

# pier heaven



INTERIOR DESIGNER MARSHA MALONE CREATES A NAUTICAL  
HAVEN IN CHATHAM FOR THE BROWN FAMILY.

by elspeth pierson | photography by eric roth



The living room opens right into a porch, which enjoys the breeze and gorgeous view of Chatham Harbor (left). The foyer of "Pier Heaven" reveals the nautical theme of the Brown's Chatham gem.





Adirondack chairs provide a comfortable place to sit and take in the breathtaking view (above). The open porch serves as another venue to relax and enjoy the natural beauty of "Pier Heaven" with family and friends (right). Marsha and Anna take a well-deserved break. The four-pillared portico, garnished with a beautiful array of plants and trees, is an inviting entrance (opposite).







ANNA AND GREG BROWN AND THEIR TWO CHILDREN, MEGAN AND TROY, had been summering on the Cape for 13 years when it came on the market. “Pier Heaven,” as the family now calls the home, is a stunning new six-bedroom home overlooking Chatham Harbor. “We stepped into the house and saw the view,” says Anna. “We looked at each other and pretty much decided as a family right there.” They were smitten and closed on the house soon after. With its harbor view, complete with weathered fish piers, basking seals, and a tiny island, it only made sense that the home décor follow a nautical theme. Many years before, the work of interior designer Marsha Malone, the owner of Nautique, a Brewster interior design boutique with a nautical theme, had caught Anna’s eye. The family called on Malone to help with the project almost immediately.

The Browns had already amassed what Malone refers to as “a little treasure trove” of favorite Nautique pieces. Once they finally knew they would have room for a house-full, Anna called Nautique to inquire about interior design services. “I just loved the feel of the store and the pieces of furniture and antiques,” says Anna. When asked if she wanted to take on the job, Malone says, “the answer,” of course, “was yes.”





The kitchen is highlighted by a perfect contrast between the light marble countertop and navy furniture; along with another astonishing view (above). The seaworthy dining room illustrates Malone's unique touch as all aspects of the room, ranging from the carpet to the lamps, bolster the nautical theme (opposite).

That doesn't mean the project was always easy. On Easter weekend, the Browns told Malone they were hoping to complete the redesign within only nine weeks. "It was a Herculean task, to say the least," laughs Malone, "but their enthusiasm and our shared love of Cape Cod got me motivated." After meeting in person for a few hours to select fabrics and identify things unique to the family, Malone whizzed through the project via phone calls and e-mails between Cape Cod and Chicago. "We walked into Pier Heaven after being there only once before in April after we bought it, and it was completely furnished with all the bells and whistles and 'trimmings' to boot," says Anna, amazed.

The greatest challenges, according to Malone, were the basement and the guestroom. The basement, a large, empty Sheet-rocked room, felt "barren and uninviting." With the designer's creativity, it quickly transformed into a home bar fashioned after an old English pub-style bar in Chatham. The mahogany bar matches the bead-board ceiling made from the same wood. A beer tap sits behind the bar, inviting guests to sit down on one of the plush maroon bar stools





Malone lavishly adorned this seafaring bedroom using everything from lighthouse-themed cushions to decorative starfish, which features an excellent view of the Harbor.

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and enjoy a shrimp from its chilling drawer. Carefully laid antique ship's flooring, an antique admiral's flag, and a blue-and-gold embossed sign that reads "Absolut Chatham" tie the room together.

The guestroom was the next challenge. Envisioning a space that would appear both seaworthy and inviting for the many young visitors likely to show up over the course of a summer, Malone put in a set of mahogany bunk beds complete with antique workable portholes and storage drawers below. "What a view of the water from those bunk beds!" she exclaims. The Browns were equally pleased. "The biggest compliment of all is that when we have family and friends to visit," says Anna, "they all say that this is a 'Brown house.' It truly reflects who we are and what we love."

Malone didn't stop with the com-



fort of the Browns' guests. "I wanted to create something special for everyone," the designer says. Knowing that the Browns' son, Troy, would be heading off to Boston College in the fall, she surprised the new undergrad with a room decorated in maroon and gold. "It is his own personal 'Eagles' nest," she laughs.

Outside of the nest, another theme that resonates throughout the home is a strong connection to Chatham's history. An antique naval bell stands in the dining room; one bell tolls for cocktails, two for dinner. Hanging from another wall is a painting of a lobster rendered by a Wellfleet artist over a century ago. "Considering their proximity to Nickerson's Fish and Lobster," says Malone, "I had to place this antique oil in their kitchen!"

In an oddly shaped nook upstairs in the family room, an antique bin-





nacle fills a challenging space. “You couldn’t place a chair or a chest or anything with function,” says Malone. “It is absolutely the perfect size and shape and makes an unusable space an area of interest.”

Also specially fit to the house is the room’s rug. Designed by Malone herself, it is custom-made of 100 percent New Zealand wool. Another graces the dining room, along with a custom-built table of antique wood and Windsor chairs from England. Like every piece of furniture in the house, these were either purchased or procured through Nautique.



Couches fit for a sea captain show the unique touch that Nautique has on all of their furniture.

Perhaps Malone's favorite item, however, came not from her shop but from her husband, Peter. The ancient antique model of a Cape Cod scallop boat sits in silhouette against a window. "We [my husband and I] agreed it belonged in the Brown's home," says Malone, "because it is the perfect replica of the very boats that pass them each day with their catch."

Over the course of her 10 years at Nautique, Malone has certainly proved her knack for finding any nautical item for the right home. Created originally as an accompaniment to her husband's Seaport Shutter Company,





"Beach," the subtle positioning of the word above the window shows how the uplifting theme fills every room of the abode. In the spacious master bathroom, Malone has continued the nautical theme of the house.

which offers custom shutters, Adirondack chairs, and custom mahogany screen doors, the boutique was a natural extension. "It became evident very quickly that Peter's clients were also searching for interior design services as well," says Malone. Housed in a building on the National Register of Historic Buildings in Brewster, the boutique does a booming business these days in all things for the home.

While it's only one example of Malone's ability as a designer, the Browns' home is an excellent representation of the classic oceanic interior she and Nautique have come to offer. "In the







Antique treasures can be found throughout "Pier Heaven," which strengthen the home's nautical identity while also honoring the rich fishing history of Chatham.

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Browns' case, I needed to honor the fishing village of Chatham—its presence as a fishing port and the history that the pier and its boats exude," explains Malone. "[Their] house is a part of all this history, and the colors, antique nautical treasures, and antique art I procured speak to all that is special about Chatham." [h](#)

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