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WATERFRONT ELEGANCE: At this Brick Township home, the first-floor rooms are visually separated by columns and ceiling moldings. The open layout assures an airy feel and ample views of Barnegat Bay. The kitchen, living room and dining room (this page and top three photos, right) get plenty of action with frequent guests. One seating area in the living room faces the kitchen, while another (bottom, far right) faces the fireplace and television. French doors open to the screened porch (opposite page, bottom left), the ideal spot to enjoy the bay breeze.



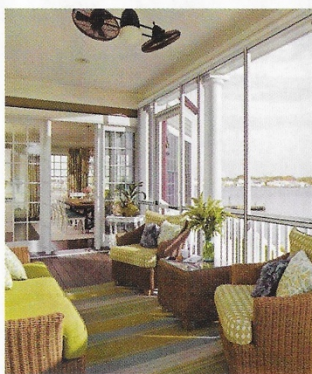
The Perfect Plan B

Their original idea thwarted, a Brick Township couple went back to the drawing board—literally. It took 16 years, but the wait for their dream house was worth it.



ULTIMATELY, IT TOOK ABOUT 14 MONTHS of construction, but tack on time spent planning and designing, overcoming obstacles, making changes on the fly and even taking a breather to save money, and this dream home took nearly 16 years to complete. But it was completely worth it, say Lisa and Michael, the owners of this stunning waterfront home on Barnegat Bay in Brick Township. “This is where we want to stay for the rest of our lives,” says Lisa. “We’ll never leave.”

It all started in 1997, when the couple bought a small house intending to add on. It had an ideal waterfront location, they say, but with a growing family—Olivia, now 16, and Max, now 12—they knew they’d eventually need more space. Then, to their dismay, they discovered that adding a second floor wouldn’t work since the sandy soil couldn’t hold the weight. “As new homeowners, we were grossly inexperienced,” Michael admits with a laugh. “We’d owned the house two weeks. We were completely heartbroken.” Instead, says



Lisa, “we decided to save up and build our dream house.”

They decided to tear down the original house and start from scratch. In 2009, after years of saving, Lisa and Michael finally hired an architect and builder.

“For all the years that Lisa and I debated about what we were doing, it gave us a real understanding of what we wanted the house to look like, and just as importantly, feel like,” says Michael. “So by the time we finally built, we knew what we wanted.”

What they wanted was a stately yet comfortable home that takes advantage of the sweeping waterfront views. It also had to be a welcoming retreat for family and friends. The construction and design team supplied the expertise while Lisa and Michael led the way, instrumental in virtually every decision.

“They were very hands on,” says builder Robert Klaus. “We all worked together as a team.” With the plan intact, construction went swimmingly, with a few key changes along the way. One change was eliminating a planned screened porch in

favor of a larger living room; another was incorporating arches, beams and ceiling moldings to create the illusion of separate spaces within the vast living room, dining room and kitchen area.

“That was sort of done on the fly,” says interior designer Jules Duffy, who was brought in at the very beginning. “We were under construction, and there was this endless ceiling. Putting in the moldings was a very significant part of the design process.”

The result is a large living area with seemingly separate spaces, accentuated by the furniture arrangement. “Each seating area has deep cove molding to separate the space,” explains Duffy, who created a clever layout so that some seating faces the television and fireplace, while another seating area faces the kitchen to keep the cook company. “Two seating areas was crucial,” she says. “There’s a different area for a different function, but they can all be together as a family. Lisa and Michael are all about family.”

The elegant, open kitchen is the hub of the house. “That was Lisa’s battle cry

PEACEFUL RETREAT: The master suite was the last room to be completed but proves to be the ideal escape for Lisa and Michael. “It’s tremendously relaxing,” he says. The couple often enjoy morning coffee in the sitting area (below left). The angled bathtub (below, right) offers a wonderful view of Barnegat Bay.

from the beginning—“When am I getting my kitchen?” says Michael. “She loves to cook, and her meals are magnificent.”

Adds Lisa, “This is a working kitchen. I do all the holidays. We love to entertain. The kids have their friends over all the time.”

The decorating is eclectic, comfortable and elegant, while the muted color scheme blends into the scenery beyond the windows. “We picked pale turquoise with a pop of raspberry,” says Duffy. “It plays nicely off the beautiful views of the water.” Lisa was involved in every furniture and fabric decision. “She has a real vision,” says Duffy. “She knows what she wants.”

“This house is all me,” adds Lisa. “Jules gets the credit, but it’s my colors and taste. Jules helped me pull it all together.”





The master bedroom, one of the last rooms to be decorated, is a private, tranquil retreat. "It reflects Lisa," says Linda Lowenthal, an interior designer with Zaksons, who designed the space. "Lisa knows what she likes, she knows her own taste." The result is a peaceful place where Lisa and Michael often enjoy their morning coffee. "I don't find a lot of things relaxing," jokes Michael, "but our bedroom

is tremendously relaxing. It's spa like."

Finally done, the couple eagerly share their space with others. "We sit here and say, 'Look at what we were able to create for ourselves.' It's everything that we wanted to accomplish," says Michael. "We wanted this for us and for our children, and also for everyone else that comes in the door. It's warm and welcoming. This house was built to create memories." ■

RESOURCES

Architect:

Ronald Rheume, AIA
Architect
Yardville
609-208-0884
ronrheume.com

Builder:

Robert Klaus
Klaus Professional
Contracting
Freehold
732-625-8188
klausbuilders.com

Kitchen design:

Ideal Kitchens
Point Pleasant Beach
732-892-0384
idealkitchens.com

Floral design:

Petal Street Flowers
Point Pleasant
732-295-0600
petalstreet.com

Interior design:

Jules Duffy
Jules Duffy Designs
Madison and Bay Head
973-845-2810
julesduffy.com

Patio, balcony and screened porch furniture:

Opdyke Furniture
Point Pleasant Beach
732-892-2020
opdykefurniturenj.com

Master bedroom design and furnishings:

Zaksons Fine Furniture
and Interior Design
Brick
732-477-8400
zaksons.com

Patio and landscaping:

KRI Landscaping
Construction
Howell
732-364-8262

Painting and flooring contractors:

Fromkin Brothers
Edison
732-225-5300
fromkinbrothers.com

Tile work:

Fuda Tile
Howell
732-308-0110
fudatile.com