



# Balmy Days... ...on the Bay

KIRA VATH, SPENCER & COMPANY AND ADVENTUROUS HOMEOWNERS NAVIGATE A REMODELING PROJECT THAT IS ALL ABOUT DAYS ON THE BAY.

Overlooking captivating Cape Cod Bay, a home in Brewster is a study in contrasts. Throughout the house, and spilling onto the sprawling patio and decking overlooking the beach, cool blues and whites permeate the space, while the warm oranges, pinks and reds of a setting sun over the Bay flood the rooms with the inescapable glow of a Cape Cod summer. Kira Vath, principal of Kira Vath Interiors in Orleans, and the dynamic duo of Ted and Matt Spencer worked closely with the homeowners to create a dream home that can be enjoyed for generations.

Some partnerships go down in history: Holmes and Watson, Ben and Jerry, Batman and Robin, Bonnie and Clyde. Add to that list, Kira Vath and the homeowners of this stunning home. "This is actually the third home of theirs I've worked on. It started maybe 12 years ago when they were building a house in Orleans. They contacted me then and I worked with them from the ground up during the building of that house, and then we furnished the whole thing," explains Kira. Her relationship with her clients has grown through three houses over almost 15 years. "It's been wonderful knowing them this long. By this point, we get along great and I really know their tastes, what they like or

don't like," she continues as she reflects on the ease of working most closely with the wife of the couple. "It really helps because she has such great taste herself and working with her is such a joy. Sometimes I feel like it's not even a job because it's just so much fun working with her! And it's great because he just leaves us alone! He says 'you just do your thing,' when it comes to making all of the fun design decisions." After working together for so many years, Kira has come to understand her clients, utilizing a type of unspoken language, and when the time came to start on their Brewster home, the color scheme looked a little different. "Her favorite color is blue, and it's funny because when we first started the project, it was a little, 'Oh,.... I want to do something different than blue' and we started working on some different color schemes. But I could sense that she wasn't quite happy, so I said, 'We just need to go back to blue; there's nothing wrong with liking blue and always having blue!' So, it became the blue and white, modern, updated beach house; nice and clean and fresh and summery," Kira recalls.

When the homeowners purchased this beachfront property almost three years ago, it looked vastly different. But thanks to the homeowners' decision to



renovate, rather than tear down, and the hard work of Ted and Matt Spencer of Spencer & Company and their team, custom home builders based in Chatham, the house on the Bay feels like new construction in every sense and stands to create lasting memories for the homeowners, their children, and their grandchild for generations to come. “The interior of the house was completely gutted before we were ever involved in the project,” Matt explains. “We added a dormer that dramatically improved the functionality of the master suite, but without any site work or extensive structural changes we hit the ground running.”

“It was a blank canvas for us. Although we do all of the framing for our projects, interior millwork and cabinetry is really the hallmark of Spencer & Company. We worked closely with Kira and the homeowners to design all of the cabinetry, built-ins and vanities,” he continues. “There were regular visits to our millwork shop in Chatham to review cabinet options and trim packages. The final product really pays homage to the coastal location and at the same time embodies more traditional Cape Cod woodworking details.”

Throughout the home, blues and whites imbue a sense of calm, reflecting the ever-changing canvas of the Bay across all rooms. No room exemplifies this more than the living room. With a sky-high ceiling and panoramic windows, the view is the star of the show. But that doesn’t mean the interior gets to take a break. “You do keep in mind the view when designing a room like that. That’s probably why we went with blue. While blue is her favorite color, it also works well with the blues of the water; it’s a continuation from the outside to the interior. And, at night when the sun is going down and the sky turns orange and pink, it complements the blue as well,” Kira explains of the design process for the living room. “You can often take nature into account, especially when it’s a room where you’re sitting inside, but looking outside. It’s nice to have some of the same colors, instead of really different colors, which could be jarring. So it’s more of a continuation so you feel like you’re still immersed in nature.”

