



GOOD LIFE NEW ENGLAND OPENS
UP A WORLD OF POSSIBILITY....

Where the Livin' IS GOOD

BY RORY MARCUS • PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANIELLE ROBERTS



pool and ocean beyond, and a stone dining table where the family could gather for meals.

Grace wanted the feel of the outdoor kitchen to have warmth. "We have so much stone on the property, especially with the new landscaping around the pool, and we wanted to add a wood look to give it a timeless feel," she explains. To meet this desire, Meader suggested outdoor cabinetry with the appearance of traditional wood and the convenience of a broad array of interior accessories. "The unique construction and materials designed into this cabinetry overcome the challenges of wood for preserving joinery and finishes under the extremes of nature while bringing the beautiful look of wood into this outdoor environment."



Grace Concannon was losing hope in her search for just the right summer place when she happened by a "For Sale" sign on a rocky hill in Plymouth in 2009. The house was a 1980s contemporary style, not at all what she was looking for, but as she gazed down from high, atop the cliff and witnessed the panoramic view of the ocean, she was sold. "It took my breath away," she says. "The view was so calming, I could feel my blood pressure drop."

"It was a quirky upside-down house," as Grace describes it, "because you enter the ground floor where the bedrooms are and have to go upstairs to the kitchen and living area to see the view." It wasn't really conducive for entertaining family and friends, but she began to

have a vision about how they could renovate it. She held fast to that vision, and years later turned it into an award-winning reality.

Admitting to being a 'magazine-aholic,' Grace devoured home magazines, cutting out decorating ideas and musing with her husband Brian about them. "Living in the house over eight summers, we discovered all the home's peculiarities and knew what we wanted to do," she remembers. When it was time to make the transition to a full-time residence, they were ready to make changes. Opening up the rooms and maximizing the views was a top priority. Also of major importance, they wanted to make it a place where they could entertain expansively and where Grace could

fully enjoy her love of cooking both indoors as well as outdoors; as in a California kitchen.

They engaged Good Life New England of Norwell, a residential design firm that specializes in space planning and fine cabinetry, whom they had worked with before on a small project. "It was such a pleasure to work with Glenn and Brittany," Grace says. "They brought all my ideas to life." Glenn Meader, the principal of Good Life, was the lead designer on the project. "Our residential designer Brittany Carroll had an ever-present and amazing supporting role in design," Meader recalls, "so the Concannons received the complements of our respective strengths." It was clearly a successful choice because their collaboration

resulted in an outdoor kitchen nestled under a deck with views to the pool and ocean beyond which won a Gold PRISM award in the Outdoor Category from BRAGB, the Builder's & Remodeler's Association of Greater Boston.

While Good Life New England's specialty is in the design and installation of custom cabinetry, their services are a perfect extension into the remodeling process. "The clients had very specific features in mind for the outdoor kitchen," Meader explains. "They wanted Grace to be fully immersive with cooking, as well as extend the outdoor season from spring to fall.

A 42" grill by Twin Eagles was a starting element that Meader

positioned so the family could enjoy the view of the ocean while remaining interacting with guests at the poolside counter bar. "We also incorporated a burner and a 30" stainless bar setup, both also manufactured by Twin Eagles, with a sink, ice well, and bottle opener that we paired in close proximity with a stainless under-counter refrigerator by Delta Heat," he adds.

Another important feature: an outdoor television so that they could catch the Boston sports games while enjoying the outdoor atmosphere.

Meader also incorporated different seating areas for different purposes: seating poolside for a drink at the bar or watching the game, more bar seating that looked out to the

Grace and Brian love cooking in their newly imagined California kitchen, "Cooking outside is more relaxed and you feel like you are on vacation," she notes. "We do a lot of grilling and steam lobsters on the gas burners. I've made pancakes on the griddle and done breakfast as well, which is a very nice way to wake up."

In addition to this award-winning outdoor kitchen, Meader's design team was responsible for significant changes indoors. Meader reflects that, "Initially we came in to do the kitchen and that led to planning many additional spaces, so we had the pleasure of working throughout the house and contributing to the feel of the whole place."

