

# Maine Home

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## + DESIGN



DESIGNED FOR PLAY



*the*  
LONG  
VIEW

*The site is small but the horizons are huge for a home that looks to the future in Biddeford Pool*

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The front door to Bill and Karen Carew's new house (left) looks out to a bunkhouse, lawn, and play area for future grandchildren.

A series of 16-foot-long custom-built screen panels (above) open up to views of the Atlantic Ocean.



A

limited footprint and an expansive view of the Atlantic Ocean influenced nearly every inch of a new home designed for Karen and Bill Carew's future. The project was a collaborative effort that started with an architect's drawings, followed by thoughtful contributions from an interior designer, a general contractor, and a landscape designer.

"Our hope was that when you walk in the front door you have a straight-line view to the water," Karen says. "We wanted all the bedrooms to have that view as well—and we wanted as much livable space as possible."

Their lot in Biddeford Pool is not a big one. It was once home to a small ranch house that the couple eyed for 15 years while vacationing in their cottage across the street. When the oceanfront property came on the market, they moved quickly. "We wanted to capitalize on the land on the edge of the water," Bill says.

The home's design wasn't without its challenges. "The biggest one is that, if you look at the land, it's a fairly tight site, and we had to squeeze it in because we wanted to be close to the water," Bill says. "The architect did a masterful job of fitting it in. There's no wasted space."



A teardown took place shortly after Labor Day in 2017, and construction of the two-story, 2,600-square-foot home and 1,000-square-foot bunkhouse commenced immediately. The Carews' goal for completion was ambition exemplified: they wanted to move in by July 4, 2018. And they did. "The builder did an amazing job of coming in on time and, if anything, under budget," Bill says. "And there were no surprises on the construction side."

The home was designed for family and entertaining for decades to come. The Connecticut-based couple has four children aged 17, 21, 23, and 25. "One just graduated from high school and one from college," Karen says. "They want to come up every weekend, and we already try to get up around Thanksgiving and over the Christmas break."

Now that they're empty nesters, they plan to use their cottage more in the spring, summer, and fall as well as over the holidays. And they're anticipating an extended family soon enough. "The bunkhouse opens to a lawn and an area for younger grandchildren," Bill says. "That was a primary goal—a lot of this is about the next 20 years."

To pull it all together inside, the Carews turned to interior designer Emily Mattei, owner and principal designer at e4 Interior Design. "They hired me to do a few things, but that mandate turned out to be much broader," she says. "It was a fun project and I got to do a little bit of everything from textile, art, and furniture selection to bathroom and pantry design."

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Interior designer Emily Mattei selected a blue Sherwin-Williams paint in Icy for the walls of a guest bathroom (above), adding a navy blue rope mirror and a dusty blue vanity.

The blue and white guest bedroom (opposite, top) features a picture window for ocean views.

The home was designed for family gatherings and entertaining (opposite, bottom).





Because the architectural drawings weren't highly detailed, the Carews hired a kitchen designer, then looked to e4 and Mattei to design the built-in bars in the dining room, mudroom, laundry room, and source the lighting and wallpaper along with other decor.

The smallish footprint steered the interior designer toward creating rooms that feel spacious, bright, and cheerful. "It creates a family-friendly environment that they can be together in and not be afraid to put their feet up," she says. "It's a beautiful, comfortable space, but it's also practical."

Mattei and her clients looked at Pinterest and Houzz

for inspiration, seeking out the kind of vibes they had in mind. Interior walls are painted white, with pops of color splashed here and there. They worked to identify the colors Karen wanted, then interpreted them in wall coverings and other finishes to tie everything together. "Each bedroom is different, but the views out the windows are amazing—it's the backdrop of what they get to look at every day," Mattei says.

One bath features a turquoise wall covering, and another is all about navy blue. "We used a coastal palette throughout that naturally came together by integrating the colors found in the landscape," she says. The



owners' suite, closet, and bath are a little more subdued, with a large picture window in the bedroom dominating the design scheme. "The tones are a calmer gray and white, and not as color-driven as the other bedrooms," notes Mattei.

That's not the only sweeping view of the Atlantic in the house, however. In the ground-floor living area, where the original design called for three sets of French doors, builders Shawn Douston and Crystal Wilson of Douston Construction had another idea. "Instead, we put in a 16-foot outfolding door for an unobstructed view," Bill says.

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The biggest challenge in designing the home lay in squeezing it onto a tight site so the owners and guests could be close to the water (above, left).

An outdoor shower for guests is clad in red cedar (above, right).

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The driveway paved in crushed stone offers space for six cars near the home's entrance.

Most of the interiors are painted white to make all the spaces feel spacious, bright, and cheerful (opposite, top).

Pops of color give a nod to a nautical theme (opposite, bottom).







The builders were able to execute other suggestions that appealed to their clients, like coffered ceilings in the living room and kitchen and plenty of built-ins to create nooks and crannies. “They had ideas and so did the interior designer, and from our years of experience—we’ve done hundreds of homes—we had examples to show them,” Douston says. “As the project manager, Crystal had a feel for that and could reach out to find them.”

The clients wanted a wood-burning fireplace, and they got it. “They wanted to maintain a classic New England feel to the house,” Wilson says. “They wanted to use real materials on the interior and exterior.”

The home is clad in Maibec white cedar shakes. Western red cedar covers the front porch and two outdoor showers: one connected to the owners’ suite and another for guests. The deck out back is built of ipê wood, and the roof is standing-seam metal. A combination of architecturally salvaged granite and flagstone defines a walkway around the house. “There are no composite materials,” Wilson says. A parking area with room for six cars is paved in crushed stone. There’s a private gravel road leading into the property that creates a soft look.

Landscape designer Steve Esch, the residential divi-

sion manager at Salmon Falls Nursery and Landscaping, worked to keep the grounds as simple and as low-maintenance as possible. “Karen had some inspiration from a little bit of an English cottage garden,” he says. “She was thinking about climbing hydrangea for that cottage feel, and we added native perennials along the edges.”

He assembled three birch trees for triangulation at the entry area, up-lighting them at night for a sculptural effect. Hydrangeas flower through most of the summer, and ornamental grasses give the landscape a beachy feel.

Still, Esch also had to navigate his way through the constraints of the less-than-large lot. “Anytime you’re working on a very small site with a small backyard area, it’s a challenge,” he says. “Up to the bulkhead where the utilities and crawl space are, we had to take care of the drainage so the water had a place to go. And we had to work with the coastal setbacks too.”

All in all, though, the collaborative effort from everyone involved has netted the Carews a comfortable future with an enviable set of views in a charming coastal setting. **MH+D**

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The pantry’s wall is a nickel-gap style; navy cabinets and a light blue barn door add pops of color to the otherwise white kitchen palette (above).

A view of the double-stall outdoor shower and laundry area (opposite, top).

Nearly every square inch of the home was utilized, including space for bunk beds (opposite, bottom).

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