



The Long View



Martha's Vineyard architect Mark Hutker faced a challenge. His client, a Chicago transplant now dividing her time between Boston and the Vineyard, wanted a home for her newly purchased three-acre lot on the northern side of the island. Separate guest quarters, an extensive entertainment area, and private owner's suite were among her requirements. She also wanted each room in the house to take full advantage of the impressive view afforded by the property's location: the Elizabeth Islands stretch in the foreground, while the Gay Head sweeps to the West. Not so difficult, really, if one could build up, but local restrictions held that the new home could measure no higher than eighteen feet.

Hutker looked to the nearby fishing village for help with the design. "It only came to me," Hutker says, "when we were driving around Menemsha looking for inspiration, gathering clues about the environment I was going to be building in."

→ p. 20

By Laurel Kornhiser
Photography By Steve Rosenthal





Above: The main kitchen area's openness is reinforced by the glass cabinet uppers, which mimic the windows, and a heightened ceiling truss frame. Left: Just steps outside the kitchen, an eating terrace allows for an unframed view. Individual rooflines express each room's unique identity.



YOUR HOME

The Long View, *Contd.*



The 150-foot hall, or “spine,” runs through the main living/dining area while connecting four other living zones. Long, narrow trusses accentuate the elongated space.

“Think of Menemsha,” Hutker instructs. “Look at all of the little fishing shacks. Each has its own individual identity, but together, they are a community expression.” Taking this concept, Hutker and his associates, Jill Neubauer and Phil Regan, at Mark Hutker Dunn Brady Architects, designed a sprawling, five-segment home built by a West Tisbury-based company, Doyle Construction. Hutker says, “We tried to express each room with its own roof, so it could have its own individual identity from the exterior, while expressing itself as a community of rooms in the interior.”

Inside, a 150-foot hall, or “spine” as Hutker calls it, connects the two guest rooms, the main living and dining area, and the master suite. Each area has the potential to be discrete. Hutker explains, “There are what we call ‘secret doors’ hidden in the wall, so each of the five spaces become rooms in and of themselves, even though the hall runs through them all.”

The design balances the owner’s social life style with her need for privacy. Hutker says, “The owner told me she wanted a home she could use on a year-round basis. The house was zoned into five segments so she could have guests

over a period of time, but they could be closed off from each other for privacy.” The design also allows parts of the home to be closed off when not in use, a practical winter-time consideration. Still, Hutker says, “When all of the doors are open, it’s a free-flowing space from one end to the other.”

The idea of the individual rooflines carries within the house as well as without. “When you are outside the house,” Hutker says, “you can see the different roof forms. Then you go inside, and you are rewarded. You can experience those roofs on the inside.” Rafters accent each room. In the living/dining pavillion, long, narrow trusses, based on an old Yankee railroad bridge design, punctuate the broad-angled slope of the ceiling. The wood is left exposed, lending warmth and informality to the room. Fronting this entertaining space is a nearly full wall of glass — a 24 foot-long radius bow window. A circular port hole window peaks above this enormous bow, added, Hutker says, “to accentuate the shape of the roof.”

Window treatments are scant throughout the house. In the case of the living/dining area, they are nonexistent.



YOUR HOME

The Long View, *Contd.*

The stunning vista, transformed daily by mythical sunsets, enters unimpeded. The owner, who selected the house's interior furnishings, chose a southwestern theme for this area, but the sea is not far away, both just outside the window and on painted scenes backing the armchairs.

Though the living/dining area is designed for entertaining, as so often happens, guests mull around the kitchen. Taking this into account, Hutker designed a room zoned with three "layers." One layer accommodates the kitchen's main functions — food storage, cooking, and dishwashing. A food preparation island offers the perfect space for those independent guests who'd like to help, leaving the cook space at the range. A breakfast bar peninsula faces the center of activity, balancing the small 16 x 16 area. The breakfast bar chairs play with the colors of the tile backsplash, installed by Wayne Marshall of Terra Nova Marble & Granite in Bourne. The deep wood hues of the verde granite counter, also Marshall's work, contrast nicely with the maple cabinetry. These blonde cabinets, manufactured by Crown Point, soak the room with warmth, while the upper cabinets mimic the windows so much in evidence throughout the house. "The owner knew she wanted glass on the cabinet uppers," Hutker says, "and we knew we didn't want each cabinet to have just one large pane of glass, so we used divided lights to break down the cabinet space."

