

# Bay Escape

**Where nature preserve and cutting-edge design meet ... Spitznagels' Loveladies home**

Every house has a language and the most remarkable places result from owners who entrust the design or renovation to someone who speaks the “language of place.” John and Mary Ann Spitznagel, of Tidal Drive in Loveladies, were indeed fortunate to have found someone who does.

When they bought their second LBI property at 17 Beacon in 2000, they had Mark Reynolds, of Reynolds Landscaping in Manahawkin, design and maintain the botanical infrastructure, as well as the annual flower rotations. For years, Reynolds has created stunning gardens and landscaped properties all over the area, using plants that deliver in sand, saltwater, and high wind environments.

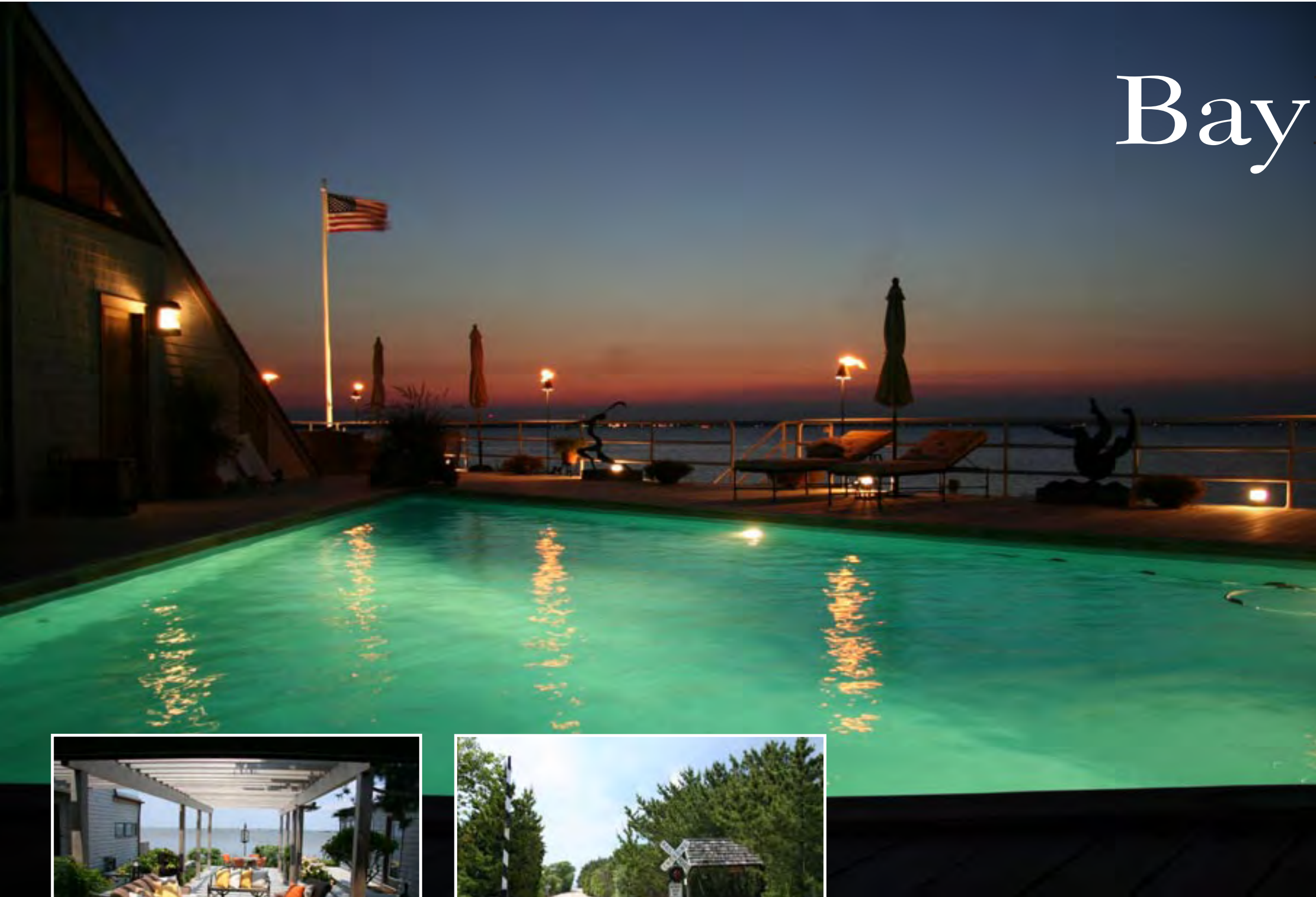
In 2005, when the Spitznagels bought all four lots of this remarkable, undeveloped peninsula that offers the most spectacular views on Long Beach Island and may be one of the best spots in coastal New Jersey, they turned to Reynolds again for the landscaping work.

