

Designing Small Spaces with Libby Langdon | Lighting to Set the Mood

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Barnegat Bay is the backdrop in the open-plan kitchen, living and dining areas. Glass-front cabinets reflect light, and earth-toned marble countertops echo the bay's current in a soothing, free-flowing pattern. Faux-finished trimwork in the kitchen calls to mind driftwood, a theme repeated in the living area's fireplace façade and coffered ceiling treatment.



*Rising
with the
TIDE*

AN AGENT OF NATURE, THIS WATERFRONT
HOME TAPS INTO ITS RESERVES AND
RECLAIMS ITS HAPPY PLACE

Whenever a major storm threatened the Ocean County coastline, Robert and Victoria Bocchino's low, ranch-style home — situated on the bay and blocks from the ocean — was always vulnerable to water damage, builder Walter Kosenski says. After recovering from the effects of Hurricane Irene, which wreaked havoc on the landscaping, bulkhead and flooring in 2011, Superstorm Sandy hit one year later and flooded the interior with more than three-feet of water.

At that point the homeowners' said "forget it," recalls Kosenski, owner of Walter G. Kosenski II & Son's Coastal Building, which is based in Lavallette and specializes in coastal homes. "It was a total gut job."

This time Kosenski and Michael Melillo, a member of the American Institute of Architects and principal of Melillo Architecture in Brielle, teamed up to build a 10-foot elevated split-level structure with cedar-shake siding to suit the home's coastal vernacular. "It's an awesome piece of property" on a harbor waterway with boats' going by from several locations, Kosenski says. Floor-to-ceiling hurricane-resistant windows wrap around the entire first floor in an open concept plan that fully maximizes the view. And durable wide-plank porcelain tile flooring has the look and feel of wood without the worry or upkeep.

During the opportune framing stage, Anthony Passanante, owner of Albert Anthony Studios in Waldwick and a certified master kitchen and bath designer, came on board to design the 20-by-15-foot kitchen, collaborating with Kosenski on the proper placement of windows, cabinetry and more. Interior designer Kirstin Schultz of DBK Interiors in Washington Township also partnered with the team on the selection of materials and finishes.

White-painted cabinets contain classic flourishes such as beaded insets, V-groove panels and corbels that mimic the brackets on the home's exterior, kitchen designer Anthony Passanante says. Contrasting wood-like porcelain tile floors are worry-free.







Custom cabinetry painted creamy white ensures that the water and sky take center stage. “We wanted warmer tones ... not too cool,” Passanante says of the cabinets, designed in a frameless door style with beaded insets for a look that is clean and streamlined. Glass fronts on the upper cabinets reflect the light. So does the glossy white subway tile above the range. The tile changes direction on a framed inset to a subtle herringbone pattern. Chosen for their iridescent see-through quality, glass pendants even have the vista in mind.

Crown molding suits the scale of the 12-foot-high ceiling, and corbels

Glossy white subway tiles make a clean and subtle backdrop for the focal-point range hood. A convenient butler’s pantry stores extra food, service ware and appliances. Glass pocket doors help conceal the clutter when the family entertains.

“mimic the brackets you see on the exterior of the house,” Passanante notes. “No [elaborate] carvings, nothing fancy, but a nice detail.” Ductwork had to be placed high into soffits to meet new building codes, a feature complemented with faux-finished trimwork that resembles driftwood. Some major trunk lines are hidden in a beam system that enhances the kitchen, Kosen-