

COASTAL LIVING

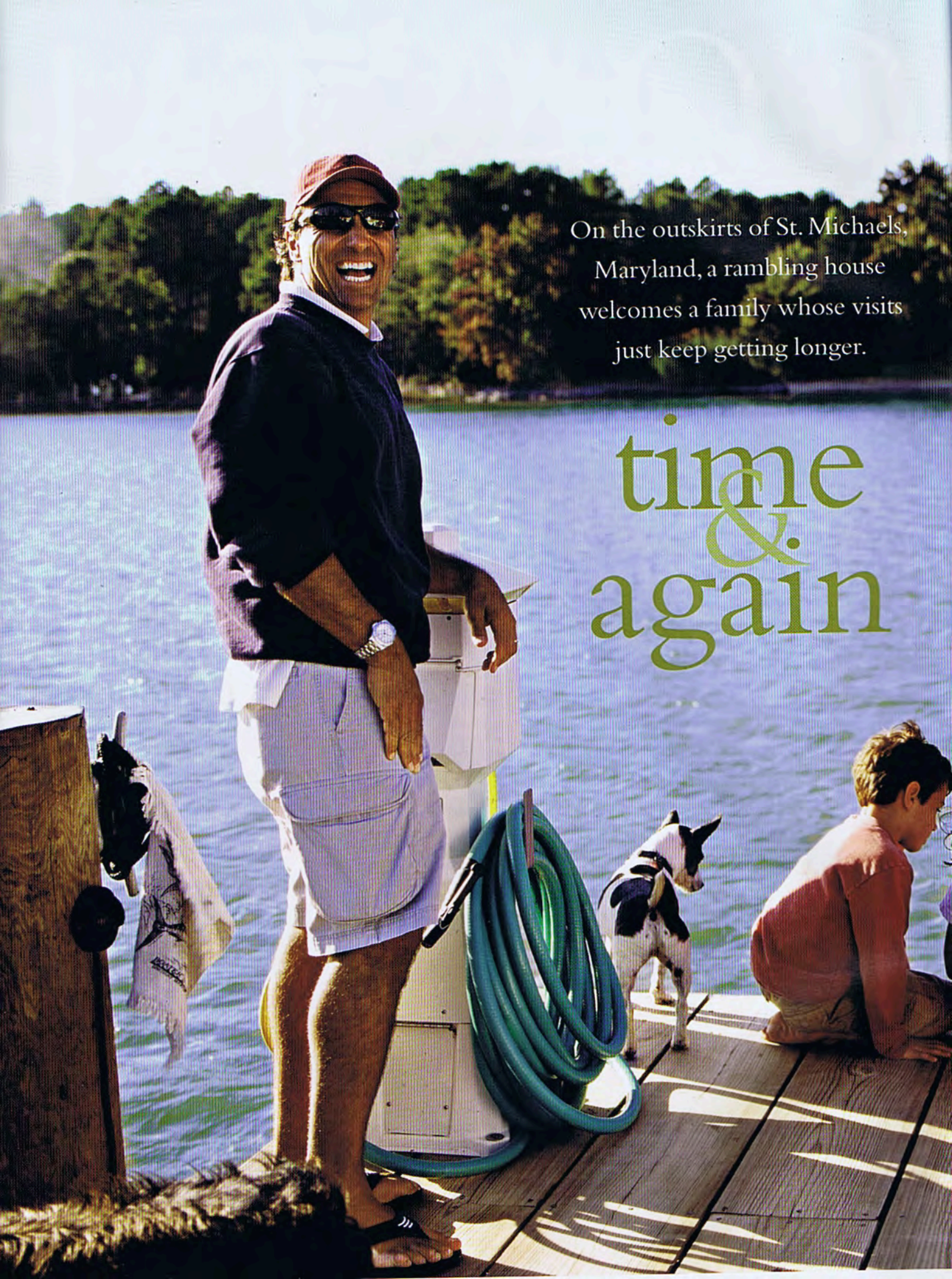
THE
MAGAZINE
FOR PEOPLE
WHO LOVE
THE COAST

weekends at the shore

decorate, relax, escape

peek inside
7 beach
homes

shop a
new england
haven



On the outskirts of St. Michaels,
Maryland, a rambling house
welcomes a family whose visits
just keep getting longer.

time & again



TEXT AND STYLING BY
MARION LAFFEY FOX
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DEBORAH
WHITLAW LLEWELLYN





Parents want to share the best parts of their childhoods with their kids. For Christine Martinelli, that means boating, swimming, and crabbing along Maryland's Eastern shore. "I grew up summering on the Chesapeake Bay and always dreamed of returning so our three children would experience the fun I had," Christine says. "I remember longing for that last day of school, when we packed up and went to the beach and didn't return until after Labor Day. Summer meant no shoes, a bathing suit, and water."

