

An escapist visual sourcebook of modern interiors in a range of waterside settings, from the creative duo behind *Mediterranean Modern* and *Mountain Modern*.

Waterside Modern

Dominic Bradbury

Photographs by Richard Powers

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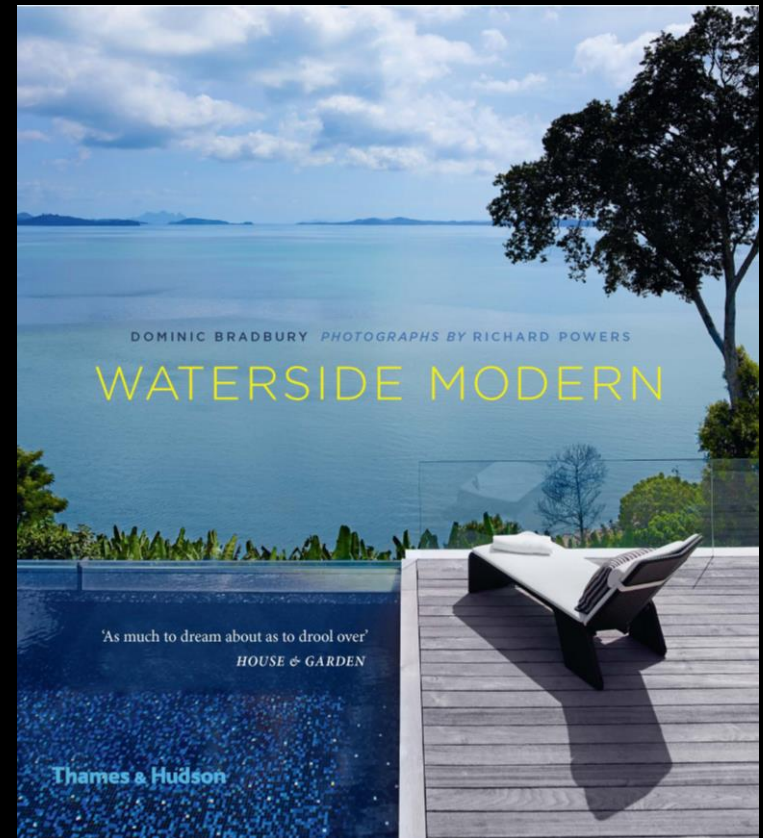
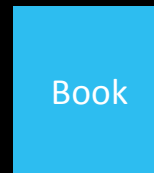
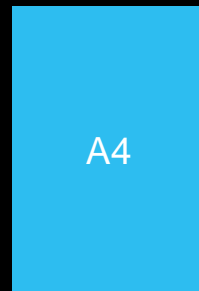
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Key Sales Points

- An inspiring survey of 25 stunning contemporary homes designed for locations in which water plays centre-stage, where nature is celebrated and indoor-outdoor living optimized
- Each house presents traditional design concepts, innovatively recast for their dramatic landscapes by leading architects and designers
- A great reference for those looking for interior design tips and inspiration with a comprehensive directory of designers and architects

Praise for *Waterside Modern*

‘Celebrates some of the coolest beachside properties in the world’

Sunday Times

‘As much to dream about as to drool over’ *House & Garden*

‘An inspirational look at the most breathtaking waterside homes
from around the world’ *Prima*

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ICONIC WATERSIDE HOUSES

INTRODUCTION



The draw of the ocean is inevitable and irresistible. It is as though there is some innate need in all of us to find our way, every now and then, to the water's edge in search of the restorative power of the sea. We may be searching for very different things, yet from childhood onwards that sense of fascination is always with us. The sea and the waterways of the world exert a strong and enduring influence upon us all.

For some, the water represents a source of sustenance and trade, a way of making a mark upon the world; for others, it is a perpetual siren of indulgence. The Victorians, in particular, turned seaside enjoyment into a unique industry, creating the idea of pleasure piers, where day-trippers and holiday makers would relax and recharge. The coast was seen as a place of health and vitality, with a 'rest cure' by the sea becoming a common theme in nineteenth-century society.

The sea and the great waterways have also been a key source of artistic inspiration. From painters to poets, the ocean has been a rich and constant siren, as it has been for the great storytellers. So many of the most captivating stories feature the sea as an essential character in the drama, from Homer's *Odyssey* to Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, Ernest Hemingway's

The Old Man and the Sea to William Golding's *Rites of Passage* and Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*. Joseph Conrad, Charles Dickens, Daphne du Maurier and many others have drawn the ocean into their work and made the sea into a stage.

