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## Embracing The New

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# BY THE THE SEA

PERCHED ON THE EDGE  
OF LONG ISLAND SOUND, THIS  
ROWAYTON HOME CELEBRATES THE  
SCENERY FROM EVERY ANGLE

BY FRED ALBERT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVEROSI.NET

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#### Sound Investment

The water side of the Rowayton home is mostly glass and sits atop a fieldstone foundation. The T-shaped house was pushed to the north edge of the property to maximize views to the south and to divert attention from the neighboring home, which extends out over the water. See *Resources*.



## SHINGLE-STYLE HOUSES ARE AS COMMON ALONG THE CONNECTICUT COAST AS SANDPIPERS AND SAILBOATS.

While we tend to think of these homes as charming relics of 19th-century America, they were really rather revolutionary in their day, offering a sleek, sinuous counterpoint to conventional Victorian excess.

Rarely has Shingle-style felt as radical, however, as in a recent Rowayton home designed by Christopher Pagliaro of Pagliaro Bartels Sajda Architects in South Norwalk. While the front façade features symmetrical gables framing an eyebrow dormer and quaint rooftop monitor, the rear feels as exposed as an x-ray—its sheathing peeled back to reveal diaphanous walls of floor-to-ceiling glass that are as evanescent as a soap bubble.

Perched atop a vertiginous bluff bordering Long Island Sound, the 7,500-square-foot home overlooks a panoramic expanse of twinkling water,

bobbing boats and serpentine shoreline that's pretty breathtaking—even by the high standards of this postcard-pretty village. And Pagliaro doesn't sacrifice a single opportunity to celebrate the scenery, wrapping the public spaces in glass walls that dissolve any distinctions between interior and exterior.

"The back of the house isn't the end of the house," Pagliaro observes. "The end of the house is Long Island Sound."

Stepping through the front door, the traditional Shingle-style façade gives way to a more contemporary entry hall, where cable railings wrap the main staircase in a nautical embrace. To help define the living areas within the open plan, Pagliaro varied ceiling heights and finishes, capping the main-floor rooms with fir treated with a weathering stain for a sun-drenched, beachy feel.



**Considered Solutions** The mahogany gate and serpentine driveway (ABOVE LEFT) designed by Artemis Landscape Architects lead to the front of the house built by Fletcher Development. A shed dormer and monitor (ABOVE RIGHT) illuminate the guest quarters over the garage, which sits perpendicular to the road so the doors don't dominate the front. **On The Water's Edge** (OPPOSITE PAGE) All-weather wicker chaises overlook the infinity pool and Long Island Sound. See *Resources*.



**Pure Transparency** (ABOVE) A glass railing surrounds the staircase to the beach, assuring safety while preserving views of the water. **Vanishing Act** (BELOW LEFT) Shoreline Pools built the swimming pool, whose overflow edges are faced in gray glass tile from D&D Homes. **A Clean Slate** (BELOW RIGHT) The home's basement level includes a cabana, which opens onto a sheltered patio equipped with an outdoor shower. See *Resources*.





**A Material Mix** A custom glass-enclosed wine room (ABOVE LEFT) flanks the front door, signaling the owners' oenological interests as soon as visitors enter. An Arteriors Clint side table complements rattan-backed A. Rudin chairs in the family room (ABOVE RIGHT); sectional is from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams. A Light Drizzle crystal chandelier from Ochre illuminates an RH table and chairs in the dining room (BELOW), where oak floors, a fir ceiling and walnut accent wall help warm the window-lined space, which includes a Hickory White console through Lillian August. See *Resources*.



**Streamlined Style** (ABOVE) In the kitchen, white marble countertops rest atop custom cabinets designed by Pagliaro Bartels Sajda Architects and fabricated by Henry Agudelo. The stone sits flush with the cabinet faces, producing a discreet shadow line. Pendants from Circa Lighting illuminate the cooktop and stools from Vanguard Furniture; glass cupboard doors reveal walnut interiors that warm the space and echo the accent wood used elsewhere in the home. See *Resources*.



