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JULY/AUGUST

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*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

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## a fairytale beach house for year-round living

BY BRIDGET MCQUATE

PHOTOS BY OLIVIERI, SHOUSKY & KISS, P.A.

The owners of this year-round beach house also own a successful hotel, restaurant and lounge in Avalon, N.J., so they know a lot about creating great vacations. When they had the opportunity to design their own year-round "vacation" home in Stone Harbor, they made sure to incorporate all the elements of a perfect getaway.

The wish list of the couple and their daughter included a screened-in porch, pool and patio, cabana and outdoor bar, veranda, wrap-around porch and several balconies with ocean views. They got it all, and threw in a white picket fence as a finishing touch.

Part of their new-home fantasy was a place with fairy-tale appeal. Architect Paul Kiss, AIA, of Olivieri, Shousky & Kiss, P.A., says, "They didn't exactly want a Victorian gingerbread house, and they didn't exactly want a shingle-style home like a mountain cottage. So we blended the two into a neo-Victorian style with the porch and towers, and added cottage-like touches with the cedar-shake roof, dry-stack stone detailing and shingle siding."

### To entertain in all seasons

Because the couple works hard at their hotel during the tourist season, they wanted their new home to be a place to relax and entertain — outside in the summer months, inside during the winter. To address their desire for outdoor entertaining, Kiss says, "The design of the more private back of the house took on even more emphasis than the front." In the backyard the cabana/outdoor bar and grill house, screened-in porch and veranda all come together with the pool to create both a serene space for family relaxation and a lively place for fair-weather parties.

From the front, the house appears very symmetrical with the exception of the stone chimney on the side facing the beach, which is a block away. One subtle but insightful design strategy called for the turret facing the beach to be set back closer to



**An eclectic assortment of windows adds charm and abundant light to the Stone Harbor home. In the back, a screened porch and veranda connect the house to the pool area.**

the house so it wouldn't block the ocean view from the balcony or turret on the other side. Designing for optimal "line of sight" obviously applies to beach houses and not just stadiums.

"The owners' choice of dark-green shingle siding really emphasizes the brilliant white of the detailing and window trim to liven up the whole exterior," says Kiss. In keeping with the architect's motto of "maximum glass, maximum light and air," windows were inserted into every surface and angle in a whimsical medley of sizes and shapes, including eyebrow dormers, port holes, arched-top windows and rectangles of various dimensions.

### 'To keep it feeling beachy'

The interior was designed to feel like a beach cottage or vacation home, with white trim, white furniture, white cabinetry and plantation shutters playing off muted, pastel backgrounds. "To keep it feeling beachy on the inside, we used a lot of bead-board wainscoting (vertical wood-strip paneling)," says Kiss. Bead board also provides added texture on the ceilings in many rooms.

The main living space, guest rooms and a music room/library are located on the first floor while the family's bedrooms and a game room are on the second floor. For extra drama, the two-and-a-half story living room rises into a vaulted ceiling with white trusses that match the detailing on the exterior roof gables.

The living room, kitchen and dining areas all flow openly into each



Paul Kiss

other, with the screened-in porch leading off from the kitchen. Two balconies were placed on the first-floor roof on either side of the entrance gable, inviting the family to sit and enjoy the views.

### To accommodate everyday needs

Because this home is for year-round living, the architect factored in areas that wouldn't be necessary in a seasonal beach house, like a large laundry area, storage space for seasonal items, places to work on homework and pay bills, and an ample garage with tool storage space.

On the exterior, the house was "shored" up against coastal high winds with stainless-steel nails and hinges, and hurricane strapping to hold the roof firmly in place.

This house with the fairytale façade turned out to be a posthumous tribute to architect John Olivieri, a friend of the owners, who passed away before the project was completed. His partner Paul Kiss stepped in to finish it, staying true to Olivieri's original concept. Surely, Olivieri would have been happy with the results and the pleasure he has given his friends in making their beach house dream a reality.

*Bridget McQuate is a Philadelphia freelance writer and the editor of The Philadelphia Architect, the monthly newspaper of the American Institute of Architects, Philadelphia Chapter.*



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