

# MODERN TAKE

Kimmel Studio Architects  
crafts an all-season waterfront  
refuge in Queenstown

Text by Kelly Velocci  
Photography by Jennifer Hughes



An indoor plunge pool opens to the exterior through a series of NanaWall folding doors leading out to the dock, with the Wye River beyond.



Builder Lynbrook of Annapolis clad the Wye River home (pictured here) in Dutch lap siding and board and batten. The floor plan was devised to accommodate public spaces including the kitchen and dining room in one wing, while private areas such as the owners' suite are located in the other. In the living room (below), a floor-to-ceiling board-form concrete fireplace towers above outdoor sofas and a coffee table from RH.



For a young family of four on the hunt for a year-round getaway where they could easily host relatives and friends, it was love at first sight. But instead of the perfect house, it was a magnificent parcel of land that stole their hearts. Set on 14 verdant acres, the coveted find in Queen Anne's County, Maryland, abuts the Wye River and is less than two hours from the family's main residence in northern Baltimore County. "We loved how the property came to a point surrounded by shoreline, woods and farmland," recalls the wife, who owns a local business with her husband. "It adds so much character." They were so smitten, in fact, that they were able to overlook the existing builder-grade home on-site, with its cramped layout and heavy architectural elements laden in wood and stone.

After three years, however, the family grew tired of the dated abode that didn't fit their needs or style. "We always wanted our house to be a gathering space," says the wife, "but it didn't accommodate large groups well. Everyone was on top of each other versus being able to spread out." Another downside: The pool was incon-

veniently sited off the basement, thereby relegating swimmers to enter and exit via the unwelcoming and isolated lower level. As the wife explains, "We wanted everything to be centrally located around the pool and kitchen. That's where everyone spends their time."

To assess the situation, the couple enlisted builder Raymond Gauthier of Lynbrook of Annapolis, who then introduced them to Kimmel Studio Architects, an Annapolis firm with expertise in deftly integrating dwellings into surrounding landscapes. "The homeowners asked us to come up with different concepts to change the style of the house," explains Kimmel Studio architect David Mallon. "We looked at how to change the chopped-up living areas and make the inside and outside spaces relate to one another and blur that boundary."

Ultimately, the team determined that renovations weren't the answer and the owners decided to build anew. As the expansive manse was dismantled, building materials ranging from timber and studs to cabinets and flooring were donated to a local salvage organization.

With a blank slate before him, Mallon dreamed up a sprawling, 14,000-square-foot abode and detached guest barn that marry Eastern Shore farmhouse vernacular with the wife's desire for a pared-down palette and "clarity of design."

Architecture, Interior, Kitchen & Landscape Design: David Mallon, Kimmel Studio Architects, Annapolis, Maryland.  
Builder: Raymond Gauthier, president; John Gaver, supervisor, Lynbrook of Annapolis, Annapolis, Maryland.





West Elm chaises line the geothermally heated outdoor pool, which is shaded by a fabric canopy system threaded on stainless-steel cables from Infinity Canopy. The home's black casement windows are from Marvin, and the roof is a painted-metal, standing-seam design. Large expanses of glass and NanaWall folding doors bring the outdoors in.





**“Collections of little vignettes  
provide breathtaking views  
of the shoreline.”**

—DAVID MALLON

In the dining room, Scabetti's Shoal chandelier, comprising a veritable school of bone-china fish, hangs above a pair of custom wood dining tables. The room's white oak flooring is painted in Benjamin Moore's Seaside Resort to echo the hues of the Wye River visible through the folding doors.





Among the home's most notable features are its dual kitchens (above and opposite), which afford guests more space for preparing meals and inspire family cooking competitions. The identical designs face one another across a sitting area; each is outfitted with its own polished, white-lacquer cabinetry, custom concrete countertop and Wolf range. Oversized pendant lights are repurposed steel mooring buoys that have been cut in half. The walls are covered in whitewashed oak boards.



The new eight-bedroom home is intended to read as a dwelling constructed over time. The main structure, sheathed in Dutch lap siding, acts as the original “farmhouse” with a collection of smaller buildings, clad in board and batten, attached via glass corridors on either side. Mallon organized the floor plan on a cross-axis that separates public and private wings. “We knew the clients wanted the house to be a place for their entire family,” says Mallon. “We needed to give them large communal spaces where they can gather and enjoy crabs, as well as private areas they can retreat to.”

From the entry and corridors to the living spaces, what Mallon describes as “collections of little vignettes” provide breathtaking views of the shoreline. Expansive windows and NanaWall folding doors abound, creating a feeling of transparency that allows the natural landscape to remain center stage. “The views out of every part of the house are just perfect,” says the wife. “They nailed it.”

Moreover, Mallon carried exterior building materials indoors to further blur the inside and outside environments. Clean-lined millwork and minimalist finishes put a modern spin on a structure that pulls from bygone eras. Bare walls and a muted color palette absent of pattern wash the interiors in a sense of calm. “I’m one of those people who needs simplicity,” explains the wife. “Clean lines, nothing ornate and not a lot of little details.”



The primary bedroom (these pages) is located in the most private area of the home. Serena & Lily lamps and Clayton Gray Home nightstands flank a curved-rattan bed frame from Anthropologie; the rug is from West Elm and the fireplace is by HearthStone.



Despite the woodland home's gentle presence, it holds more than a few surprises. Case in point: An aqua-blue, painted-wood floor makes a striking statement in the dining room, while an Italian Scabetti chandelier featuring a bone-china school of fish cascades down from the soaring ceiling.

Yet Mallon never lost sight of how the home needed to function with his clients' active lifestyle, opting for clean and modern indoor/outdoor furnishings and no extraneous decorations. Through a doorway, what the architect calls "dual kitchens" are separated by an informal sitting area. Outfitted with identical features on both sides—including matching ranges, refrigerators, polished-lacquer cabinets and custom concrete countertops—the expansive spaces encourage family cooking competitions and enable guests to prepare meals without getting in anyone's way.

Around a corner, a glass-enclosed indoor plunge pool allows kids and adults alike to enjoy year-round swimming without missing out on the beauty outdoors or fun in nearby rooms, ultimately fulfilling the wife's wish to keep everyone together. "We've hosted a lot of family events here—even big reunions where we have connected with extended family whom we had never met," she reflects. "We have really been able to use the house to bring people together. Everyone just loves being here." ↕

