

Charlotte

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# HOME

DESIGN & DECOR®

## THE *Sanctuary* ISSUE

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NATURE



Reclaimed-wooden beams and antique oak flooring set the tone for this American European Arts & Crafts-style home. "The materials of this house look like they've been there for a hundred years," says RVA+I designer Julia Palen Wood. The hand-woven rug is from Stark, and the vase on the coffee table is a vintage African water vessel from Foxglove Antiques & Galleries.



# MAINE ATTRACTION

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TUCKED ALONG THE MAINE COASTLINE, A STUNNING  
WATERFRONT HOME OFFERS SWEEPING VIEWS OF CASCO BAY.



ARCHITECT RUARD VELTMAN and interior designer Julia Palen Wood had already worked on several renovations for their clients' home when they learned that the family wanted to build a home in Portland, Maine, just off the coast of secluded Casco Bay.

"The homeowners were itching to do a ground-up house, and were actually talking about doing a second vacation home," says Veltman, principal and owner of Ruard Veltman Architecture + Interiors (RVA+I). "But when it was determined that they were going

to move, I thought, 'Oh, this is perfect. We're going to design a new house, but it's going to be their main house.' No pun intended."

The new home, designed in an American and European Arts & Crafts style, differed in many ways from the clients' previous home, which had a distinctly French Normandy feel. This home, which is nestled on five acres of pristine Maine coastland, called for a more local approach. "Because of its location, we wanted to incorporate wood and stone, and carry that throughout the home," says Veltman. The goal

Veltman designed the study to evoke a feeling of *gezellig*—a Dutch word that means a place of comfort and peace. “I think every house should have that one room where it’s either small, dark, or has low ceilings,” he says. “We focus so much on being together, but there are times when you have to retreat or have a quiet moment.” **OPPOSITE:** The living room was designed around a fourteen-foot antique French mirror that the homeowners found at auction. “They wanted to have that one glamorous room,” says Veltman. The white leather sofas, chaise, and pouf are from Poltrona Frau Quadra.







A custom-built wooden hutch, designed by Veltman, helps separate the kitchen from the family room and adds warmth to the space.

On the island, a mortar and pestle from Foxglove Antiques & Galleries is repurposed as a vase.



**ABOVE:** A pivoting steel door is just one intriguing architectural detail found throughout the home.

**LEFT:** In the primary bedroom, the wall is upholstered in varying shades of gray velvet. French doors open up for a sweeping view of the bay.

was to make the home look like it was a natural part of the landscape, and the steep, pitched roofs and visible dormers help shrink the visual scale, so as not to compete with the views of the bay or the natural grass around it. “We wanted to design something that looks like it belongs,” says Wood.

With four children (and two large dogs, a Bernese Mountain Dog and a chocolate Labrador), all of whom are active outdoors, the home also had to be very practical. “The family really embraces the land. They go down to the water for swims and kayaking and paddleboarding,” says

Wood. “And they’re in a climate where there are a ton of boots and coats, and it’s raining, and snowing, and cold,” adds Veltman. “They’re very active, so they’re constantly coming and going.” The land around the home also features a sport court that, in the winter, can be converted into a hockey rink. To accommodate the family’s outdoor lifestyle, Veltman designed the entryway to double as the mudroom, complete with built-in lockers and a durable bluestone floor. The result is a functional but elevated room.

The home was also designed with multiple larger living areas that accommodate the big family, like the kitchen centered around a marble island and a formal living room overlooking the bay. Veltman also specifically designed the living room to include a fourteen-foot antique French mirror that the homeowners purchased at auction. “It was a



In the family room, an RVA+I custom-designed sofa rests against one of the home's three bay windows. The gaming table, also a custom design, is made of antique oak.



Nestled on five acres of coastal property, the home was built using local materials like fieldstone and cedar. "We wanted to give it a feeling of permanence, as if this house has always been here," says Wood.








"Because of its location, we wanted to incorporate wood and stone, and carry that throughout the home," says Veltman. He and Wood designed the home so that it complements its pristine surroundings.

centerpiece in their first house, so we wanted to incorporate it into their Maine house as well," says Wood. "And we all crossed our fingers that it would transport without breaking." The result is a glamorous room that's functional for the entire family—including the kids and the dogs.

The house took about three years to design and build, but Veltman says the process went smoothly. From the outset, he and Wood were in lockstep with the homeowners, in part because they'd already worked together in the past.

Working with the homeowners from the earliest stages of the project also allowed the team to design the house around the family's lifestyle. "It was a great experience for them to go through the kinds of rooms they wanted," she says.

The family moved into the home in 2019, but they still keep in touch with Wood and Veltman. "They really embrace being in this home and on this property," says Wood. "The house has a great energy, and a lot of it comes from the personality of the family." ♦



In a nod to the bay outside, Wood designed the steel sconces on the wall above the banquette to have a nautical feel. A twisted rope runs down the light and holds the ivory linen shade. The sconces are custom by Evan Wood.