

# Traditional Meets Rustic Design

BY LAUREL KORNHISER

*A Chatham home near the beach has a split personality—a formal street facade and a more relaxed pond-side in the back.*





With its bump-out screen porch and rustic details, the house beckons you to have a seat, put your feet up and revel in the sights of the backyard pond.



Like a person who takes care to be well groomed, this Chatham home, designed and built by Polhemus Savery DaSilva Architects Builders (PSD), has a face to greet the public. Situated at the end of a street leading to a public beach, the façade is slightly formal, with a curved driveway that gallantly sweeps guests to an arched entry flanked by six columns. Though politely reserved, the front of the home offers a friendly wave from the roses spilling over the split rail fence.

But just like that person who takes care to look ordered and

polished in public but who, once home, kicks off his shoes, the back side of this home relaxes. With its bump-out screen porch and slightly more rustic details, it says, have a seat, put your feet up, and revel in the sights of the backyard pond, its surrounding marsh and the wooded amphitheater of mature trees beyond.

The challenge for the architect became creating a unified whole with a formal but welcoming street facade and a more “relaxed and rustic” pond-side. “The manipulation of the roof is key to that,” says John DaSilva, the firm’s design principal. “The roof eave at the front comes down to the first floor, and from

the front, you see more roof. That allows the house to be more expressive, and it can carry the roof into three distinct shapes.” Though three symmetrical gables are not often seen on Cape Cod, each individual gable has the feeling of a traditional Greek Revival house. These lightning-splitters, as they are called, have a pitch so steep they seem to pierce the sky, and while these three gables mirror each other, they do not form a straight line.

The lot itself is shallow, triangular and restricted by setbacks from the roadway and from the pond. To give the clients the spaces they wanted inside and to fit the house comfortably on

the lot, DaSilva designed the three gabled pavilions to cascade back from each other.

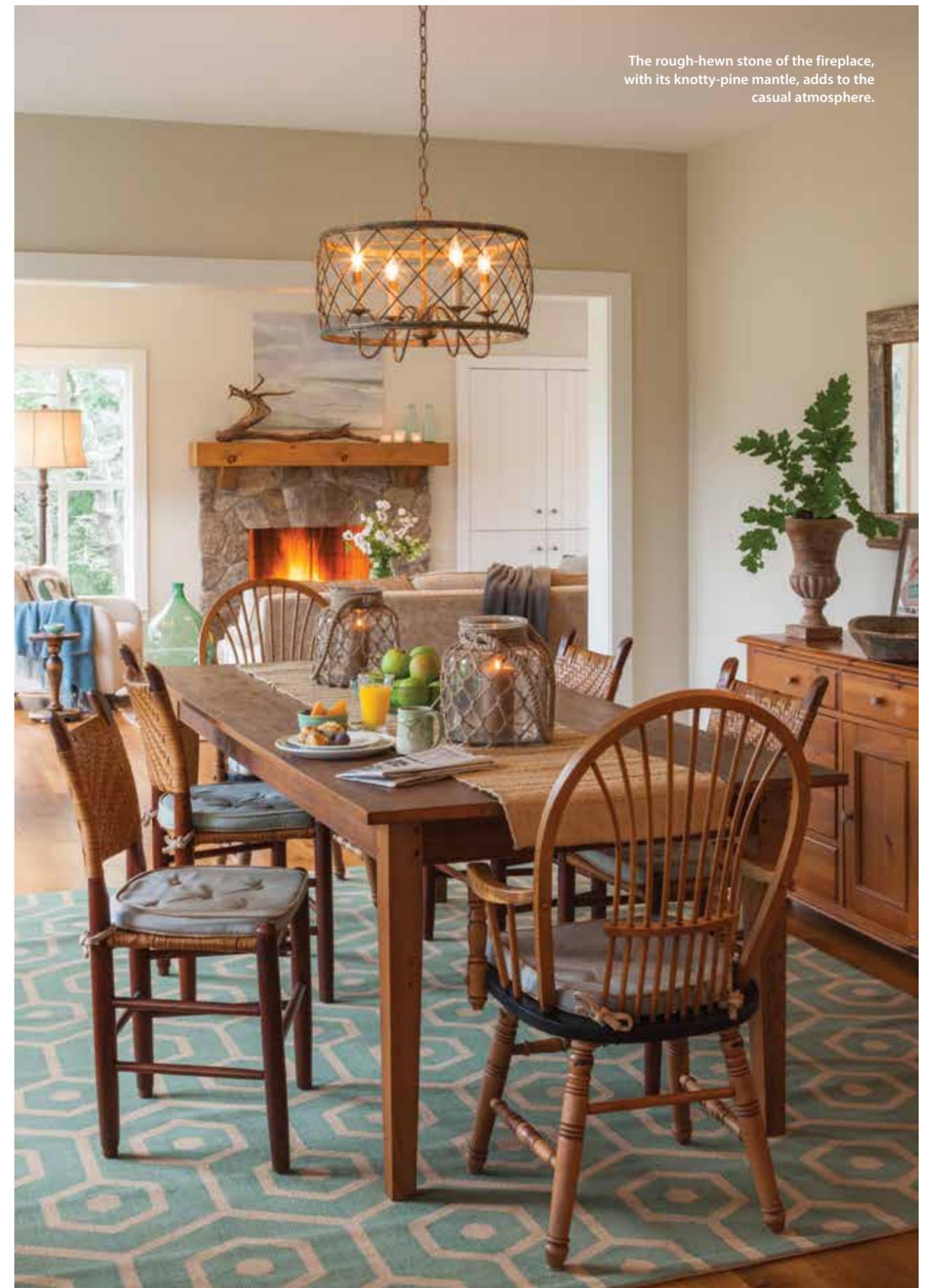
While the front of the house is one-and-a-half stories, the back is two, with the transition accomplished through shed dormers emerging from the nested side garage, which is hidden in the massing of the 2,800-square-foot house. “In the back, it is a full two-story house,” DaSilva says. “It is bit more boxy and less expressive, but given the height restrictions, this gave us more to work with as it allowed the bedrooms in the back to have full height and not feel like they were tucked within an attic.”