For architects and designers, too, the shoreline is both an enduring temptation and a powerful setting in which to build. It requires a particular sensitivity to and respect for the natural beauty of the surroundings, usually well protected by planning constraints, and creating a home in such a context carries a special responsibility. Yet clearly the rewards can be extraordinary. Even an urban river setting has a definite allure, offering architects the opportunity to create a building with a sense of connection to an enigmatic thoroughfare that offers light, calm and a rhythmic natural beauty.

Many landmark houses of the twentieth century have a waterside setting. They include such influential buildings as Casa Malaparte (1941), designed by architect Adalberto Libera for the novelist Curzio Malaparte, and perched on a rocky peninsula on the island of Capri. When architect and client fell out, Malaparte continued the project alone, creating one of the most dramatic waterside houses of the twentieth century.



B E A C H
H O U S E



BEACH HOUSE

INTRODUCTION



The most enticing beach houses are always defined by a sense of freedom. There is a casual informality to beachside living and an openness to the sea, as well as to themes of restorative pleasure, escapist indulgence and intimate interaction with nature. Time by the beach seems to be different from time spent anywhere else, helping to add to that welcome feeling of liberation.

'Time is more complex near the sea than in any other place,' wrote John Steinbeck in *Tortilla Flat*, 'for in addition to the circling of the sun and the turning of the seasons, the waves beat out the passage of time on the rocks and the tides rise and fall as a great clepsydra.'

The best beach houses are infused with a free spirit and are places of friendly informality where the usual restrictions of daily working life are put on hold. They often serve as second homes and holiday retreats, lifted by an open design approach that suits this kind of sanctuary but might feel out of place in the city. This approach also promotes a sense of connection with the sea, leading the eye ever outwards. These homes offer a choice of outdoor living spaces on terraces, decks and balconies, each with a unique perspective on the natural surroundings.

A beach house at Amagansett, on Long Island (p. 24), by Yabu Pushelberg has viewing points and outdoor rooms that connect with the views and surrounding dunes. The same is true of Casa MTL (p. 66), Bernardes Arquitetura's house in Laranjeiras, on Brazil's Atlantic coast, where you can walk directly onto the beach and into the water without passing through a clutter of fences, gates and walls. The beach becomes part of the house, creating the perfect outdoor room, crafted by nature.

The beach house has a long and varied history, from the thatched *palapas* of Mexico and Latin America to the simple fishermen's huts of England and France. There is a wide variety to the shape, form and conception of traditional beachside dwellings, but common to them all is a feeling of simplicity. Many are just a single storey in height, and made with easily available materials. They often have a sense of impermanence and vulnerability that is endearing, although sometimes challenging in extreme weather. They are a modest and discreet presence upon the coastline.

Today, the contemporary beach house is designed to be enduring, as well as sustainable. But rather than drawing inspiration from Victorian seaside villas or imposing coastal

fortresses, these modern dwellings look to buildings that, in Glenn Murcutt's phrase, 'touch the earth lightly', seeking a direct and intimate connection with the coast and the sea. In some parts of the world, particularly England and parts of Europe, beachside cabins have become known as chalets, sharing a natural, organic character with their timber-built mountain cousins. These waterside huts stand in stark contrast to the vast oceanfront developments that have overwhelmed many popular coastal communities.

The best modern beach houses are characterized by an imaginative approach and a sensitivity to land and sea. Modernist pioneer Andrew Geller may never have expected his quirky timber huts on Long Island to last more than a few decades, but many have survived to become desirable and much-loved residences. On Shelter Island, at Long Island's southern tip, designer Jonathan Adler created a beachside enclave in collaboration with architectural firm Gray Organschi, which has a refreshing spirit and rich personality (p. 34). And the house that architect Carlos Ferrater designed for his brother on the Costa del Azahar, in Spain, is full of charm, character and individuality, with only a grove of palm trees between the house and the beach (p. 76).

Certain picturesque coastal communities around the world have been defined by their beach houses. Dungeness in Kent, England, has become known the world over for its row of former fishermen's cabins, which now attract architects and artists, tempted by an extraordinary seascape and the shingle beach. This is the location for Johnson Naylor's beach house on the site of an old maritime experimental station (p. 56), close to one of the town's two lighthouses.

