



## A Deck House Revival

A new floor plan and a fresh palette prove the stalwart post-and-beam, open concept design is still relevant

WRITTEN BY JACI CONRY • PHOTOGRAPHED BY ERIC ROTH

**T**he house on Martha's Vineyard, a Deck House built in 1979, had certainly seen better days. Used solely as a summer residence since it was built, the place was musty, dark, and dated. In fact, the real estate listing photos were so bad that Tamara Thome couldn't persuade her husband, Malcolm Scully, to even visit the property. But by the spring of 2013, Thome, an emergency room doctor at Martha's Vineyard Hospital, and Scully, an oceanographer at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, were getting desperate. The couple and

their 1-year-old son (by the next year a second child would arrive) had recently relocated to Martha's Vineyard from Virginia and were weary of temporary housing. They needed a home of their own.

"We couldn't find anything we liked that was affordable, and we wanted some water access," recalls Thome. And that house, that Deck House, was located on a lovely parcel on Lambert's Cove in West

**A TIERED ISLAND** topped with Raven Caesarstone in a matte finish provides ample area for food preparation on one side, while four people can be comfortably seated on the other. The oak floors were refinished with a darker stain than the original honey-hue for a more modern look.

## KITCHEN + BATH



**THE KITCHEN'S COUNTER stools are a classic midcentury design by Norman Cherner. Crafted of molded plywood, the stools have an elegant silhouette against the white island.**

Tisbury with direct access to tranquil Old House Pond. Thome persevered and finally convinced Scully it was worth a look.

Ultimately, “the site won him over,” says Thome.

In addition, the open layout appealed to the couple, as did the house’s beginnings. After purchasing the place, they came across a briefcase containing the original plans

and documentation authenticating the house as a bona fide Deck House: a post-and-beam structure based on an open floor plan made of prefabricated parts with exposed wood-clad walls, tongue-and-groove vaulted ceilings, and large expanses of glass. (Founded in 1959 in Acton, Massachusetts, Deck House is now Acorn Deck House Co., still headquartered in Acton.)

## KITCHEN + BATH

Before the family could move in, however, there was work to be done. Thome and Scully contracted Martha's Vineyard Interior Design in Vineyard Haven to reconfigure and rehab the interiors. The primary focus was a major kitchen overhaul, a new powder room, and an updated master bathroom.

"The kitchen was like a time capsule that had been sealed," says principal/designer Liane Thomas. "It had faded white Formica counters, and the appliances were so old they were basically unusable."

In Virginia, the couple had lived in a traditional 1920s row house with a formal dining room and a galley kitchen. "We were ready for something more modern," says Thome, "and the concept of an open kitchen inte-

**PAINTING THE CEILING white did wonders to brighten the kitchen. Upper cabinets were kept to a minimum and a long counter beneath the windows allows for an unobstructed view of the wooded yard outside. Blue glass tile on the backsplash complements the mahogany trim around the windows and the custom cabinets are finished with sleek satin nickel hardware (FACING PAGE, LEFT) for a contemporary look. Halogen track lighting illuminates the space at night (FACING PAGE, RIGHT).**



grated with the living and dining spaces really appealed to us."

Located in a small nook off the living and dining area, the existing kitchen was tiny, "with a very dark, woody feeling to it," says Thomas, who strove to ensure the new design was in keeping with the original architecture. The goal was to give the space a bright, airy appeal while pro-

viding Thome and Scully, who love to cook, ample area for food preparation and entertaining.

