



A custom white oak table made by Square Manufacturing Co. in Lewiston, Maine, fills the dining space.

YOUR HOME | MODERN

BY THE BAY

A 20-foot-wide house
graces the Maine coast,
blurring the lines between
indoors and out.

BY MARNI ELYSE KATZ

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY TRENT BELL



The team at Whitten Architects designs dwellings that connect people with nature. Like many of its projects, this family campus nestled into the landscape on a peninsula not far from Portland, Maine, was designed for a multigenerational family of nature lovers.

The clients tasked the firm — principal architect Russ Tyson oversaw the initiative and principal architect Tom Lane was the project leader — with designing a full-time residence where they would retire. There would also be a trio of smaller dwellings for the owners' three children and their own growing families. First, however, they needed to address coastal erosion, not wanting to do further damage or build without knowing if the shoreline was resilient.

The family was interested in an organic design process. "They wanted to learn what was right for the landscape," Tyson says. It would be modern, practical, and site-sensitive. The structures would blend with the woods and be constructed of

Glassy porch-like spaces help blend the boundaries between outdoors and indoors on the bay side of the home, where a terrace nestles into the land close to the pool house (left) and screened porch.

materials that age well and require minimal maintenance.

For the exterior, they went with local Eastern white cedar shingles, a standing seam metal roof, and ash siding thermally treated for durability. Terraces are composed of local granite, and the surrounding landscape boasts native grasses, trees, and wildflowers. Inside, the palette includes white oak, ash, local granite, blackened brass, and galvanized steel. The triple-paned windows are either aluminum (for strength) or white oak, all finished with a bronze-colored stain that matches the interior's metalwork details.

You approach the home from the north, moving toward the sunlight, bay views, and breezes. The owners mostly enter the home through the mudroom — a glassy corridor with a full bath and laundry that connects the garage to the rest of the home. The functions support their outdoor-centric lifestyle — family members wash up here after kayaking or chopping wood. There's also a door from the front courtyard.

The architects liken the mudroom to a glass porch; same



The kitchen's local granite and Light Blue paint by Farrow & Ball informed the home's interior palette.

THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE BOASTS NATIVE GRASSES, TREES, AND WILDFLOWERS.

with the dining and sitting rooms. There is also a screened porch and an open-air breezeway to the pool house, which is the largest glass box of them all. "We created a variety of ways to experience the site and celebrate the seasons from within the home," Lane explains. "This is a slim, narrow house with porches that project off it and reach into the landscape."

The mudroom travels north to south, directly into the breakfast area in the main body of the home, which sits on an east-west axis. The leather-topped banquette hugs the home's southeast corner under large corner windows that pull in bright, morning light. The architects use corner windows throughout to capture maximum sunlight and highlight the views.

Heidi Lachapelle, founder of Heidi Lachapelle Interiors, joined the team well before construction. In establishing the look and feel of the interior, she started in the kitchen. Farrow & Ball's Light Blue paint, a pale, silvery blue reminiscent of robins' eggs, graces the clean-lined cabinetry and informs



Resources

BUILDER: Wright-Ryan Homes,
wright-ryanhomes.com

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Heidi
Lachapelle Interiors, heidilachapelle.com

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER:
Albert Putnam Associates,
albertputnamassociates.com

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE:
Sarah Witte and Keith Smith

**LANDSCAPE INSTALLATION AND
OUTDOOR KITCHEN MASONRY:**
Stoney Brook Landscape & Masonry,
stoneybrooklandscaping.com

METALWORK: Italian Green Design,
italiangreendesign.com

CABINETWORK: Northe
Woodworking, northewoodworking.com

LIGHTING: AVDG, avdg.com

Facing page: A non-chlorine pool (top) stretches alongside the bay in a glass pool house. In the primary bedroom (bottom), corner windows help showcase the view.

This page: Clé zellige wall tile in the shower (top) coordinates with the Roman clay plaster wall finish in the primary bath, where electrified mirrors mounted in front of the windows provide function without blocking the view. The living room (bottom) is oriented toward the fireplace, while the adjacent sitting room is meant for reading, playing games, and taking in the landscape.



“THE FLOOR PLAN RESPONDS TO THE DAILY PATTERN FOLLOWING THE SUN.”

the upholstery in the dining areas and the handmade Clé tiles in the primary and pool house baths. “Colors play off what you see outdoors,” the designer says. The paint color also led to choosing the local Heritage Valley granite used behind the range and as floor tiles in the foyer, pool house, and terraces.

A light-filled path between the kitchen and glass porch dining room leads past the double-height formal entry into the living spaces. Here, a granite fireplace with blackened-brass panels that hide the television anchors the main seating area. Off-white performance linen sofas and a pair of Nickey Kehoe spindle-back chairs sit atop a saturated Persian rug that the owners brought from their prior home. “These more traditional silhouettes balance the modernity of the architecture,” Lachapelle says. “The number one mandate was to soften the spaces with the furniture.”

Just as the dining room glass porch projects off the kitchen, a sitting room glass porch projects off the living room, spectacularly showcasing the wispy grasses and water view. “The sitting area is contemplative, a place to observe the outdoors or read, and there’s also a game table for puzzles,” Lachapelle says.

A glass pocket door disappears behind the fireplace for entry into the screened porch at the west end of the residence. “The floor plan responds to the daily pattern following the sun,” Lane explains. “You have breakfast with the sun, pass through a variety of spaces, and end on the screened porch for sunset.” The porch opens onto a terrace with an outdoor kitchen and fire pit for actual outdoor entertaining.

A white oak stair with blackened-brass details and an elevator for aging in place ascend to the second floor. Two guest bedrooms with en suite baths occupy the eastern half while the primary bedroom suite occupies the west. All are fairly small spaces meant for sleeping. Like the home’s public areas, the primary bedroom focuses on the view. “The glazed corners dissolve the boundaries between indoors and outdoors,” Lane says. “The architecture helps blur these lines.” ■

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Choosing
between guns
and faith

60 years later,
he's still my
teacher

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THE BOSTON GLOBE | SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

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