

Feature

# LUXURY LIVING ON A LAGOON

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The allure of a waterfront shore house is inarguably at the top of any Long Beach Island getaway list, and this beautiful Holgate home happens to be engulfed in quite possibly the most resplendent outdoor oasis of all. Proving that evocative views don't end at the bay, with the help of Reynolds Landscaping, this 10,000-square-foot property on the southernmost tip of LBI has been reborn as a stylish, sun-drenched, serene sanctuary that celebrates island style and gracious outdoor living.





"We needed a change," began homeowner, Tina Wright, of her family's Holgate home for the past two decades. She added, "Everything was different from when we spent our time at the shore, to how often we came down, to our lifestyle when we were here—and we really needed to intentionally reflect on that and reconfigure it for how we want to live in the home now." After the sudden passing of her late husband, Wright and their daughter made the decision to take over the reins of the family business which happened to be in Woodbury, so it consequently left them transitioning from being full-time Long Beach Island residents to weekend visitors, or whenever their busy work schedules allowed. This ultimately shifted the functionality from everyday home to a place of much anticipated respite—their family safe haven—and a place to relax and rejuvenate. Since we all know that the best part of a beach house is living outside of it, Tina enlisted in the services of the talented landscape and design gurus at Reynolds in order to transform her weathered yard into the whimsical backyard paradise it is today.

The property originally consisted of an older swimming pool that required relentless maintenance, and since she and her daughter (who is now well past her childhood pool-party days) didn't really use the pool anymore, Tina knew that this obligation was the first thing that had to go. Since the duo knew that holidays in LBI were going to consist primarily of resting, unwinding and not having to think about work of any sort, they wanted the space to be conducive to relaxation, hosting loved ones, and—most importantly—completely maintenance-free. Another quirk was that the property also happens to be an irregular shape, so although quite large of a parcel for LBI, the vast majority of it was not being entirely utilized since it was so exposed to the adjacent



properties. The homeowner needed expert creative solutions for how to make the most of every square inch of her expansive yard, while still maintaining a sense of privacy from her surrounding neighbors.

The team at Reynolds wasted no time on the task at hand, carefully preparing to conceptualize, design, plan and build every conceivable luxury at Tina's fingertips. Founder Mark Reynolds and his son Luke Reynolds, who spearheaded the project and was personally on-site every day as it was in motion, share that the first 6 months of the project was actually spent on the thorough design and meticulous planning of the new layout. "Tina is a Garden Shop customer of ours, so understanding her desired aesthetic was quite straightforward—she loved the ambience of the Reynolds Garden Shops so much, she wanted us to replicate that atmosphere in her yard. It really resonates with her, as it resonates with us, so the collaboration was so organic." With a plethora of rustic wood and other natural, raw materials all immersed in luscious native and tropical greenery, the prospect of creating a multitude of living spaces outdoors got their creative juices flowing. They

divided the landscaping into different distinct areas for cooking, dining, lounging, and gathering. Each has a sense of intimacy and privacy, but all are still visually connected to the other spaces. As you walk through the yard, the energy grabs you. It truly is perfect for enjoying either in solitude or while entertaining guests, and there is architectural interest at every turn.

The first enhancement was to build a substantially larger deck off of the second story kitchen of the home. Not only did the Reynolds team add significantly more square footage to the brand-new deck area, yielding more comfortable dining space, but this also resulted in a lovely expansive covered patio area underneath. They constructed a prominent staircase from the second story to the ground floor, allowing for access to the kitchen area from outside, and a shade provoking high-grade white PVC pergola above, with automatic privacy screens attached in order to maintain privacy from the neighbors if desired.

Whenever the homeowners have the urge to prepare meals outdoors, however, the grill and kitchen area is



but another place to gather over a meal. The bar top travertine façade and granite counter is equipped with a built-in Weber grill and Marvel refrigerator, as well as subtle, yet luxe, details such as counter lip lighting. To the one side of it is a cedar pergola-covered defined area facing the water, perfect for sunbathing in lounge chairs or enjoying a peaceful cup of coffee—a zen-inducing paradise.

Across the landscape is an alluring cabana, which one would never guess reaches towards the far edge of the property line. This quaint and cozy 3-sided luxury outdoor living room was carefully curated in

front of a custom-built travertine wall, surrounded by lush greenery and taller, decorative trees—to truly transport the Wrights into a tranquil state of mind. The structure oozes of resort-like vibes, with its tropical fan and soft, luscious couches, as the bay breeze blows through its open crevices with a front row view to the sun setting over the water. This cabana, too, is equipped with gorgeous subdued lighting, and mobile phone-controlled automatic shade screens and storm shutters to protect its occupants from blazing sun, a rain storm or pesky insects.

This curvaceous walkway from the cabana towards

the al fresco living area underneath the deck brings to mind the meandering path of a small river flowing into the bay. This serpentine pergola was custom built by the Reynolds, and the home owner insists that walking through it gives her an inexplicable pleasure. The ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers lining its path make a natural accompaniment, as they both have a sense of flow and movement, as the happiness Tina feels walking through this Secret Garden-like path is like something straight out of a fantasy. The perfectly selected and placed flora not only here, but throughout the entire property, emphasizes its entire cohesive peaceful, meditative

quality. Outdoor spaces should be as invigorating as they are comfortable, and with this curvaceous, intimate trail back to the home, the Reynolds surely nailed it.

The covered patio is not just another place to gather for dining at one of its two situated tables. It is subtly adorned with nautical rope details coiled around each of the pilings and is adjacent to a majestic combination of travertine and cedar, mahogany and ipe hardwood spa-like outdoor shower area. The smell of the custom-built cedar finishes is one of the homeowners most treasured simple pleasures, and





it beautifully accents the changing room and vanity area within its vicinity. And have you checked out the loggia leading access from the bicycle parking out front towards the back of the home? Also covered in beautiful cedar, ipe and mahogany hardwood detailing, it is demonstrative of the Reynolds' exquisite craftsmanship.

The crown jewel of the property must be the spectacular dock, however, offering magnificent views of the lagoon and arguably the perfect place to take in that magnificent LBI sunset, or star gaze on a dark, clear night. The Reynolds team took attentive care to bring the bulkhead up to date (and code) as well as redesign the dock and mooring, once again enhancing

its beauty with the most perfect underwater lighting, but also keeping in mind clever storage solutions for the various paddleboards and watercrafts—even a sentimental rowboat—of the Wright family. This space, too, is adorned with luscious potted plants and a fun turquoise bench that was a gift from daughter to mother some time ago.

Above all, any coastal home should have a comfortable place to gather and enjoy the view on a chilly evening, and where better to spend time with friends and family than around a gorgeous fire pit. This patio firepit area is nestled into the landscape for wind protection, non-view obstruction and most importantly, a harmonious look. The travertine fire pit features beau-





tiful mahogany backs and noting the importance of integrating a personal touch into the design, the Reynolds team found ways in which some of Tina's sentimental gifts from her husband could be put on display in this area of the yard. They inserted the family's antique Indian Oil Lamps into the concrete and stone during build, as they too have a memory connected to them—and we all know that memories make the best accessories—and now Tina puts little tea lights inside of the lamps as a warming reminder of days long ago.

Who knew you could have everything that you have ever dreamed of all in one property? And yet the Reynolds team somehow managed to do it in such a beautiful way. Whether searching for a retreat for relaxing, reading, or having coffee with a friend, or simply hosting intimate dinners on the patio, it's clear who to call for planning one's own slice of paradise. The team at Reynolds Landscaping is standing by, awaiting to transform your world.