

New England HOME

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Surf Shack

This Cape Cod beach house walks the plank between traditional and modern architecture. BY BOB CURLEY

Shingles, slats, and a sloped roof combine to create an intriguing design that mixes California coastal cool with Cape Cod coziness.



Referring to this Springhill Beach house as a “shack” is a bit like calling the Newport mansions “summer cottages”: more cute than apt. Yes, the home’s California-inspired gradual shed roof evokes the image of *Endless Summer* lifeguard

stands, but the design also nods to Shingle-style Cape Cod coastal homes and the blend of clean lines and functionality typical of Scandinavian architecture—not exactly the first thing that comes to mind when you think “beach.”

Affectionately dubbed the Malibu House by its East Sandwich neighbors, the 2,400-square-foot year-round home overlooks Cape Cod Bay in the front and wetlands in the back, with decks providing views and entertaining space in either direction. Wooden slats recall beach cabanas, but white acrylic Cembrit panels keep the design from veering into rustic.

“The owners asked for a clean, modern, and bright home that maximized the gorgeous views,” says architect Alissa Hike Harris of Salt Architecture. “Rather than relying on the typical Cape Cod beach cottage to speak to our sense of place, we looked to the Cape Cod Modernist houses for inspiration, specifically their massing as well as their use of more modern materials and building techniques—large openings, open floor plans, spare and simple detail-



ABOVE: Plank walls evoke the casualness of a beach cabana, and the Cembrit ceiling in this exterior corridor adds clean Scandinavian lines. **BELOW:** Wall-sized Loewen doors slide aside to admit ocean breezes while drenching the living room and other indoor spaces with light even when closed.





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Extensive use of light natural woods and neutral colors seamlessly unites the interior and exterior designs. A second-floor outdoor shower, cleverly concealed but still affording unblocked views of Cape Cod Bay, counts among the owners' favorite spaces in the home. Designed as a year-round home, the beach house especially shines in the warmer months when decks to the front and rear become extensions of the living space in an otherwise compact structure.

ing—paired with vernacular materials like white cedar shingles and red cedar boards.”

Mike Katon, vice president of construction at The Valle Group, the firm that built the home, says that “both the interior and exterior scope of work had very tight architectural tolerances,” but the shed roof allows for maximum height on interior ceilings, and the retractable floor-to-ceiling Loewen doors that comprise two of the four exterior walls facilitate a sense of openness in defiance of a limited, setback-imposed footprint.

Opening the doors allows a seamless transition from the kitchen, living room, and other indoor spaces to the deck, admitting views of sand, sea, and sunrises. Soaking in the vista from the second-floor outdoor shower is one of life’s great pleasures, say the homeowners: “It turns a quick saltwater rinse off into a King of the World moment from the bow of the *Titanic*.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: For details, see Resources.



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