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Hamptons Cottages and Gardens

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From laid-back North Sea to picture-perfect East Hampton, inspiration beckons at every corner

FRANCINE FLEISCHER



Heavenly View

The living room (THIS PAGE) is furnished with a reproduction Ib Kofod-Larsen Hoop chair from One Kings Lane, petrified wood-topped cocktail tables from Phillips Collection, and a Frankfurt Articulating sconce from Circa Lighting. (OPPOSITE) Marshall Paetzel Landscape Architecture designed the summer garden. See Resources.



Setting the Scene

A revamped waterfront cottage in North Sea respects its natural surroundings

BY **KELLY VELOCCI** | PHOTOGRAPHS BY **FRANCINE FLEISCHER**

Earthy Palette

(THIS PAGE) A seating nook includes a custom settee by Babcock Peffer Design, jute pendants from Roost, and a side table from Sylvester & Co. Modern General. (OPPOSITE TOP) The living room's walnut-framed sectional is topped with cushions covered in Perennials' Sea Salt. The kitchen cabinets (OPPOSITE BOTTOM) are painted Farrow & Ball's All White. See *Resources*.





The best designers possess a sense of place—a deep understanding of an environment and a lifestyle. For local decorating duo Allison Babcock and Cristina Peffer, of Sag Harbor–based Babcock Peffer Design, living and working on the East End plays to their distinct advantage. “We know what people value when they come out east,” says Peffer. “It’s about having a home in perfect harmony with the natural beauty of the Hamptons.”

Fittingly, when repeat Manhattan clients gave the designers carte blanche to rethink their beloved weekend cottage, Babcock and Peffer decided to embrace the “peacefulness of the waterfront location,” says Babcock, and create what Peffer calls “an immediate feeling of serenity upon entering the house.”

Tucked away on a small parcel abutting North Sea Harbor, the 2,000-square-foot dwelling had a tight floor plan, with low ceilings and small, dark rooms. The first phase of the renovation centered around opening up the house to usher in natural light, so the team swapped unremarkable windows lining the rear of the abode with over-



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Quiet Environs

(OPPOSITE AND THIS PAGE NEAR LEFT) The open-plan second floor serves multiple functions: guest sleeping quarters, office, and family room. The Clemente sconces are from Aerin, the Beni Ourain floor cushions are from Jayson Home, and the desk is a vintage Kai Kristiansen design. In the downstairs guest room (ABOVE), a Possini Euro Design light fixture hangs above the bed. The duvet is from Coyuchi. See [Resources](#).





Waterside Affair

A dining set from Crate & Barrel occupies a corner of the deck, which lies just a few steps above the gently lapping waves of North Sea Harbor. See Resources.

size sliding glass doors, instantly brightening the first floor and showcasing the unobstructed water views. Next, they knocked out the dropped ceilings in the kitchen and living room for extra height, revealing characterful exposed beams, and installed grooved wall paneling for added architectural interest. White rift-oak flooring replaced bamboo planks, and the sunken dining area was leveled to create a better flow. A fresh coat of Farrow & Ball's All White, even on the brick fireplace and kitchen cabinets, unifies everything on the first floor.

The narrow living room proved especially challenging. To make the most of its one long wall, Babcock and Peffer commissioned a built-in walnut-framed sectional with attached side tables that save valuable space. ("A floating sofa," Babcock notes, "would feel too heavy.") Accentuating the piece are a pair of petrified wood-topped cocktail tables and a reproduction Ib Kofod-Larsen chair. Around the corner, adjacent to the master bedroom, lies a cozy sitting area offering the same jaw-dropping water vista. The compact nook features a custom settee, graphic kuba-cloth benches, and a trio of jute pendant lights.

The open-plan, window-lined second level has been fashioned for multifunctional use. Previously consisting of two "cave-like" small rooms, says Babcock, it now boasts a raised ceiling and a full-size bath. Built-in benches topped with twin-size cushions double as guest sleeping quarters, while a mid-20th-century Kai Kristiansen-designed desk occupies a dedicated work zone. A floor-to-ceiling bookcase serves as a room partition and conceals a television.

To underscore the home's aura of tranquility, Babcock and Peffer kept all upholstery neutral and surfaces uncluttered. Artwork is spare, save for a dynamic triptych of a female diver that looms above the custom sofa. Essentially, Babcock proclaims, "this house is really about the view." The focus, emphasizes Peffer, "had to be on the outdoors first, and *then* the decor." ●