Visible supports are all but absent, allowing window walls to flow nearly uninterrupted—and, in several instances, to fold out of the way altogether. “There’s an incredible amount of steel framing,” acknowledges contractor Ryan Fletcher of Fletcher Development in South Norwalk.

While the kitchen sits in full view, its pale gray cabinets and matching marble counters manage to impress but not impose. Since the owner wanted to enjoy the scenery while he cooked, Pagliaro inserted a cooktop into the sprawling, 16-foot island (“It’s not an island,” he quips. “It’s a continent.”) and installed a flush ceiling vent above, so nothing blocks the view.

Interior designer Amy Aidinis Hirsch of Greenwich was tasked with bringing warmth to the rooms without stealing focus from the vista. She kept the

palette neutral in accordance with the clients’ wishes, but introduced subtle hints of color and texture—opting for nubby wool carpeting and fabrics like mohair and chenille that are both sensual and durable. “The owner wanted to be able to put his feet up and not worry,” Hirsch says.

Expanses of dusky walnut punctuate the interior, grounding spaces like the dining room, where a coffered fir ceiling supports a tiered crystal chandelier that looks like raindrops suspended in midair. In the neighboring family room, a pair of A. Rudin chairs with woven rattan backs add a welcome touch of texture, while the cobalt mohair upholstery lends a dash of color—and echoes the natural palette of sky and water beyond.

Sky and water dominate the views from the upstairs master bedroom, which



**Grand Entrance** (ABOVE) In the entry, an RH chandelier illuminates a Holly Hunt table fitted with a custom concrete top; the rug is from J.D. Staron; small benches are through Holland & Sherry. The adjacent living room features a Vanguard sofa and Barbara Barry chairs in front of a stucco fireplace topped with a Lexington mirror. **Gathering Place** (BELOW) A linear fire pit warms the lower patio outside the cabana. See *Resources*.



“THE BACK OF THE HOUSE ISN'T THE END OF THE HOUSE. THE END OF THE HOUSE IS LONG ISLAND SOUND”

**Poolside Paradise** (ABOVE) The rear of the home embraces the view and the pool, which was a collaboration between architect Chris Pagliaro and Tara Vincenta of Artemis Landscape Architects. Balconies off the bedrooms break up the two-story façade and allowed Pagliaro to amplify the views with large glass doors. The glass tower bridging the two wings contains the master bathroom. **Natural Beauty** (OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM) Salt-resistant plantings line a picturesque pathway to the backyard. See *Resources*.



**Fine Lines** (ABOVE) Cable railings add a nautical touch to the main stairway, which is illuminated at night by Arteriors' Rook pendants. **Glass Acts** (BELOW) A Bain Ultra Evanescence bathtub from D&D Homes takes pride of place inside the glass tower adjoining the master bathroom. Sandblasted glass offers a modicum of modesty in the shower; the countertops are crafted from milk glass. See *Resources*.



**Astounding Aerie** (ABOVE) The master bedroom feels like it's floating above the water. Cool grays and blues are reflected in the Barbara Barry lounge chairs and ottoman, which rest atop an Antrim carpet from Turabian & Sariyan. Bed is through Brownstone Furniture. See *Resources*.

seems to hover over the surroundings like a bird in flight. The outside scene is so magnificent that the homeowners were reluctant to install window treatments, finally opting to forgo them altogether. "They weren't really concerned about the privacy," notes Hirsch.

That's a good thing, considering the fact that their bathtub is planted smack in the middle of a whimsical glass tower that overlooks the rear patio. From there, it's possible to look down on the Chinese granite terrace and the swimming pool, which was hammered out of solid rock. Because the view extends

to both the south and east, Pagliaro designed the pool with two disappearing edges—so no matter which way you look, the surface of the water blends into Long Island Sound.

The family maintains an active interest in golf, and even has a room dedicated to it on the lower level, where a projection screen and built-in swing sensors let the residents simulate the experience of playing on the world's most beautiful courses. While the technology is impressive, it can't surpass the natural beauty beckoning just outside the door. ✨