

NJ Home

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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.

DESIGN *by* **INSABELLA DESIGN**

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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.





THERE'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.

