

A Midwestern family finds its ideal beach escape  
in Rhode Island.





# MILES

away from  
ordinary



**nothing** goes better with an icy Corona than a wedge of lime. Just ask Andy Berk, who imports Mexico's popular beer into the United States. When he and his wife, Diane, purchased a New England getaway with surroundings as soothing as a Corona commercial, they named it Lime's Wedge.

The Berks initially sought a second home for three reasons—their grown kids. “As our children got older and settled on the East Coast, we began to fantasize about a family compound where we

TEXT AND STYLING BY MARION LAFFEY FOX  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEAN ALLSOPP



could gather,” Diane says. Though they considered Cape Cod and the Hamptons, “we realized it was really Rhode Island we loved.”

Then a real estate agent guided Diane to a new six-bedroom home in Middletown with 150 feet of rocky coastline. “It was love at first sight,” she says. “It had an unimaginable setting with views of Newport’s Second Beach Nature Preserve and the Sakonnet Point Light.”

Diane also liked the house’s details, which included an eat-in kitchen, a spacious family room, and floor-to-ceiling windows.

Andy and Diane used simple artwork and accessories to make the house feel homey and welcoming. It is the perfect getaway for their two sons and daughter, who often drive over from Boston and Providence to watch football as a family on Sundays.



But the master suite—with its cathedral ceiling, enormous bath, and deck curved like the bow of a ship—sealed the deal. She placed an excited phone call to Andy, who quickly jumped on board, and the couple moved in during the summer of 2004.

The Berks quickly came to appreciate architect Ron DiMauro’s thoughtful siting of the house. Says Ron, “The builder, Mark Horan, and I wanted to celebrate the views here. When you open the front door, you can see straight through to the ocean



and immediately understand why you're here. In essence, the house typifies the core reasons you buy a coastal home: to wake up and see the blue ocean, smell the salty air, and imagine that you are on permanent vacation."

While local landscape architect Katherine Field set to work planning an infinity pool and gardens off the back terrace, Diane sat at home in Chicago calculating the challenges of furnishing a new house nearly 1,000 miles away. "This project was large, but I

"I wanted to make the living room really comfortable so that if you came in from the beach, you didn't hesitate to sit down on the couch," Diane says. Painted slat-back chairs in the breakfast room (below) "all match in style, but the different colors make the space more cheerful."



wasn't intimidated. My immediate goal was to make it both usable and comfortable in the shortest amount of time possible," Diane explains. "I purposely confined my furniture search to catalog and chain stores because they offer good, solid products at reasonable prices and are capable of shipping from local warehouses near Newport and Boston." She was surprised to find how simple the task turned out to be. "That year Crate & Barrel had a line of furniture called the Newport



collection, and I thought, 'Here's a message from God,'" she says with a laugh. "Because I was buying in spring, the stores were decked out for summer, so it was easy to find what I wanted."

As much as Diane liked the new furniture, she wanted Lime's Wedge to look more like a home than a page out of a catalog. So with the basics on order, she took her time adding favorite antiques

Diane and Andy often escape to the balcony off the master bedroom (above). Visitors find their own retreat in the colorful first-floor guest room (below).



from home and bringing in art and accessories from local shops. "We made up the word 'wedgian' to describe the look that evolved," she says. "We think it connotes the special touches that warm the house and make it uniquely ours. The house has become everybody's favorite place, so we consider it a complete success." 🌿

More info: page 198