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# Morgan's Point Dream House

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## *Radiates Eastern Shore Charm*

BY *Mary Lou Baker*  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *J. Brough Schamp*

Potomac residents Steve and Kelly Schorer dreamt of a weekend house on the water—not on Nantucket or Hilton Head, but on the Eastern Shore. They found the perfect spot at Morgan's Landing, a small community of custom-built homes near Oxford, on the shores of the Tred Avon River, where they purchased a five-acre lot with deep water access and expansive water views in 2011—the year this historic Eastern Shore village was named “best boating town in the world” by *Yachting Magazine*.

That was the beginning of an odyssey that involved engaging Washington architect Claude Lapp as a consultant, Jim Kerwin of Decatur Home Building Services as the builder, Bryan LeCompte of Yard Designs for landscaping, picking Aqua Pools to install a 25x40-foot pool as the centerpiece of a sweeping flagstone patio at the rear of the house—and, finally, deciding how to design the interior of this 8,000 square-foot waterfront showplace.

Initially, Kelly and Steve had chosen the traditional look that prevailed in their Potomac residence as the theme for her shore house interior. But when the Schorers moved into their weekend home in 2010 (nearly two years after construction began), she and her husband began to second-guess this decision. The furniture seemed heavy, window treatments were fussy and the big house did not have a cozy feel. She was especially frustrated with how to make the most of the water views from the window-walled sun porch adjacent to the kitchen.





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Photo by Amanda Ringer White

One day, while browsing for ideas in Jamie Merida's shop in Easton (appropriately named "Bountiful"), she shared her dilemma with a staff member, who introduced her to Amanda Friend, one of Merida's lead interior designers. It was the beginning of a partnership that succeeded in achieving the elegant but casual look that Steve and Kelly wanted for their home, where the use of columns allowed for an open concept design, which maximizes the waterfront views while still maintaining a traditional feel.

"Bountiful was one of Kelly's go-to places for furnishings and accessories, but she had not taken advantage of our interior design services previously," says Amanda. Her chance meeting with Kelly was the beginning of a team effort that resulted in light-filled spaces and original accent pieces in every room. The colors are earth-toned, ceilings and walls are washed in subtle shades, handmade sisal area rugs accent the handsome hand-scraped walnut wood floors throughout the house, every chandelier has a story and the eye is constantly delighted by tasteful accents and imaginative accessories discovered by Amanda and Jamie.

Visitors to the Schorer house enter through heavy wooden doors centered with decorative glass panels overlaid with swirls of wrought iron. White Carrera marble outlined with a narrow cocoa-colored marble border gleams underfoot and a dramatic stairway curves upward to a landing where a hand-carved wooden sculpture of a seahorse is silhouetted against a window soaring to the ceiling. An antique French garden table topped with a round of glass centers the hallway, flanked on one side with a formal dining room and on the other by a comfortable but elegant sitting room featuring gorgeous throw pillows accenting the natural linen-covered sofa.







*Lighting throughout the house is soft and subtle, whether from beautiful custom-made chandeliers or unobtrusive ceiling inserts. The electrified candle-bulbed fixture suspended over the dining room table features antique crystals, milky-white with the patina of time and hand-cut into different shapes. A pair of wooden casting molds, once used to make ornate French garden urns and pewter candlesticks, shaped like seahorses share table space and a massive breakfront displays handsome serving pieces. Floor-to-ceiling drapes with a raised pattern of embroidered pussy willows (the same fabric used for drapes in the sitting room) add whimsy to the formal setting, where chairs are dressed in linen slipcovers just waiting for some lucky dinner guests. (Just one example of the rare attention to detail in this house: the finials of the curtain rods are made of crushed duck eggshells.) Most of the family-style living takes place in the wing that houses the kitchen, a dining nook, a charming sunroom and a two-story great room complete with a fireplace built into a huge cherry wood structure that also frames a big screen TV and other accoutrements of a modern entertainment center. Amanda rescued the sunroom with a small L-shaped sofa and a swivel armchair upholstered in chocolate-brown fabric patterned with seashells. The sunroom is Kelly's favorite hangout, a place where she can read and watch the boats go by in a never-ending parade.*

*A circular dining nook is centered with a light-reflective glass-topped table under a custom-made teak ceiling suggesting the deck of a boat. Overhead, a chandelier made entirely of delicate white natural seashells strung on an invisible rope is a thing of beauty. The entire back of the house is awash with windows, making it an ever-changing background of natural wonders — whether wildlife, native birds, sunrise, sunset or storms. Outside the windows, a pair of metal sculptures of blue herons from Gatsby's in St. Michaels add man-made artistry to the natural landscape.*



Amanda carried out Kelly's wish for a "casual but elegant coastal look" throughout the residence, adding beautiful mollusks of every description in baskets to a kitchen where countertops of black granite swirled with bronze quartz key the bold color scheme. Copper fixtures on the four-burner stove and two copper sinks—one a center island and the other a two-tiered buffet with high stools—face the two-story great room and entertainment center. Nearby is a well-stocked wine refrigerator, reflecting Steve's interest in fine spirits and the couple's love of entertaining.

The cook can easily kibitz with family or guests with this overlapping of spaces for meal preparation and socializing. Among the whimsical touches "too numerous to mention" is an antique rowing scull suspended from the ceiling, with a life-size Santa Claus as a seasonal topper. A balcony overlooks the two-story family room, which can be accessed by a back stairway and a rear entrance featuring a mud room and photos of the Schorer's two children in their younger days.

A master suite with a curved wall of windows is dominated by a handsome antique mahogany four-poster bed elegantly dressed with an intricately embroidered silk spread and a skirt of finely pleated silk. A spa-like master bath is a spacious high-ceilinged oasis of tasteful luxury, boasting marble floors and a capacious Jacuzzi framed with carved white columns. His-and-her shower rooms and marble double sinks occupy opposite walls. Completing the picture of comfort and convenience is a room-size closet large enough for storing clothes for all seasons.

Steve was all in favor of the "re-do" planned by Amanda and his wife, even though it meant starting from scratch. He was the one who came up with the handsome white wooden columns that separate the rooms and open up all the spaces on the first floor, allowing light from multiple windows on the waterside to spill into the house. Evidence of his many interests are scattered throughout one wing of the house, where Steve's study is decorated with telescopes, reflecting his interest in antique optics and astronomy.



Photo by Amanda Rippen White

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An adjacent room with a fireplace reminds one of a men's club. Here the main attraction is a gleaming boat-shaped bar, custom made from the hull of an old Chris Craft. "Feelin' Nauti" is emblazoned on the bow. A locked glass case displays Steve's collection of hunting firearms and an old brass underwater diving helmet is mounted on a stand. Steve jokingly calls himself a "redneck wannabe" because of his love of hunting, fishing and the water, and has enough interests and talents to qualify as a true renaissance man. He does not consider himself an athlete; however he passes that designation to his wife, who is a runner.

"With wine and hope, anything is possible." This is the motto on a

sign inside an spectacular wine room, reached through leaded glass doors a few steps down from the center hallway. With a constant temperature of 55 degrees, the grand selection of reds, whites and Champagnes are kept safe and sound in a space lined with shelves that can hold up to 1,600 bottles. An old wine cask from a French vineyard is the centerpiece of a magical space decorated with two paintings evocative of Provence.

"Open and welcome" announces another rustic sign in this Oxford hideaway—an appropriate greeting for anyone fortunate enough to get an invitation to this extraordinary Eastern Shore showplace.