Recalling those carefree times, she introduced her husband, David, to her favorite area of the world shortly after they were married. "Initially he said

In the front hall (opposite), New England accents reign: a copper lantern, nautical pillows, and a custom rug with local scenes copied from old postcards. Above: Architect Lyman Perry relaxes with the Martinellis in the family room. Coastal fabric covers the ottoman and throw pillows, and rope piping trims sofas and chairs. Inset: A compass rose adorns the third-floor hardwoods.

“We wanted a big house because we wanted to have a lot of guests—we like to entertain. Now we can have two or three families at a time for [sleepover] weekends.” —Christine Martinelli, homeowner



Brass sheaths the kitchen island, designed to resemble an upside-down dinghy. Other shipshape details—fisherman's lanterns, a built-in banquette, and boat-cleat hardware—maintain the waterfront theme.

something like, 'Chesapeake? What is that?'" Christine says. After repeat visits, he became hooked and the couple bought waterfront farmland to build a second home.

When it was time to consider the house's design, the couple rejected the region's typical brick vernacular and reached, instead, for a more casual shingle-style building reminiscent of Nantucket. "We wanted to create an instant getaway feel," says Christine. Researching their favorite houses on

the Massachusetts island, they discovered homes by architect Lyman Perry. "After we learned that he grew up on the Miles River in Maryland, no other architect had a chance," she says.

For the interiors, the couple signed on designer Kathleen Jamieson of Mock Fox Interiors, Inc., in Haverford, Pennsylvania. The Martinellis admired her philosophy of keeping things easy and simple, and not worrying about kids' dirty feet. Project manager Jeff Spoelker and builder Doug Croker of

Ilex Builders in Easton, Maryland, rounded out the design team.

As hands-on clients, the Martinellis compiled lists of must-have features. Jeff recalls early meetings with the couple surrounded by kids and dogs. "They conveyed the need to create a place for family play," he says.

The design team incorporated the family's wishes into the plans. Water views permeate every space, an eat-in kitchen and family room sustain gatherings, and multiple fireplaces and



Christine asked for a dining room that could host a crowd. Reproduction Windsor chairs and a long table fill the bill. The cabinet, stained floor pattern, and antique lantern lend architectural interest to the simply appointed room.

“[Christine and David] conveyed the need to create a place for family play.”

—Jeff Spoelker, project manager



screened porches provide outdoor dining and entertainment spots. “We wanted a cozy master bedroom, and I insisted on a pool house like the one that became our party shack when I was growing up,” says Christine, who also asked for several guest bedrooms and a formal dining room to seat at least 15 for holiday celebrations.

The family loves to point out favorite architectural details, such as the custom breakfast table with a sliding top to allow easy access to the banquette, the mud-room’s oversize dog shower (which also comes in handy for kids), and the lofts above the children’s rooms. “Jeff and Doug came up with the novel idea of creating these lofts, but the fact that they are so high made us worry that someone would fall overboard,” says Christine. To allay her fears, they covered the openings with sailcloth and secured it with grommets. “It not only looked nautical, but also became totally safe,” she says. Further responding to the family’s requests, when David wanted a kitchen island that looked like an upside-down boat, the builders interpreted Kathleen’s design and covered it with who-cares-if-it’s-high-maintenance brass.

Today, the family gravitates to their dream house for off-season weekends and long stretches in the summer. Just as Christine once did, their children bike to Big Al’s for bait, go crabbing, and sail. “My kids are even beginning to recognize beauty in the nature that surrounds us,” Christine says. “One of them said recently, ‘Look, the ospreys are in the nest!’ That’s what it’s all about.” 🐾

In the kids’ rooms, ships’ ladders lead to lofty play areas. Left: Radiant-heat flooring and removable windows make the long screened porch comfortable year-round.



*A built-in bed in the
master suite surveys
Broad Creek from high in
the house's octagonal tower.*