Creating a larger kitchen required moving it to the dining area, which was then pushed toward the expansive living space. A long counter was built under the windows overlooking the wooded front yard. Opposite it, a sizable island with a cooktop provides both work and dining

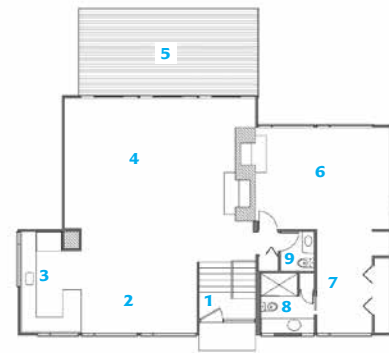
## KITCHEN + BATH

space with a raised tier conveniently obscuring any mess left from meal prep when it's time to eat. The tongue-and-groove ceiling boards and the v-groove cladding on the walls were painted white, which brightened the space tremendously. The mahogany trim around the windows — one of the house's most compelling features, says Thomas — was preserved and complemented by a blue-toned glass mosaic tile backsplash.

Flat-front custom cabinets are traditional with a modern feel. Since the room can seem extra dark at night, good lighting was key, so low-voltage track lighting was installed. "It provides great halogen light, which really warms the room up," says Thomas.

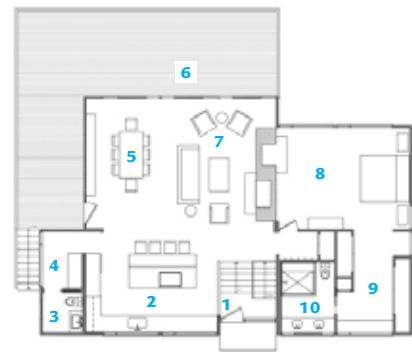
The original kitchen became the new pantry and adjacent powder room, where mahogany-stained shelves under the vessel sink mirror the original window trim. The new powder room walls were paneled with horizontal boards painted white to reflect the kitchen scheme.

Moving the powder room from the hallway to the master suite allowed Thomas to enlarge the master bath. The original bathroom with its fiberglass shower and laminate surfaces was "typical 1970s," says Thomas. Save for the



### BEFORE

- 1 ENTRY
- 2 DINING AREA
- 3 KITCHEN
- 4 LIVING ROOM
- 5 DECK
- 6 MASTER BEDROOM
- 7 MASTER CLOSET
- 8 MASTER BATH
- 9 POWDER ROOM



### AFTER

- 1 ENTRY
- 2 KITCHEN
- 3 POWDER ROOM
- 4 PANTRY
- 5 DINING AREA
- 6 DECK
- 7 LIVING ROOM
- 8 MASTER BEDROOM
- 9 MASTER CLOSET
- 10 MASTER BATH



**IN THE MASTER bathroom, a large built-in mirror between two windows (ABOVE LEFT) helps bounce light around the space. Under the mirror is a custom vanity, which features oil-rubbed bronze drawer pulls and a Caesarstone countertop. A new glass shower (ABOVE RIGHT) with a long bench makes the room feel open and light.**

two long mahogany-trimmed windows above the vanity, the room was gutted. Adding symmetry to the ceiling dramatically transformed the space. "Previously, the shower had been framed in. We opened that up and narrowed the existing ceiling so both sides came together at a peak," says Thomas. Now the room feels spacious and contemporary. The shower is set off with new glass doors,

## KITCHEN + BATH



**THE POWDER ROOM is small but functional. Faucets built into the wall serve the vessel sink, which is affixed to a mahogany base. The round mirror is trimmed with bone inlay and the chrome light fixture is from RH.**

and 12-by-24-inch porcelain tile in a light hue called “sea salt” sheaths the walls. On the floor, tiles are a darker shade, dubbed “tivoli silver.” A custom double vanity topped with Caesarstone is fitted with oil-rubbed bronze pulls that pick up the room’s darker tones.

Thome particularly loves having two windows — with a new mirror in between — by the vanity. “It’s so nice to have a view when you’re brushing your teeth,” she says. “The room feels much bigger, so completely different than it was before.”

Renovation complete, Thome and Scully find it uncanny that they nearly overlooked the home they now so cherish. “We like that our boys can swim in the pond, fish, listen to screech owls at night and the resident osprey during the day,” says Thome.

“We were surprised at how much could be done within the existing footprint. It works perfectly for us; it’s a very easy place to live in.” ■

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