The opportunity was given to Mark by John and Mary Ann to influence the design for both the home’s architecture and surrounding property. John Spitznagel said, “This was truly a relationship built on trust.”

The conversation began between husband, wife and Mark Reynolds, who not only has a great eye, but a great ear. He’s a listener, someone who pays attention. He knew the Spitznagels wanted “their best life”—and Reynolds could see how to create that best life right there, blending interiors and exteriors seamlessly to create the well-crafted pieces of a perfect puzzle. So well-crafted and so perfect that it is both natural and cutting edge, extroverted and serene, exuberant and contemplative.

A place to live a real “best life.”

First, everyone had their work cut out for them. Blow out the windows, open up the interior space, maximize the magnificent views—now you can stand in any number of spots in the house and only turn your head to take in the 270-degree unobstructed view from bridge to lighthouse and beyond.





**This house says warmth and livability, without sacrificing the elegance ...**

Over three years, Reynolds designed, built, and renovated various facets of the property.

John and Mary Ann love people, entertaining, and the natural world. Now this 5,000-square-foot home says they can have it all, blending sleek modern amenities and a hearth-like warmth with marsh and wetlands — a two-story-plus Spanish Antequera limestone fireplace chimney; a bay-front wood fire pit of sandstone boulders; custom barbeque; and one of the most dramatic outdoor showers on the island, made of western red cedar and Brazilian mahogany, enhanced by site-specific lighting crafted by Tanek Hood, lighting designer and son-in-law to Mark Reynolds. Hood brings to the company a love of light, an extreme sensitivity to the terrain and the views, and how to create outdoor night scapes that will extend living choices without compromising nocturnal space. Here, Hood has used up lights that work with escaping ambient light to allow a soft glow, as well as other modalities to illuminate showers, walkways, and the deck.

If only you could experience it all: the crushed stone drive, the rustic set of train tracks you must cross, the small vineyard. It feels as if you are driving down an isolated road in the wilderness — less the breaks on your sight line through the pines where you can see the bay and marshland to the south — heading to a nature preserve. But then you are at this dramatic angular home, with white cedar siding, deeply sloped roofs of red cedar shakes, windows and more windows, and dramatic expanses of native plant material interspersed with hydrangeas, roses, and vibrant annual plantings.

Overlooking Barnegat Bay, a triangular pool is surrounded by a mahogany deck and segmented into intimate seating areas. Once inside, there's a chef's kitchen designed by Francie Milano Kitchens, expansive living areas, bathrooms of wood, stone and glass, much of it redesigned and reoriented by Reynolds, and all of it impacted by Mary Ann Spitznagel and the palette sensibility of Wendy Wilshin of WLW Designs in Manhattan.

Binoculars rest on a table, a chair, the bathroom vanity. They are bird watchers, egret watchers, otter watchers, and fox watchers. It is a far cry from their city life in Manhattan. Often they kayak, but when the winds are up, it's likely the Spitznagels, avid sailors of two Catboats, can be found out traversing the bay. They celebrate daily life with their children, their grandchildren, and their friends, of which they now count the Reynolds family.

The strongest binding thread is perhaps the way wetlands and marsh coexist with this contemporary home, the way the built environment — buildings, plantings and light — supports the natural environment — trees, grasses and moonlight on water.

This house says warmth and livability, without sacrificing the elegance.

As night falls on Barnegat Bay, a sliver of moon balances in a beautiful bruise of sky. A salsa beat pulses by the pool, laughter tinkers with the night. Conversations move on wind currents. This is a house and a family of relationships that create a "best life." — *Annaliese Jakimides* •



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