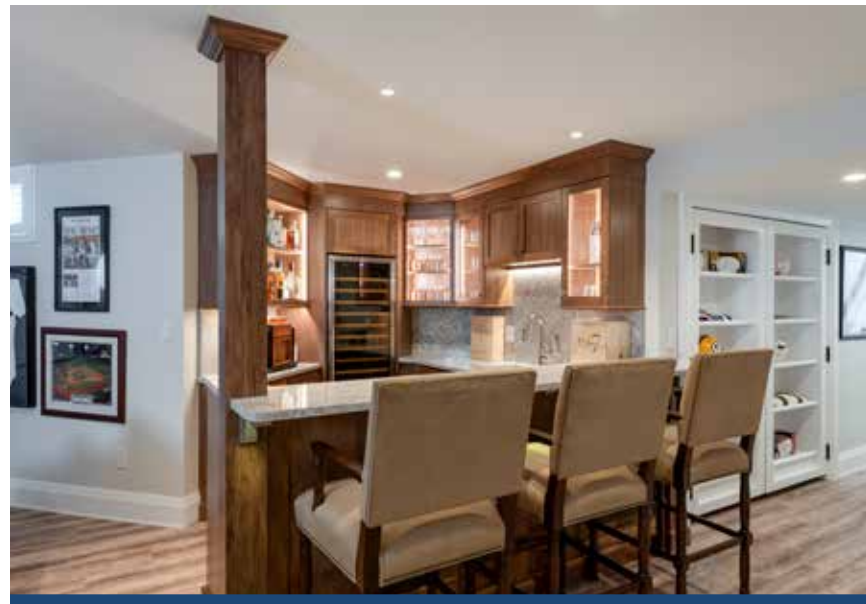
They designed the new indoor

kitchen, added a pantry, a wet bar near the porch for entertaining, and a bar in the lower level man cave. To integrate all these pieces as a whole was an exacting undertaking that was assisted by the 3D modeling service that Good Life New England offers. Grace went to their design studio to look at a vast array of materials to choose from and brought home samples to consider. Ultimately the 3D modeling gave her an experience that immersed her in the new spaces.

“It was very helpful to see all the pieces together in a bird’s eye view layout. After months of just picturing how things would work it was reassuring to see it all come together,” she says.

“Our 3D modeling process is truly a game changer for clients,” Meader confirms. “It enables them to visualize what most struggle to perceive from standard two-dimensional drawings. They can select a variety of different materials and finish options in the composition of the designed space, rather than try to hold separate samples together in their imagination.”

Indeed there were unique challenges with the existing kitchen space to realize Grace’s vision to open it to the living area and enjoy the gorgeous views while cooking. “The shape stretched long but was too narrow for a long island to stretch with it,” Meader explains. “We wanted the space to flow. We handled this challenge with an intentional separation of zones. The wider part of the kitchen received



a seven-foot island and the main sink area, both with views to the ocean beyond. A built-in SubZero refrigerator was positioned at the transition between this wider space and the more narrow half of the kitchen, where cabinets wrapped in a U-shape, extending storage and counter space toward the range.”

“A great feature of their kitchen now is that while it’s not positioned at the ocean-side of the house, it is very open to all the adjacent living spaces that boast ample windows with



ocean views,” Meader continues. In the formerly sunken living room, Grace changed a brick fireplace into a double-sided stone fireplace and raised the floor two feet to be seamlessly connected to the rest of the space. “Now the sink area enjoys not only views to the water, but views to the fireplace in the living room and beyond,” Meader explains. Grace’s satisfaction with the result is evident when she says, “The kitchen flows so much better and cooking and entertaining have been a joy. It is so nice that guests can sit and talk and have a glass of wine while I’m working in the kitchen.”

Adjacent to the kitchen, Grace also got the pantry she always wanted. Handsome cabinets with tall glass doors offer storage on one side, while the opposite side offers an additional sink, dishwasher and a built-in steam oven. Grace’s fun decorating sense is evident with a

unique collection of rolling pins that attach to the wall like an art display. To make the home’s lower-level dramatically more comfortable, Meader had to work with odd angles to create an open and entertaining space that included a wet bar. He sums it up by saying, “The lower level bar and surrounding finished space was as dramatic a transition as any in the house.” Higher plastered ceilings replaced a low lattice ceiling, formerly painted black to conceal the mechanicals above. The full bar, crafted in natural walnut, features a wine refrigerator, open shelves for display, and glass and solid door upper cabinets for liquor and other storage.

The lower section includes a large bar sink, a raised bar counter for guests, and a serving counter for making drinks and an under-counter beverage refrigerator. The adjacent lounging space

with a large screen television and comfortable seating is adorned with sports paraphernalia from Boston’s favorite teams and has become Brian’s favorite spot in the house.

“Altogether it was a very big and satisfying remodeling effort that we were thrilled to be part of.” Meader recalls. “I was floored with Grace’s beautiful taste and what she has created throughout. It is so relaxing that whenever I’ve visited, I don’t want to leave.”

On the Concannon’s part, the changes have made their lives easier and made it more fun to entertain. What she still loves most, Grace says is, “to sit in the living room with a cup of tea and enjoy the boundless views.”

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