



# WATER'S EDGE

A design team builds a sprawling,  
Georgian-style home on the  
South River in Annapolis

By JULIE SANDERS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BURROUGHS



The traditional residence (opposite) is stately and welcoming, with a harmoniously symmetrical front façade. The entry hall (pictured here) emphasizes a broad, elegant staircase clad in white-painted wall panels.



The dining room, decorated in shades of teal, combines a table from Hickory White and chairs from Pearson with a chandelier by Niermann Weeks; the drapery fabric is from Kravet. The room is designed to accommodate large gatherings of family and friends.

A winding, tree-lined drive is the first hint that something special lies ahead. When the road opens up to reveal a stately white clapboard home, expectations are fulfilled. Nestled into a 10-acre waterfront property, the house is expansive—a harmonious, symmetrical structure beyond which the picturesque South River can be seen. Its solid, traditional style belies its newness—and that’s the point. “The whole idea was a house that didn’t look like it was just plopped here,” says the homeowner. “We wanted it to look like it belonged.”

She and her husband, a mechanical engineer, were living just a couple of miles away when the property came on the market. The couple, who built their previous house, wished to move with their three teenagers into a new custom home on the water. They jumped at the sizeable lot, which at the time encompassed three houses. Assembling a design team that included architect Catherine Purple Cherry and interior designer Lisa Publicover—with the husband acting as the general contractor—they first razed two of the structures, retaining and renovating the other as a small cottage on the property.

Then the team set to work realizing the homeowners’ vision for the main abode. The wife “was committed to an older look from the outside,” explains Purple Cherry. “So we chose the Georgian style, very balanced and symmetrical in the front. But we always try to open up the back—the goal in waterfront houses is to make sure the solid space is minimized in back in order to show the views.”

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ARCHITECTURE: CATHERINE PURPLE CHERRY, AIA, LEED AP, principal; BRIAN BASSINDALE, AIA, project manager; RICHARD MONTEIRO, project designer, Purple Cherry Architects, Annapolis, Maryland.  
INTERIOR DESIGN: LISA PUBLICOVER, LPID LLC, Annapolis, Maryland. LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE: KEVIN CAMPION, ASLA, Campion Hruby Landscape Architects, Annapolis, Maryland.

The kitchen (right) boasts cabinetry from Premier Custom-Built Cabinetry, five-centimeter-thick Carrara marble countertops and light fixtures from Visual Comfort over the island. It adjoins the breakfast area (bottom) and opens into the family room (below), where sofas from Stanford Furniture surround a coffee table by Hickory White.





In the family room, four club chairs from Thibaut Fine Furniture create a conversation area around a custom ottoman by Pearson. Beyond, French doors open to the screened porch, where a table and chairs from Kingsley-Bate overlook the water.



The screened porch (left) is roomy, with brick floors, a beadboard ceiling and wicker seating from Kingsley-Bate. A pavilion (bottom) houses a fully equipped kitchen that abuts a pool flanked by chaise longues from Frontgate. Water views, accentuated by Kevin Campion's landscape design, stretch out beyond.



“I strategize connections between spaces for quality of life.”

—CATHERINE PURPLE CHERRY



The finished house measures 10,000 square feet, with exteriors of clapboard-like HardiePlank siding and brick reclaimed from the Eastern Shore, which impart an authentic, older-house look. Inside, extensive millwork adds character and visually scales down the rooms, making them feel intimate despite their size.

Purple Cherry designed a spacious foyer with a wide, elegant staircase and clear sight lines to the water. To one side, the foyer opens to a formal dining room. Beyond the stairwell, a long corridor leads on one side to a small parlor and the husband's study, paneled in knotty alderwood. At the other end, a private wing includes a mudroom, the wife's office, a main-floor laundry room and a wine storage room. The floors in the

private area are slate while wide planks of reclaimed oak sound an informal note throughout the rest of the house.

An open-plan kitchen/family room spans 52 feet. The classic, white kitchen (a collaboration between Lisa Publicover and kitchen designer Joni Zimmerman Manto) boasts custom cabinetry and extra-deep Carrara marble counters. A breakfast nook overlooks the river, and both kitchen and family room open out to a screened porch where cushioned seating beckons.

According to Purple Cherry, the construction process was seamless, due in part to the husband's skill set. "His experience [as a mechanical engineer] made him logical and reasonable," she observes. "He made the whole project easy."

Adding to the comfort level, designer Lisa Publicover and the homeowners had worked together on two previous projects. "I came in at the beginning," Publicover says. "Everything was new and the biggest challenge was dealing with the sheer number of selections and details in a short time frame. I didn't want to hold anyone up!" In keeping with the waterside locale, Publicover and her client chose a fresh palette of teal and cream against crisp white woodwork for the downstairs rooms. Comfortable easy chairs in a conversational enclave anchor the family room; sofas and chairs are grouped round a brick fireplace and a wall of windows brings the outdoors in.

The second-floor landing mimics the front door vestibule below with a bay win-



The second-floor landing (opposite) houses a sideboard from Bramble Furniture and a wide bay window with bright yellow draperies from Suburban Home by Duralee. Down the hall, the kids' sitting room (this page) combines beadboard wainscoting and built-ins with comfortable furniture for lounging.

The restful master bedroom (below) opens through French doors to a narrow balcony with river vistas beyond. The focal point of the master bath (right) is a graceful soaking tub. Custom cabinetry and Thassos marble floors finish the look.



dow (directly over the front door) flanked by window seat niches. The sons' rooms are down one hallway while the daughter's room and another bedroom—currently outfitted as a gym—are opposite. Each bedroom has its own bath, and the kids share a cheerful sitting room complete with a large-screen TV.

Situated above the kitchen, the master suite encompasses a large walk-in closet designed by California Closets and a luxurious bath with a soaking tub that serves as a stunning focal point. White Thassos marble clads the floors and shower surround.

In the second-floor landing and sitting room, Publicover mixed teal and sunny yellow to create a sense of lightness and fun. Accessible through an extra door to the main hallway, the master bedroom is awash in pale blue and cream. "I try to ensure that there's always an anteroom for privacy so the bathroom and closet are not just accessible through the bedroom," Purple Cherry explains. "I strategize connections between spaces for quality of life."

Outside, landscape architect Kevin Campion created a design that incorporated a pool, hot tub, sport court and pavilion with full outdoor kitchen, as well as a perennial garden, tidal lawn and parking court. "We located the drive and lined it with elm trees for scale," he says. "Historically, older homes included terracing down to the water, so our terraced design conveys a sense of the house being older."

While the home emphasizes traditional beauty and a connection to its stunning locale, it also puts a premium on functionality. Two sets of two-car garages flank the driveway; one accesses the house directly and one via a breezeway. An elevator was installed that will enable the homeowners to age in place. "Life is complicated," says Purple Cherry. "It's important to understand how we humans live." ♦

*Photographer David Burroughs is based in Annapolis, Maryland.*

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