Throughout the house, stunning ocean vistas are mesmerizing, and most rooms employ the use of natural colors and textures to complement and enhance the seascape outside. A small breakfast nook surrounded by windows and accented with warm wooden seating invites the homeowners and guests to ease into their day, sipping coffee and basking in the morning sun, while the dining room features a large wooden table and wicker chairs with soft denim cushions. The dining table, which seats eight comfortably, and is inspired by the driftwood that washes up only meters away, welcomes diners to enjoy their dinner with a view. “We had that wood table handmade for this space; it’s that farm table, rustic,



The blue and white color palette throughout the house is not only a nod to the homeowner’s favorite color, but enhances and reflects the beautiful water outside. Above, Kira Vath matches with the carefully selected fabrics in the living room.

Above: The airy kitchen features custom cabinetry and millwork done by Spencer & Company, as does the mudroom shown right. The breakfast nook fills with bright sunshine, helping the homeowners and guests ease into their day.





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whitewashed look. And we went with the wicker chairs because of the natural elements. The wicker chairs and furniture with natural finishes are very organic and natural,” says Kira of the airy, light-filled dining room. “The goal was that casual beach house with organic elements here and there, because it’s all about the family. They love entertaining, and to them, that’s a summer beach house: hanging out in shorts, a barbeque on the patio, and relaxing on the beach.”



The Spencer & Company team was just as impressed with the view, and the decisions surrounding the redesign of the home. “With so many houses in locations like that getting torn down and rebuilt, it’s a perfect example of not doing that, saving what you can, but really fixing it up. There’s nothing about the inside of that house that’s the same as when we first walked in,” says Ted Spencer.



No beach house would be complete without a spot to sit and watch the sunset. Here, it is without a doubt the

marvelous stone patio. “I think that patio is going to be where they spend most of their time. They’re going to be eating all their meals out there, they’re going to be sitting around the fire pit every night. Whether there’s a good sunset or not, it’s just a great place to be outside and hang out,” says Kira. This is no ordinary patio. Accommodating a full dining set, an outdoor kitchen (and soon, a pizza oven), and a fire pit surrounded by cozy, comfy couches, it’s easy to understand her surety. No detail was too small when it came to creating this outdoor sanctuary. The masonry of the pavers covering the patio are crafted with seashells, resulting in a cool to the touch surface on even the hottest possible days in August. The fire pit and the outdoor kitchen island were created with cement and lit from within by LED lights, mimicking the stars above. The landscaping, done by Estates Landscaping, enhances and blends with the surrounding natural beauty. The addition of a future pizza oven is the only way the gorgeous outdoor kitchen could be improved upon. Who doesn’t want to come

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back from a day at the beach to smell homemade pizzas?

But the patio area and the adjacent deck that cantilevers off the living room over the beach, weren't always so perfect. "We had to modify the shape of the deck. There was a curved component to it that we flattened out, so it expanded the waterside part of the deck, which was beneficial for the house too. We put the staircase in that leads to the patio area. And we replaced the storm panels in the screened-in porch area with Anderson casement windows, so that it would be more of a three-season room," explains Ted.

Despite the patio's outside environs, thanks to Kira's careful planning, it feels like a true extension of the home. The blue and white reaches out in the patio furniture, while the rock walls and stone and seashell pavers blend the space into the surrounding nature.

What it all comes down to for the homeowners is creating a place for people to come together. "They're all about having space where family

can just come and hang out. They're all about taking care of their guests. Every bedroom in their houses has its own bathroom, because they feel like their guests should have their own suite, and each room has a king bed, except the coral room, which has two queen beds! They're all about comfort, which means having a king-sized bed and your own bathroom! I would come over to work and she and I would be at the kitchen island and he'd be in the kitchen making everyone breakfast," says Kira of working with the homeowners. After years of a partnership turned friendship, she feels that sense of welcome and comfort, a feeling that can be felt in every detail she and the homeowners have placed throughout the home. From the contrasting warm sunsets and cool blues, to the clean white walls and natural elements, every corner of this house welcomes guests home.

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*Elizabeth Shaw is the editorial assistant for Cape Cod Life Publications.*

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