custom Designs and accent pillows livens the scene, as does a navy Asian-inspired table. Completing the look are a woven abaca imbue side table, grass cloth shades and a soft, sisal-like carpet.

For an “element of surprise,” shiplap walls go high-gloss red-orange (Fine Paints of Europe) in the powder room, where an Admiral Blue pendant by KingsHaven Marais pops with navy. Under the first-floor stairs, this room is a “hidden jewel” with a large impact, Walsh says, featuring cork on the ceiling, a gold-toned Global Views mirror and a tropical-themed custom shade.

The perfect day’s end for any beachgoer is in a master

bedroom maximizing ocean views. In fact, with so many windows, each with a motorized shade, Walsh arranged for the TV to pop up only when needed. The Palecek Woodside bed offers a beachy vibe with natural rope and inspires the tropical palette that accentuates Barclay Butera linen. Wrapped in linen, Serena & Lily nightstands are classy and brassy; the ivory braided rug delivers texture; and Horchow’s 3D lighting goes gold with butterflies. Not least, the sitting area is where reupholstered furniture gained new life.

Time challenge met, the family returned on Memorial Day as planned. “We knew it was going to be a huge challenge to complete it, but we did,” says the homeowner, crediting Walsh and team for their “amazing job.” ♦

A custom media cabinet keeps the TV under wraps until showtime, joining an acrylic desk in not spoiling the master bedroom's generous window views.

