

southern new england

HOME

YOUR GUIDE TO EVERYTHING HOME





Design: PATRICK AHEARN ARCHITECT

Hiding in Plain Sight

After an extensive renovation conceived by Patrick Ahearn, this home is an opulent hide-away just a block from Edgartown's Main Street

BY ROB DUCA • PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG PREMRO

Architect Patrick Ahearn has designed more than 100 houses located within Edgartown's historic district, so when Norman Rankow of Colonial Reproductions approached him with a project to renovate a Federal-style captain's house near the center of the quaint, charming Martha's Vineyard village, he confidently accepted the challenge.

"This house is a showcase for the kinds of projects we've done together over the years," Ahearn said. "Norman basically said to me, 'do it as though it's for yourself.'"

Rankow, also the owner, is delighted with the final result. "Patrick is a consummate professional and on top of his game for historically motivated architecture," he said. "We've been working with him for over a decade. It's a home run in our minds."

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Despite undergoing a massive renovation, the front of the home retained its classic facade and still blends seamlessly with the surrounding historic homes.

It's all about the view

Ahearn jacked up the house and replaced the crumbling foundation, then gutted and renovated the interior, maintaining the overall structure while gently restoring the spectacular home that overlooks Edgartown harbor. Today, the 6,000-square-foot property, which is currently available for sale, includes six bedrooms, six-and-a-half baths, outdoor decks on two levels (along with a widow's walk) and dazzling water views from every room.

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Above: The rear of the beautifully landscaped home overlooks Edgartown Harbor and has decks on two levels. Top: The kitchen opens directly onto a deck with dazzling views of the water.

"Everything is geared toward the water view," Ahearn says.

The view from the street-facing front of the house provides little indication of the magnificent rear of the home, which is dominated by a series of windows on three levels and a massive 20-foot second-story deck where the roof previously existed. The deck wraps around the home and can be reached via a common room or through two guest bedrooms. It overlooks a walk-out garden level, where a bluestone terrace leads to a swimming pool perched just yards from the water.

"Even though the house is just a block away from Main Street in Edgartown, we've created a world of very quiet outdoor spaces," Ahearn said. "The pool kind of floats in a sea of grass, and there are many spots where you can spend the day or the evening relaxing. It was all designed to work with the existing topography and the natural amenities of the harbor."



A slipper tub, positioned directly in front of a bank of windows, is the perfect place to enjoy the view.



A private terrace and gas-operated fireplace are just two of the luxurious features in the master bedroom.



Casement windows were installed in what had been a screened-in porch creating space that can be treated as both interior and exterior.

French doors in the comfortable and casual living room lead directly to a stone terrace overlooking the harbor.

A whimsical porch...

An enclosed porch serves as the ideal transitional space, depending on one's whims. What was previously a screened porch now has Pella casement windows with retractable screens that open 90 degrees. "So you can literally open up every window in that room and still be in a 'screened porch,'" Rankow says. "Close the door to the kitchen and the living room and you have an exterior space."

Brick floors, exposed beams and stylish bead board walls give the space a relaxed but elegant feel. Because of its proximity to the kitchen, living room and breakfast area, it serves a variety of functions, all while retaining what Ahearn calls a "porch-like attitude."

...and a classic master

The master bedroom sits on the lower level, with a master bath and gathering room nearby. A gas fireplace, wainscoting, six-inch bead board on the ceiling and a highly detailed beam system provide texture to the room. Scones placed alongside a formal mantle, a built-in window seat tucked neatly into a corner and cream-colored walls create a soothing, romantic atmosphere.



Above: One of the rear decks; it's a prime spot for entertaining. At right: Classic detailing, such as this intricate staircase, can be found throughout the home.

A flair for the dramatic

Many special touches add flair to the kitchen. A copper skylight over the seven-foot-by-10-foot island allows light to filter into the space. At night, the overhead deck glows from the up-lit skylight. A Romeo & Juliet deck off the kitchen includes a grill for barbecuing. An antique oak floor combines with a white bead board ceiling to produce a comfortable, graceful appearance.

