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A WILDWOODS CLASSIC

A DESIGNER INFUSED A NEW SHORE HOUSE WITH RETRO GLAMOUR OF THE '50s AND '60s.



By Kathleen Nicholson Webber

FOR THE INQUIRER

NORTH WILDWOOD — When Mary-Ann Kleschick decided to design a Shore house for her longtime client Larry Miller, she thought she would take cues from this town's signature sleek 1950s and '60s architecture.

Miller thought in more general terms about the house. He wanted something comfortable, yet grown-up, light and summery, but with a rich appearance to use year-round (allowing the fall and winter holidays here). And he envisioned a compound of sorts to host extended family.

So, Miller decided to build a four-bedroom house in North Wildwood, and a set of condos next door for other family members. He called Philadelphia designer Kleschick to sketch plans for the main house. The two had worked on three other houses together, and he liked her concept of high style and comfort. The result is a glamorous house that is anything but a movie set.

The main floor's living spaces are open. "It is the key to make the home airy and welcoming," says Kleschick. "They have large family gatherings where everyone feels at home."

See **SHORE HOUSE** on D10



The great room, top photo, at the Miller family Shore house in North Wildwood has an open, airy feel. Above, the clean lines of a credenza, accented with nature's sea designs. At left, the dining room — comfortable, inviting.

Shore house recalls retro glamour of Wildwoods

SHORE HOUSE from D1

Miller gave Kleschick carte blanche with the design, save for one element he didn't want in the living room — a coffee table. With small grandchildren, the place had to be kid-friendly.

Kleschick was worried the room would look strange without one, so she flanked the sofa with two curvy, mirror-top, white lacquer tables. She perched ceramic base lamps from the Center City shop Bulb on top of the tables.

The bases are retro in feeling, but they remind me a little bit of coral," she says. A 50s-style geometric drum table sits between two honeycomb pattern chairs in the room.

The durable, cushy seating vignettes pack a visual punch. "With a Shore house, swicker is fine to look at, but it is not comfortable to lie down on," says the designer. Neither did she want a hyacinth chair, made of the coarse fibers of the water hyacinth. "You don't want to sit on them when you are wearing a bikini," she says. "I used fabrics that are embracing and warm so it's charming, yet still sophisticated."

Next to the living room, Kleschick chose an Eero Saarinen table from Knoll for formal dining.

"The table was designed in the same era, the late 1950s, as much of the architecture of Wildwood in its heyday," she said. "It is a subtle reference to the architecture of the motels the town is known for."

She chose the piece, too, because it is sturdy and low-maintenance. "Because it is a slim, pedestal base, you can fit 10 for dinner around it."

In the main living spaces, she dressed windows with white linen drapes that soften the space. "They make the room look less stark, and because they like the AC off a lot, you get this great billowy feel to the room when the breeze comes in." Underfoot there are Brazilian cherry hardwood floors and custom area rugs atop them.

Throughout the house, there are dark and light contrasts. In the kitchen, Kle-

schick combined white lacquer and dark cherry cabinets complemented by a mosaic tile backsplash in browns and cool blues, against the walls a rich texture. At the breakfast counter, she put white faux-leather seats on the dark wood stools.

Since the house was new construction, Kleschick had to first work on bathrooms. The palette she chose set the tone for the house. In the powder room, a clear-blue, cantilevered bubbled-glass sink floats on the wall and looks like a wave. Jets-in-looking scones are on either side of the round mirror.

For the guest bath, she chose white, yellow onyx and turquoise tile from Joanne Hudson in a matchstick pattern.

Next to it, the guest bedroom features light seafoam walls, with natural accents like sea fans. Taupe, white, and hot-pink pillows are piled on the turquoise custom duvet. A bench at the foot of the bed is covered in a rich brown-and-white cut velvet, fashioned in a Greek key-chain pattern. The rug is a forgiving turquoise and brown pattern.

On the lower level of the house, Kleschick installed walnut travertine instead of rugs to hide the sand that's tracked in. On that same level, she chose indoor/outdoor fabrics for the family room and father-in-law suite.

On the main floor, off the living room, is a study where Larry's wife, Delores, a poet, works. Kleschick installed an L-shaped beechwood custom desk with Knoll "Life" chairs in the room, and a love seat.

In the back of the house are an outdoor kitchen and a common area between the main house and the condos, with three large tables with umbrellas and Brown Jordan sling furniture for lounging. The centerpiece is the pool with two mosaic tile dolphins on the bottom.

"In the summer months and into the fall, family and friends are out here all the time," says Kleschick. "It really is a family retreat where everyone gathers comfortably."



SHARON GEKOSKI-KIMMEL / Staff Photographer



Interior designer MaryAnn Kleschick

relaxes in the family room of the Shore house she designed in North Wildwood. Her longtime client, Larry Miller, gave her free rein, and she took architectural cues from the town's sleek designs of the 1950s and '60s. At left, the kitchen has white lacquer and dark cherry cabinets, complemented by a mosaic tile backsplash. Dark and white contrasts and a variety of textures are a theme throughout the house. The owner wanted a summery feel, but with an appearance rich enough for year-round.

