COASTAL COOL

Deep maritime hues, driftwood finishes, and satin brass accents come together in a modern twist on a classic Rhode Island seaside style.

STAMFORD, CONN.-BASED INTERIOR DESIGNER Denise Enright wanted to create a coastal-inspired kitchen that would look "beachy and nautical without relying on seashells, sailor's knots, and oversold shades of seafoam greens. Instead, dark blue cabinetry, satin brass details, and a driftwood-finished counter come together in a sophisticated maritime look, "without screaming in your face," Enright jokes.

The East Matamuck, R.I. beach house puts a modern twist on the 19th-century, New England seaside shingle style. Many of Enright's design choices were made not only with regard to the home's beach setting but also its open floor plan, with fluidity between first-floor kitchen, dining, and living spaces. "When your kitchen is basically in your living space, you have to kick it up a notch," Enright explains.

"You can see one from the other very clearly, so you have to make sure they balance each other."

While the living and dining rooms are relatively neutral, the maritime-inspired cabinets lining the perimeter of the kitchen add vivid color that is somewhere between a navy and a seaglass. Enright's choice of backspashes with various shades of blue seamlessly ties together the blue-green shades used throughout the first floor.

The kitchen's color palette also pairs well with the gray-stained oak hardwood floors that are evocative of driftwood found nearby. While perimeter countertops are a neutral white quartz, the central island features a handmade, driftwood countertop that's sealed for food prep. The island provides a design focal point while also promoting socialization, Enright points out.

Opposite the window and large kitchen sink on one side is a bar area with a built-in wine fridge. A sleek, seven-bottle wine refrigerator. A bar refrigerator in the island offer additional drink storage.

Enright knew early on in the design process that the kitchen's appliances and faucets would be stainless steel, but she was determined to incorporate satin brass to complement the nautical aesthetic. A custom-crafted vent hood making use of both metals "became the corner of the kitchen." Enright's design, allowing her to include satin brass cabinet hardware and globe lighting fixtures.

Enright initially planned cabinets to extend the full length of the back wall, and later realized that the window placement didn't give her enough depth for a corner cabinet. The floating shelf pottery display backed by the tile backsplash is an innovative, practical solution.—KATHLEEN BROWN

PROJECT DETAILS
Location
East Matamuck, R.I.
Designer
Denise Enright Interior Design
Stamford, Conn.
Builder
Sawyer Builders
Westfield, R.I.
House Size
3,200 square feet
Kitchen Size
150 square feet
Construction Cost
Withheld
PRODUCTS
Cabinets
Diamond Cabinets
Cooktop/Stove
GE Profile
Countertops
Caesarstone
Dishwasher/Refrigerator
Cabin
Faucets
American Standard
Hardware
Emtek
Lighting Fixtures
House of Antique Hardware
Refrigerator Drawers
Miele
Vent Hood
The Vent Shop
Windows
American
Wine Cooler
Wine Temp.
WITH YEARS OF EXPERIENCE BUILDING HOMES on narrow urban infill lots in Chicago’s busiest neighborhoods, Barnett Homes prides itself on coming up with creative ways to stretch a floor plan to make the interior feel bigger. For this $1.9 million spec home in the city’s Lakeview neighborhood, the firm didn’t let the constraints of a 25-foot-wide lot dissuade its vision for a spacious and bright kitchen. Architects from local firm Stoneberg + Giosa worked around the problem by placing the kitchen in the middle of the first floor, where it is open to the light-filled living space and easily accessible to the dining areas via a butler’s pantry pass-through.

The creative layout left plenty of ancillary space for a roomy island, kitchen table eating area, and a large walk-in pantry and powder room tucked behind the double refrigerator. "If you compared the usability and space of this house to a wider house, the way the pantry and kitchen expand beyond where the appliances are makes it seem so much larger," says Barnett president Ken Fixler. Ten-foot-tall ceilings add to the feeling of expansiveness and make way for extra storage in the upper cabinets. Other standouts in the space include rich-looking white quartz countertop with a thickened, mitered edge and gunmetal gray-stained red oak floors.

Barnett, which completed about 70 homes last year, takes pains to set itself apart from other new and resale homes in the hot Chicago move-up market. One of the newest ways that the firm is staying on-trend is with the use of a variety of metal fixtures placed side by side throughout its homes. In this project, this means brass light fixtures from Arteriors, stainless steel appliances, chrome and brushed nickel plumbing fixtures from Kohler and Blanco, and Emtek polished nickel cabinet pulls.

"We incorporated all these metals in order to stand out a little bit from the competition," Fixler says. "In a neighborhood with transitional homes this helps us lean a bit toward contemporary and creates more warmth for the home."

It’s not a huge design risk, Fixler points out, because if a buyer doesn’t like one of the metal fixture selections “it takes 10 minutes to switch it out. It’s sort of like jewelry,” he says. "It adds a sparkle and you can put it on and take it off."—JENNIFER GOODMAN