

# PHILADELPHIA STYLE

## Vincent Piazza

THE *BOARDWALK EMPIRE* STAR TALKS ABOUT THE UPCOMING SEASON AND THE ALLURE OF THE SHORE

AC CONFIDENTIAL: WHAT'S HOT IN ATLANTIC CITY

PLUS PIERRE ROBERT, HOPE COHEN, RON JAWORSKI

A beachfront home in Avalon catches the light at sunset.

## sights to sea

AN AVALON HOME'S OCEANFRONT VIEWS ARE THE FOCUS OF ITS FUNCTIONAL DESIGN.

BY KATHLEEN NICHOLSON WEBBER

Until recently, Mark Asher of Asher Associates Architects (115 West Ave., Jenkintown, 215-576-1413; [asherarchitects.com](http://asherarchitects.com)) was the go-to guy for a historically correct coastal look. That was until a new client, with a plot steps from the beach in Avalon, asked for a little something different. "We had originally planned a more traditional home," says Asher, who designs homes along the Jersey Shore and in Philadelphia. So he went back to work, drawing inspiration from simply styled beach homes from the '60s and '70s, and dreamt up a contemporary, cedar-sided house with lots of windows and a design boatlike in its efficiency. "Every inch was thought about and worried over," he says.

But "efficient" does not equate with "compact." With 10-foot ceilings,

floor-to-ceiling glass windows, and inviting wraparound porches, the home is airy and invokes a feeling of tropical living. The clients asked that the ocean views be the focus, so Asher made sure sand and surf could be seen from the living spaces and the master bedroom perch. Designer Will Bellis of Philadelphia (147 W. Meade St., 215-470-4809; [wgbinteriors.com](http://wgbinteriors.com)), also known for more traditional work here and in the UK, gave the interior a transitional look that could withstand plenty of guests. "They didn't want your typical shore house with anchors and seagulls," says Bellis. The clients asked Bellis to make the interior elegant yet casual, and most of all: durable. Floors are stone or cherry wood and can be swept easily; fabrics are mostly Kravet (many from the Soleil collection) and can take the elements

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## HAUTE PROPERTY

The foyer reflects the home's elegant yet casual design. FAR LEFT: The first-floor living room opens to the pool.



“Every inch [of the home] was thought about and worried over.” —MARK ASHER

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and plenty of visits from family. Two oversize kids' bunkrooms on the first floor, one for boys and one for girls, sleep six each, allowing the homeowners to easily entertain for their two daughters. Off the first-floor kids' living room is a pool and hot tub designed by Chuck Hess of Lansdale (1570A Sunnyside Pike, Lansdale, 215-855-5530; [hessla.com](http://hessla.com)). Hess used custom details such as a cedar fence, an asymmetrical trellis, and an ipe deck in his progressive design. “The pool is like a little piece of sculpture,” says Asher.

Ocean views are front and center in the main spaces on the second and third floors. The kitchen, created by Euro Line Designe (751 Bay Ave., Somers Point, NJ, 609-927-1111; [eurolinedesigne.com](http://eurolinedesigne.com)), features khaki cabinets that reach into the dining room where a sub-kitchen is installed. Instead of an island, the homeowner opted for an oversize banquette with upholstered seats that match the dining room seats. Bellis mirrored the geometric shape of the table with a rectangular fabric chandelier. In the dining room he chose a more whimsical Art Deco iron chandelier, which is like a beautiful piece of jewelry.

Bellis also added some shimmer, facing the fireplace with vertical glass tiles in sandy shades. Light dances off of them

Instead of an island, the kitchen boasts a sleek banquette.



at dusk. “Mark teases me about doing monolithic statements with my fireplaces,” says the designer. The tiles repeat the pattern in the sofa. “If you aren't doing a mantle, it makes an impression and takes your eye up.” Curvy Kravet chairs swivel so you can turn to see the latest goings-on at the beach. To make the house feel open, Bellis mixed draperies with electronic blinds controlled with a smart panel, which the homeowners can manipulate remotely.

The master bedroom and bath, observation porch, and deck are located on the third floor. The bedroom is like a glass box and feels nest-like. “The client wanted it simple and clean, with minimal furniture,” says Bellis. “They wanted it to feel like being on a ship, so we have a captain's bed with storage underneath.” Adds Asher: “It is almost like a private sanctuary up there.” And, of course, the views are spectacular.

The collaboration between architect, designer, builder, and client was one Asher relishes. “It was a great project because they pushed us, and vice versa. We have all come away thinking we wouldn't change a thing.” **PS**

## WALK ON THE OCEAN

Ashley Franchini details the most sought-after features and popular design elements for housing at the Shore.

No matter which beachfront town you decide to call home, there's no doubting the significance of ocean views on the value of a property. “If you can sip your morning coffee watching the ocean waves, your value instantly skyrockets,” says Ashley Franchini of Soleil Sotheby's International Realty in Margate. A panorama of the Atlantic tops most buyers' wish lists, which also include close proximity to the beach, outdoor areas for entertaining, and a spacious interior layout: “High ceilings, open floor plans, center islands—that's what everyone wants.” Though Franchini notes that the traditional “beach house” look usually prevails, newer residences are taking on a more modern and customized appearance. “My new construction homes are selling very quickly; most are pre-construction sales because the buyers can make their own [design] selections—and most of the buyers are leaning toward the contemporary look.” *Soleil Sotheby's International Realty, 8502 Ventnor Ave., Margate, 609-233-6116; [franchinirealestate.com](http://franchinirealestate.com)*