It is, of course, the location that drives the design of these houses. From Piet Boon's vision for a house in Bonaire (p. 44) to Fearon Hay's Dune House in Omaha, New Zealand (p. 14), these are buildings that seek to connect with the landscape and embrace that sense of intimacy with the sea. Modernity, geometry, sensitivity and contextuality are the key ingredients of contemporary beach houses that frame the view and blur the boundaries between indoors and out, as well as between land and sea.

It is this sense of intimacy that is so vital to the individual character of the beach house. The relationship with the ocean is immediate and powerful, and the sound of the rolling surf is a constant companion and a source of inspiration. The sense of freedom in such places is palpable.

SEASIDE HOUSE

JONATHAN ADLER / GRAY ORGANSCHI SHELTER ISLAND, NEW YORK, USA

Set within the waters of Gardiners Bay and cradled by the outstretched northern and southern forks of Long Island, Shelter Island has a unique character all of its own. Compared to the pace of life in the Hamptons – just a short ferry ride away – Shelter Island feels much more relaxed and tranquil. This is a place to escape to and unwind. No wonder, then, that designer and potter Jonathan Adler and his partner Simon Doonan, writer and Creative Ambassador-at-Large for Barneys department stores, have been coming out here for the last twenty years.

Originally the couple spent weekends and holidays away from their Manhattan apartment at a small, A-frame house dating from the 1960s, before an irresistible opportunity arose to buy a plot of land right next to the sea, looking out to Orient Point and its coffee-pot lighthouse on the tip of the north fork. With yachts tacking across the water and the gentle rhythm of the ocean, it was an ideal place to build a new home.

The pair knew from the outset that they wanted something very different from the grand beach mansions in the Hamptons. The house needed to be informal and casual, fitting the character of the place and harking back to the simple mid-century beach cabins of Fire Island, as well as drawing inspiration from the house Adler grew up in: his parents' modernist, Scandinavian-style home, which has proved a key influence on his work ever since. There is also a hint of the courtyard houses of Japan, where Doonan spends a good deal of time for Barneys, consulting on the look of the group's Japanese stores.

Approaching the single-storey house, which was designed in collaboration with architects Gray Organschi, the first thing you see is an enigmatic barrier of black timber pierced by a double gate, with echoes of Japanese-style charcoal walls. Stepping through the gate, you find yourself in a courtyard garden, complete with a breakfast

The house looks out to Orient Point across the waters of Gardiners Bay. The positioning of the house makes the most of the vista, with a series of outdoor rooms arranged around the swimming pool and the waterside elevation of the building.





The terrace to the master bedroom (*above*) provides enough space for breakfast and dining outside. The central courtyard (*above right*) offers a more sheltered and private outdoor room with 'Asturias' armchairs by Carlos Motta. The veranda at the front of the house (*opposite, below right*) features an outdoor lounge with a barbecue and bar close at hand.



HOUSE FOR A PHOTOGRAPHER II

CARLOS FERRATER | ALCANAR, CATALONIA, SPAIN

Photographer José Manuel Ferrater first got to know the Costa del Azahar as a child. He still cherishes fond memories of the prawns at the Can Pa Torrat restaurant in a small village down by the sea, not far from the town of Alcanar. This coastal enclave is now a second home and an alternative to his daily life in Barcelona.

For many years Ferrater had a cottage here, in the middle of an orange grove, but without a sea view. Then he came across a quiet site looking directly onto the gravel beach and the sea. It is one of a series of linear strips facing the water, with a number of the neighbouring gardens planted with vegetables and fruit trees. The atmosphere is calm and inviting, with a pair of concrete defence posts – relics from the Spanish Civil War – resting on the beach. The terrain, which forms part of the delta of the River Ebro, is flat and gentle, in contrast to the cliffs and promontories seen further north along the coastline.

Naturally, Ferrater turned to his brother, the much-respected Spanish architect Carlos Ferrater, to design the new house. The brief was a simple one, yet the resulting home is extraordinary and poetic. The architect designed three separate but complementary single-storey pavilions, positioned towards the back of the site, with smooth, rendered exteriors painted a crisp white. The pavilions sit on a floating timber platform, raised 70 cm (28 in.) off the ground, to protect against flooding, with the space between forming a sheltered outdoor terrace.

The dominant pavilion faces the sea and contains the main open-plan living area, with the furniture arranged around the view, visible through a large picture window. This pavilion also contains a kitchen island, and the high ceiling height allows a mezzanine ledge above the front window to be used as a display niche for sculpture and art.

Fifty-two mature palm trees, sourced locally, provide a graphic garden that sits between the house and the beach. The grove forms a vibrant hinterland, full of shadows and movement.



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