



# DREAM

A bluff-top property overlooking Chatham Harbor is quirky and playful, yet classically inspired



# DESIGN

BY LENORE CULLEN BARNES  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRIAN VANDEN BRINK

Sometimes, the stars align. For this couple with grown children, their dreams of owning a second home on Cape Cod came true when they found an enviable piece of property overlooking Chatham Harbor and the perfect architectural firm to bring their vision to life.

The couple began their search by simply driving around the Cape, looking at houses. “Time and again, the homes that caught our eye were built by Polhemus Savery DaSilva,” says the wife. “So I picked up the phone and called Peter Polhemus. Peter spent many hours with us searching for the right piece of property, and his ability to imagine the siting of a home, and the potential of a piece of land was genius. And all of this was before we even officially signed on!”

It was the beginning of a beautiful working relationship. They knew they wanted a single-style home that maximized the views from their bluff-top property.

“(Design principal) John DaSilva and his architectural project manager, Steve Glasheen, steered us through the initial program,” says the wife. “I’m still amazed at how much of what I said in those meetings was remembered and incorporated into the home. John asked a lot of questions and offered a lot of suggestions, and was able to make sense of the jumble of ideas that we had.”





DaSilva emphasizes that the project was a collaborative endeavor.

“The wife is very design savvy and was very much involved,” says DaSilva. “She’s very astute aesthetically.”

Because Polhemus Savery DaSilva is an integrated architecture and design firm, their services encompass the often arduous permitting process. Once the permitting was in place, the design began in earnest, with the goal of creating what DaSilva describes as a home that would “both fit in and make a unique statement.”

“It is classically inspired but playful, a hybrid,” DaSilva says. “The energy of the house parallels the energy of its context. The facade is not static; it has implied motion. Like a locomotive, the large gambrel roof drives the motion toward the stair tower, entry pavilion, and on to the linear dormered extension, gesturing toward the opening of the harbor and the expanse of the ocean beyond.”

A screened-in porch projects off one end of the rectangular footprint of the main house. A broad porch at the rear of the house is a favorite gathering spot for the family. “It was my husband’s must-have,” says the wife. “The porch is the first place that we gather in the morning. We love to watch the activity of the fishing boats in the harbor during the day. And it is where we enjoy the cool breezes at night.”



Inside the front entry, a winding staircase climbs three sides of the space and features balustrades and newel posts that DaSilva describes as “beefy but simple.” The wife especially enjoyed finding unique lighting to complement the interiors; she chose collage pendants by Louis Poulsen for the foyer and a pair of Tartufo chandeliers for the dining room.

While the layout facilitates easy flow, the owners did not want an entirely open floor plan. They prefer easy access from one space to another, but with some separation.

“I wanted the overall ambience of the home to be clean, relaxed and calm,” says the wife. “The joke during construction was that my favorite color is white. We wanted clean lines, and a limited palette inside because the view outside is the star. In the bedroom upstairs, I chose very soft hues of gray for a serene look. White,



grays and browns predominate.” She worked with Michelle Coppolo, owner of Darby Road Home in Waltham, to create custom upholstered pieces and beds throughout the home.

Inside and out, Windy Brae is now the warm, welcoming home the owners envisioned. “Our goal is to create a comfortable place to live—dynamic and fun, but still relaxing and peaceful,” says DaSilva. “We strive for that magical balance.” 🏡