



Flavor OF THE SEA

*Brewster designer transforms home using
inspiring colors and nautical details*

Cape Cod is a land of beached driftwood, whales' tails, seashells, ships, mermaids and lovely, inspiring light. When Marsha Malone, the owner of Nautique, an interior design and home furnishings company in Brewster, was hired by a Florida couple to transform the home they had just purchased in New Seabury from formal suburban to sophisticated Cape coastal style, these decorative seaside details served as the inspiration for many design elements.

The couple—both retired—had bought the home on a bit of a whim. Though they love Florida's winter warmth, they dreaded its summer heat, and so they hopped in their motor home and searched for a summer place, exploring the East Coast all the way to Maine. They had never been to Cape Cod but had seen pictures and heard wonderful reports of the region's charm. They were quickly enamored by the Cape's natural beauty, wildlife, originality and serenity. They contacted a real estate agent,

viewed several potential properties, and settled on this custom-built five-bedroom home in New Seabury.

"We chose it for its desirable location, and because it was close to move-in ready and was well built," the husband says. "The home's quality of construction was second to none."

There was, however, one drawback: the décor. The home was formally dressed in dark colors, ornate drapes, crystal chandeliers and Oriental carpets. The new owners—new to both the home and the region—wanted a place that really said "Cape Cod". "We wanted something beachy, yet elegant," the wife says, "with seashells and mermaids."

Realizing the couple was not familiar with any of the Cape's home furnishing resources, and given that it was October and they were due to return to Florida for the winter, their realtor recommended

By Laurel Kornhiser • Photography by Dan Cutrona

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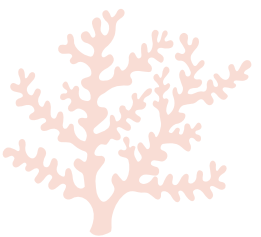


they contact Malone. Nautique's owner met the couple at their hotel the day before they headed south. They discussed the project, and Malone was given until April of the following year, when the couple would return for the season, to redesign the house to their tastes. Overseeing a cadre of contractors and staff—painters, carpet and wallcovering installers, artists, upholsterers, electricians and builders—Malone created interiors that are, as the designer says, “Cape Cod coastal, sophisticated but relaxed.”

Just as shells are scattered along Cape Cod's shores, they are present in nearly every room in this home; they appear in many of the fabrics from the kitchen window treatment and living room armchairs to the window and bed fabrics in most of the bedrooms. There are nautilus and coral shells, seafans and whelks, moon shells and scallops. In one room they are presented in nautical blue and white, in another it's blue with yellow, and in a few instances the shells are set in relief against a seafoam background.



Nautical details can be found in most every room in the house, ranging from a wooden whale carving in the kitchen to a model ship in the den—and nearly every furnishing in the living room.



The master bedroom also has a seaside feel. The headboard, designed by Malone, built by her carpenters, and upholstered in her fabric workroom, is finished in a cream, blue and green fabric that replicates the residence's natural surroundings. “I wanted it to feel restful and sophisticated,” Malone says. The headboard, like a banquette bench added to the lower-level bedroom suite, was also custom-built by Malone's carpenters.



Throughout the home, shells also dangle in and from many of the overhead light fixtures. One particularly elaborate chandelier that hangs above the breakfast table features large mussel shells. Another, incorporating a judicious use of scallop shells among crystals, illuminates the living room; yet another, highlighting mussel shells, lights the stairway. Though jellyfish are to be avoided in the ocean, when translated into a light fixture the marine animal becomes a dramatic work of art, and in this house, one such jelly drifts over another set of stairs.



According to Malone, not only does the couple have great taste, but they are also a lot of fun, and this feeling is manifest in their willingness to add such design surprises throughout their home. While the light fixtures are inspired by the sea, some of the side table lamps, part of Malone's lighting line, have bases inspired by New England lamp posts, and their shades are hand-painted by Nautique's artists.

Other quintessential seaside ingredients contribute to the home's Cape Cod theme. The desk in the husband's office, for instance, is finished in driftwood, and Malone designed a matching shelf unit, using 200-year-old wood, a mainstay of Nautique's Sail Loft furniture collection. The lower level billiard table also sports a driftwood finish and lives in a room clad in kiwi-green beadboard walls, a Cape cottage staple. The custom-made living room coffee table is also built from antique wood; for its painted rim, Malone extracted design elements from the room's window treatment and the fabric on an armchair. She also designed the living room console, its reclaimed New



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England barn wood painted a seafoam green which was then rubbed and distressed.

The use of shells and antique barn wood connect the interiors of the home to the surrounding seascape, as do the various materials and textures used for wallcoverings, carpets and other furnishings. One guest bed is made of woven seagrass, while the lamps on the side tables have lampshades made of cork, adding more texture to the room. In the living room, a rope rug replaced the Oriental that had been there, and the walls are now clad in a Nantucket basket weave. The foyer and stairwell walls are papered in a Japanese weave. These natural textures create the perfect backdrop for all of the home's many coastal touches.



Top: Note the marine-life pattern on the seats and pillowcases, and the rope-bedecked chandelier.



Above: The fun continues on the lower level with a billiards table finished in driftwood.

Malone says many of the colors selected for the home were inspired by artwork the couple owned, but she also sent them on a mission to explore the Cape's galleries. "As part of the adventure, I said, 'Go procure the artwork.' They had never been to Provincetown." As the couple traveled, they bought mermaids—one is suspended over the flat screen television in the living room, and another floats over the downstairs banquette—a painting of a whale's tail, carved whales and other nautically themed art. "We had a lot of fun going out to buy art and knickknacks," the husband says. "We wanted to buy local, and meet local artists."

New to the Cape, the new homeowners wanted to surround themselves in all things Cape Cod; that just happened to be Malone's specialty. Both husband



and wife praise her design and professionalism and appreciate that she met the deadline they had given her. "She was awesome to work with, as was her staff," the wife says. "All of the tradespeople were fantastic and on time," the husband adds.

Though the two parties were hundreds of miles apart pretty much throughout the entire project, with communication taking place via emails and texts, Malone says the work turned out wonderfully. "It was a great collaboration and a positive, happy experience," she says. Walking through the home, spotting coastal colors, beautiful shells and many other serene seaside touches, one gets a sense that the warm feelings experienced during the renovation have successfully been imbued into the home's atmosphere.

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