

quiet time

sea worthy

modest, charming bungalows used to permeate the landscape in Rye Beach, N.H., but that's changing as more wealthy families buy lots and build bigger, more opulent homes. The owners of this custom vacation home are a breed apart—they sought to honor the original architectural vocabulary of this beach town, and they valued quality over quantity. To realize that goal, they turned to the Techler Design Group in Watertown, Mass.

The clients wanted something minimalist, with the deceptively simple, crafted beauty of a classic yacht. An open living space was important, and a streamlined kitchen with the feel of fine furniture was another must. To make things even more challenging, the postage-stamp-sized lot demanded a small footprint. "Our task was to design the most spacious-feeling small house we could," says principal Timothy Techler.

What the lot lacked in size it made up for with its enviable location by the Atlantic Ocean. But that also meant the house required hardy materials to withstand New Hampshire's harsh coastal weather. So, Techler and his team clad the exterior in white cedar and treated it with bleaching oil to achieve a uniform color. "White cedar is one of my most favorite materials and one of the most durable," Techler says. The architects also chose painted aluminum-clad windows and a coated-copper standing-seam roof.

To avoid a word-for-word translation of the bungalow vocabulary, Techler used the style as his filter. One outcome was the two-stage roof, articulated as a wave-like shape evoking the nearby surf. "It's a bungalow form, but we did a modern take on a common element," he says. A modern turn also is evident in the tapered aluminum columns custom fabricated by a flagpole company.

The house's interior has an open plan with a clearly defined sense of public and private space. Service and utility rooms hunker down on the entry facade, while the public rooms embrace the beachfront views. Patio doors and glass openings provide visual access to the water.

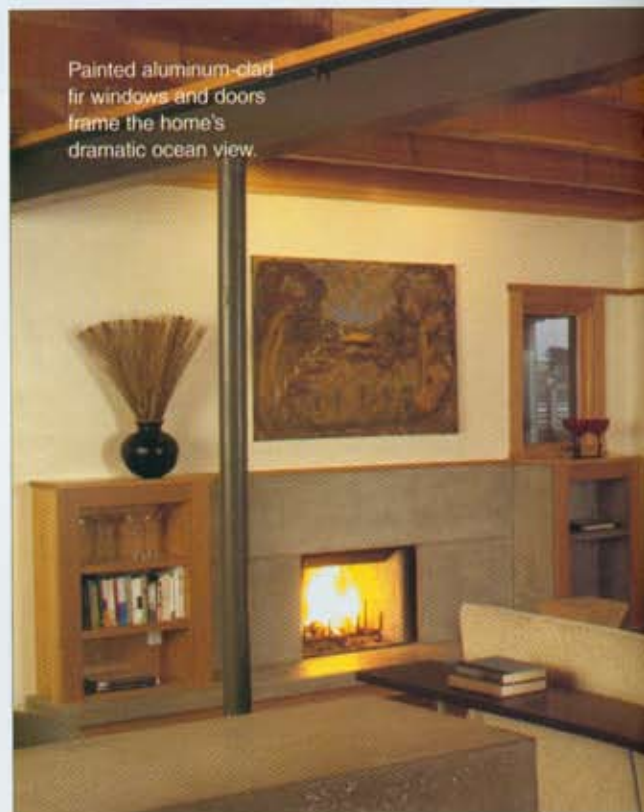
With Sitka spruce cabinets, mahogany floors, fir windows, doors, trim, and beams, the house's materials are definitely yacht worthy. "The materials used are common, and we tried to use as few as possible," Techler says. "They have a calming effect, and everything is simple." An ipé deck, tinted plaster walls, and concrete counters round out the palette.

The sum of those parts is not exactly a bungalow and not exactly a yacht. But it's exactly what the clients asked for—an elegant spot to while away the summer hours with family and friends. "People are always coming and going," Techler says. "And the homeowners love it. They would love to move there permanently."—*n.f.m.*

Techler Design Group used a coated-copper roof, oil-treated cedar shingles, and aluminum columns to tame the coastal climate. The roof's form hints at a bungalow vernacular.



Painted aluminum-clad fir windows and doors frame the home's dramatic ocean view.





lower level

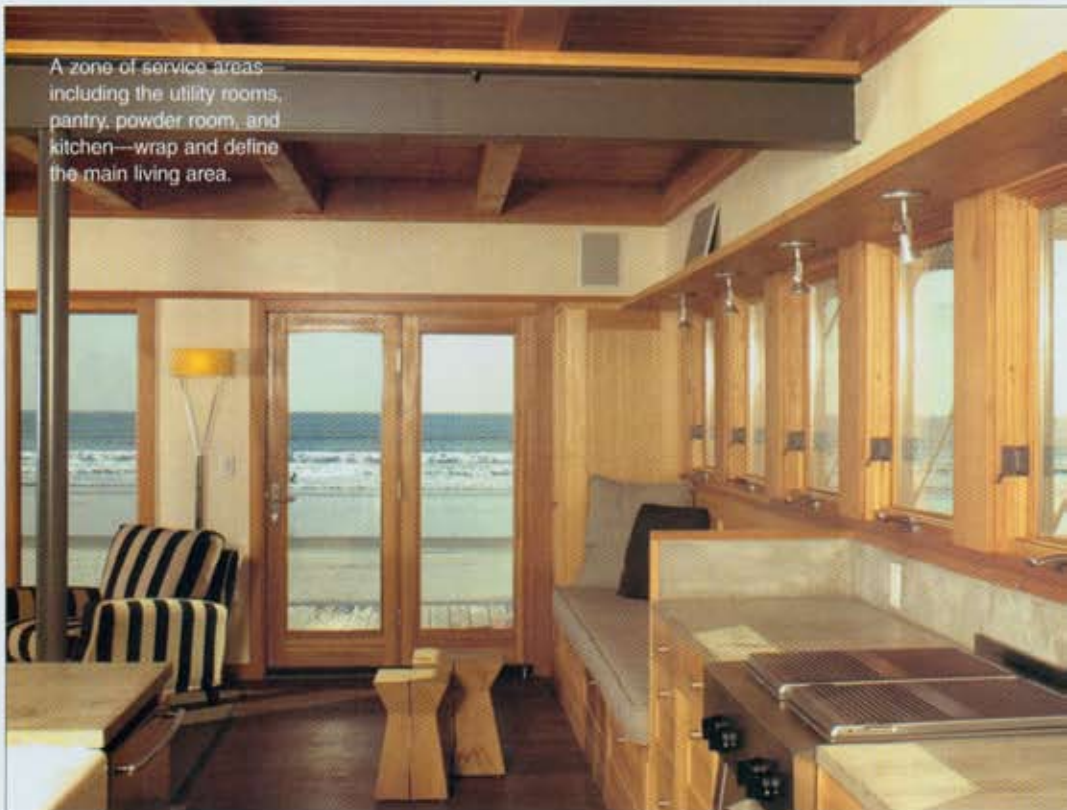


upper level



project:
Beach house, Rye, N.H.
architect:
Techler Design Group, Watertown, Mass.
general contractor:
Glen Farrell, YFI Custom Homes, Cape Neddick, Maine
project size:
2,098 square feet
construction cost:
Withheld

Photos: © David Henderson



A zone of service areas—including the utility rooms, pantry, powder room, and kitchen—wrap and define the main living area.