Across a short kitchen aisle, floored with the same birch wood used throughout the house, the refrigerator and pantry are built into a full-height wall. Hutker says, "I tried to have only cabinetry in the main area of the kitchen, leaving it open spatially, with the refrigerator and pantry nearby." There is still a working triangle between the range, sink, and refrigerator, within the recommended 21 feet. The refrigerator is equidistance from all parts.

Wood reigns in the kitchen. "The owner loves wood and wanted to use it in different ways throughout the house,"

Hutker notes. He congratulates her for "letting the woods be themselves." The whole kitchen space is elongated and heightened by a truss frame, lightened by the slanted plaster ceiling which leads to one of the house's many cathedral ceilings. Marvin windows usher in the fabulous ocean view, while just steps outside the kitchen, an eating terrace allows for an unframed view.

Backing the kitchen is an inglenook, the owner's own intimate living space. A brick fireplace fills the wall, wrapping the area in the coziness of day-to-day living. Just beyond is the master suite, dominated by a king-size pencil post bed, "a handsome hybrid piece of furniture," Hutker remarks. The square bedroom area, accented by an antique mantle which frames more of Wayne Marshall's stone work, leads outward to a triangular sitting area, shaped, Hutker points out, like the bow of a ship. He says, "Because of the way the bow is angled, when you are in the sitting area, one facet looks north to the Elizabeth Islands, while the other looks due west to Gay Head." The truss crowning the room serves to delineate the master bedroom from the master sitting room, "A way of defining space without putting walls in," Hutker says. A private deck lies beyond the suite. The master bath includes a steam shower, complete with teak sitting bench, a double vanity sink framed by a long Crown Point cabinet, and features a Jacuzzi which looks directly out upon the ocean. Because of the interior window frames, that view is available from all bathroom points.

The house reaches its legal height in what Hutker calls the "tree house," a room, accessed by a few stairs off the master suite. From here the owner confronts the house's most expansive view while basking in the solitude that the small, 12 x 12, room provides — a perfect work space.

The house's surprises aren't exhausted with the sea-side facade of individual roof lines and confronting ocean views. The entry way, known as the "Wizard's Hat," is topped with the architect's own

old left-handed driver golf club, chosen to rise from the "hat's" peak. This is just one hint of the sports motif carried here and there throughout the house, testament to the owner's interest. Stepping through the "raked fir" door, which harbors a small rectangular "peak" window reminiscent of the Emerald City entryway in *The Wizard of Oz*, one is swept into a magical world. Faux artist Margo Datz snatched the sky and recreated it inside the wizard's hat. Hutker pays tribute to these whimsical touches, "The owner had the courage to dream a little bit and have some fun."

The front of the house cradles a courtyard of grass — the future pool site. "We wanted a sense of enclosure, keeping the winds out," Hutker says. The pool, too, will have an ocean view, stolen through the glass-wrapped living/dining pavillion.

Hutker's design protects the property's priceless view, while never forgetting the area's setting. "We knew we were working within the New England vernacular," he says. The double hung nature of many of the windows, cedar shingles — stained to precisely match the moss that grows on the north side of scrub oak trees — and the overall simplicity of the details and execution stay within the boundaries of the New England frame. Above all, Hutker says, "The owner wanted the house to fit in with the landscape."

"We feel one of the most important aspects of our work is that it is an expression of a place, and Martha's Vineyard has an expression of place unlike that of Cape Cod or Nantucket. Because the house is near Menemsha, we tried to interpret many of the particular aspects of this environment and incorporate them into the design." ■

IMPORTANT NUMBERS:

Mark Hutker Dunn Brady Architects
(508) 693-3340

Doyle Construction: (508) 693-9004

Crown Point Cabinets: (603) 543-1218

Terra Nova Granite & Marble:

(508) 759-1526