Gold, cream and coffee tones are used in the one-inch tiles for the kitchen backsplash. The kitchen cabinetry was designed by Classic Kitchens & Interiors of Hyannis.

Though the second-floor master bedroom enjoys a shard of seaview that extends out to Nantucket Sound, for this home's design it was more important for the rooms to open to the views of the bog, pond and woods—views which all of the bedrooms provide. Responding to this landscape, whose natural characteristics were enhanced by CBA Landscape Architects of Cambridge, this side feels a bit more rustic, more reminiscent of a country house than a beach house. To that end, the design of the porch's corner brackets, says DaSilva, was "vaguely influenced by the type of post-and-beam construction found in a barn."

The home's interior spaces, created with the help of Susan Tuttle of Surroundings in Orleans, respond to this vision of a camp-style cottage as well. The four bedrooms are furnished in cottage style, not the variety that is ready-made and over-determined, but of the type that is organic and seems to have evolved, incorporating much beloved items accumulated over time both from relatives and past houses, filling rooms with love and comfort.



The rough-hewn stone of the fireplace, with its knotty-pine mantel, adds to the casual atmosphere.



Even though this home is steps away from the ocean, it is not a typical beach house. But it still has traditional characteristics, including natural light and exposures to the light and the views. At left, the five-light Alessandra chandelier from Ballard Designs hangs in the foyer.

and tight, and it had no garage and was not insulated. When PSD's client inherited it, she realized that though she loved it, it could not accommodate her family. When building their new home on the site, the firm's clients re-purposed the uncle's knotty pine paneling, asking PSD to use it for the walls of the den and to add it judiciously in other areas of the home, including as the cabinetry for bathroom vanities. Carrying on the theme are the rustic wood living room coffee table, the farmer-style dining table, and the kitchen cabinetry, which was designed by Classic Kitchens & Interiors of Hyannis. Augmenting the casual feel is the unfinished stone tile used in the mudroom, the rough-hewn stone of the fireplace with its knotty-pine mantle, and the tongue-and-groove cabinet next to the fireplace, which discreetly houses the television.

Even though this home is steps away from the ocean, it is not a typical beach home, yet it still has traditional characteristics DaSilva believes are critical, including its "great natural light and its multiple exposures to the light and the views. The living room on the south side of the house spans from front to back and has eastern, southern and western exposures. The living room is flooded with light all day, all year." The east-facing kitchen catches the rising sun, but as DaSilva points out, "The nice thing with a house like this is that because the openings are large between the spaces, even though the kitchen faces east, it is open enough to other spaces so the light overflows."

Enhancing this feeling is the repeated use of knotty pine, which not only speaks the same language as the wooded pond setting, but also represents family and the past to the clients. The wife's uncle originally owned the small Cape cottage on this property. Built shortly after World War II, it served its purpose for decades, but its spaces were small



While open-floor plans can sometimes feel vacuous, this one feels cozy by design. The entries to the first-floor spaces are framed with simple trim, and the cascading pavilions outside become points of architectural interest to those inside.

This is a home that says a polite hello to all who pass by on their way to a relaxing day at the beach, and it welcomes its own family into its warm, sunlit spaces and casual ease. When they turn their backs to the outside world and enter the embrace of family past and present, they can slip quietly into the reverie provided by the peaceful pond views. 🍷