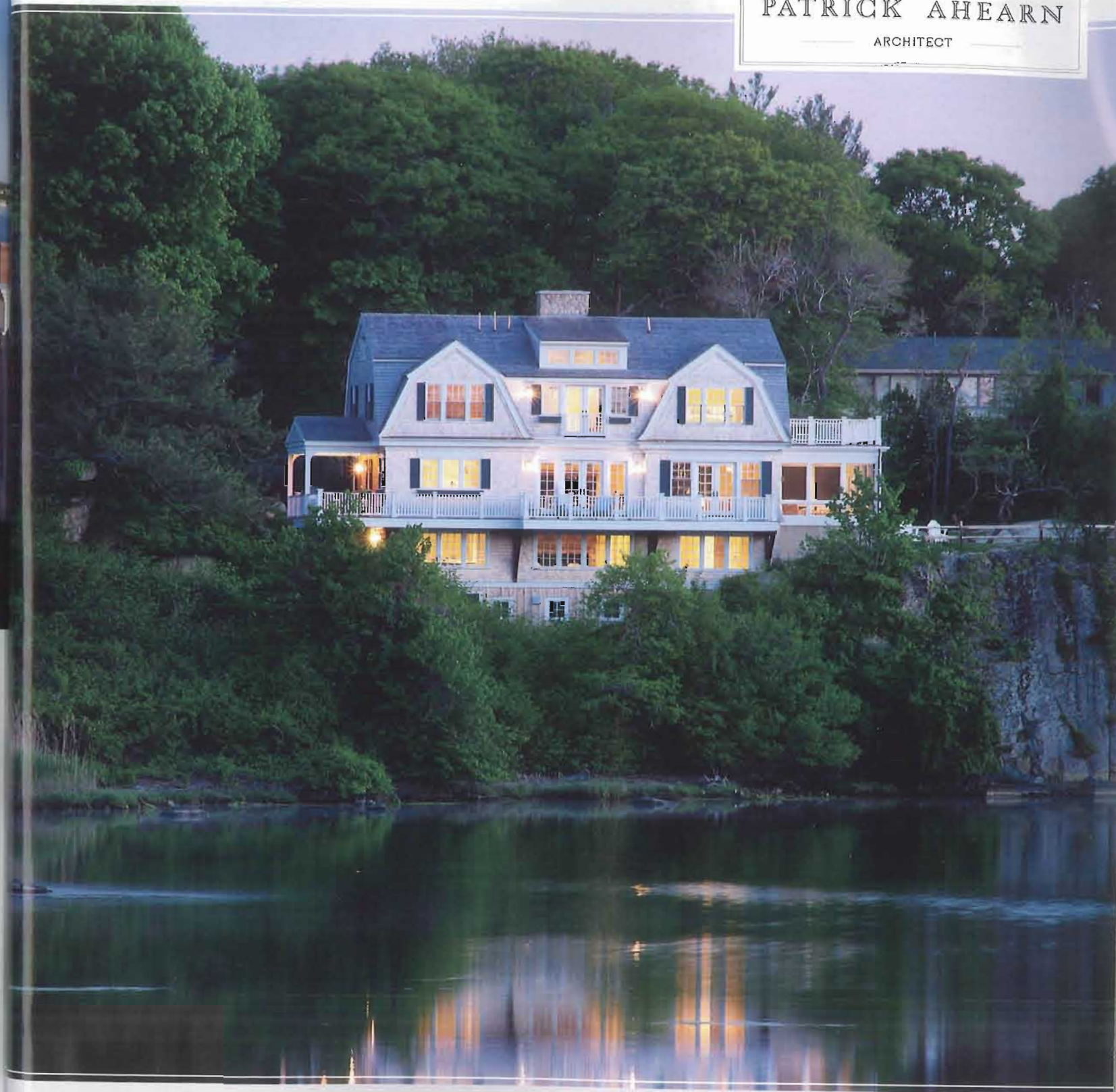
Each bedroom includes a private bath, and has window seats and built-in bookcases to maximize space. A third-floor guest room features a window seat beneath a dormer, eliciting the feeling of being on a ship. A wood-burning fireplace with a brick facing serves as the centerpiece of the formal living room.

"We wanted to capture the essence of being on an island and on the harbor, and to maintain the cottage style," Ahearn said. "So the more informal rooms have bead board, while the more formal rooms have full height paneling. There's a clear hierarchy between formal and informal. The garage is spar-varnished with bead board and a brick floor, with carriage house doors, so it looks like an old carriage house.

"It sets the theme and character for a house that was lovingly restored from another time." HOME



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BOSTON OFFICE
160 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, MA 02116

Telephone: 617 266 1710 Fax: 617 266 2276

MARTHA'S VINEYARD
Nevin Square, 17 Winter Street, Edgartown, MA 02539

Telephone: 508 939 9312 Fax: 508 939 9083

www.patrickahearn.com