

LIVING *Small*

Nature's bountiful gifts and a designer's custom creations make a big impact on a petite place.

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To tie in with the relaxed, natural aesthetic of the beach bungalow, Malone used reclaimed wood and four coats of finish and paint to create a dining room table with the appearance of driftwood.



Sometimes, less is more at the beach. The owners of this bungalow and their two children spend the school year in their modern 8,000-square-foot home in Newton. But when they started looking for a beach house on the Cape three years ago, they were after something different. “We wanted the opposite,” explains the husband. “My wife and I wanted a place where we don’t need to worry, where we can wake up early and stay up late and bring in kids and sand and just enjoy the beach.”

They settled on a 1,500-square-foot bungalow on the Brewster flats, just steps away from the bay. Built in the late 1960s, the home manages to fit a lot into its modest footprint: three first-floor bedrooms; two baths; an open, split-level living area that flows into a dining room and kitchen; and a large, airy loft that serves as both a sleep and play space for the middle-school age kids and their friends.

Soon after buying the house, the homeowners stumbled upon Brewster home design shop Nautique and hit it off with owner Marsha Malone. “My wife and I basically gave her carte blanche,” the husband says, “and the results have been great.”

Malone has been in business 18 years, and she says it isn’t often she gets to do a project like this. “I do so many big houses, and they’re beautiful,” she says. “But to me, this is the old Cape, and I absolutely love it.” Malone custom built almost all of the furniture in the house, designing headboards and side tables to fit into bedrooms and in the living areas down to the inch. “It was really a challenge of how to make it livable and fun,” says Malone, “and to get it all to fit.”

Still, despite its small footprint, the house feels anything but cramped. A mirror in the guest bedroom hangs opposite a window, creating a feeling of space. Boats carved out of the headboards of two twin beds sail left and right, pushing the walls away. A large picture window in the living room

creates a feeling of merging indoors and out, and beyond it beckon the flats and the beach.

“It’s a totally different vibe here than at home,” says the husband. “Everyone sits on the deck with their coffee in the morning, and the kids run around on the flats.” The Brewster tidal flats are one of the widest such expanses in the western hemisphere, second in size only to a similar area in Brazil. “On a nice day you can walk when the tide’s out well over a mile until you hit water. Six hours later it’s over your head in front of the house. It’s pretty wild.”

Malone used reclaimed wood salvaged from old New England barns and homes and four coats of finish and paint to create a dining room table with the appearance of driftwood, adding to the relaxed, natural feel. She chose acrylic and Sunbrella fabrics in various shades of beige and blue for the living area, eliminating any worry about spills or fading. Wood floors and a natural fiber carpet tie into sand tones in the kitchen and dining room, and lamps made from driftwood and woven rope accent the views of the beach.

“You never know how many friends you have until you have a beach house,” reads a print in one of the guest bedrooms. The homeowners say it’s true—and the family loves it. “When we go down with family and friends, the upstairs becomes a huge kid hangout while the adults relax on the deck and in the two family rooms. It’s very nice, but it’s also comfortable and practical. It’s been great.” **H**



ABOVE: A large picture window in the living room creates a feeling of merging indoors and out, and beyond it beckon the flats and the beach. **NEAR RIGHT:** The classic Adirondack Chair from Seaport Shutter Company is offered through Nautique. **FAR RIGHT:** Navy and white stripes, a natural grass lamp and beadboard all contribute to the fresh, nautical feeling.



A bedroom tucked under the eaves features custom headboards and dressers by Nautique.