

Custom Home

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The Art and Craft of Custom Home Building ■ May/June 2008

2008 Custom Home Design Awards



DIRECTIONS08

A conference for custom building executives, *page 102*

Merit Award

Custom Home More Than 5,000 Square Feet
Mount Desert Island, Maine, Residence

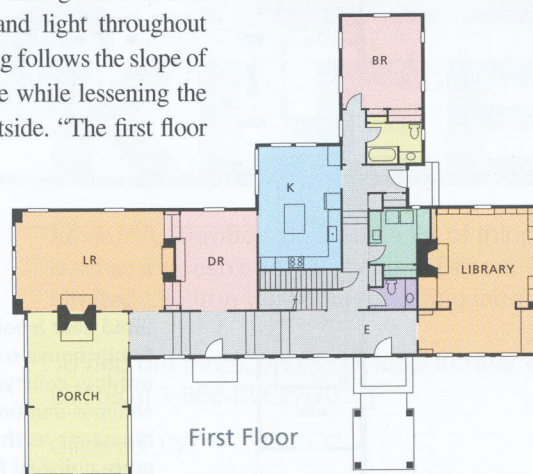
This Maine retreat benefits from the best of both vacation worlds from its mountain perch overlooking an ocean harbor below. The owners wanted their house to radiate cozy mountain hideaway mixed with airy oceanfront resort. Architects Jacob Albert, Jim Richter, and August Ventimiglia gave them that blend. The design team borrowed from both mountain cabin and seaside cottage traditions to create a house that the jury said evokes the history of the place while showing graceful simplicity and restraint.

Guests are greeted by a shingled cottage exterior with hints of mountain lodge in the exposed rafter tails and dark-green painted zigzag trim that carries throughout the house. The interiors also attracted kudos from the judges, who applauded their balance of openness and warmth. Liberal use of natural wood is tempered by lighthearted detailing, numerous painted built-ins, and large openings that let daylight flow freely from room to room. "We used painted trim to introduce color," explains Albert, "and big windows to get a lot of light."

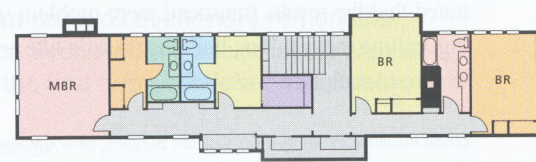
Besides taking cues from local building traditions, the team looked to the site's geography to inform the design. The house is tucked into the leeward side of a bluff facing the harbor. Luckily, ocean views are to the south, so all those big windows and outdoor spaces absorb heat and light throughout long summer days. The building follows the slope of the land to afford drama inside while lessening the visual impact of the house outside. "The first floor follows the ground but the second-story height remains constant," Albert says, "so lower-level public rooms gradually get bigger and more open with higher ceilings." —S.D.H.



Entrant/Architect: Albert, Richter & Tittmann Architects, Boston; Builder: Al Jensen, Dixmont, Maine; Landscape architect: Patrick Chasse, Somerville, Mass.; Interior designer: Judith Swartwood, Cambridge, Mass.; Living space (house and guesthouse): 5,702 square feet; Site: approximately 25 acres; Construction cost: Withheld; Photographer: Brian Vanden Brink. ■ For product information visit www.customhomeonline.com.



The house maximizes southern sun and water views with a light-filled passageway that links indoor rooms to outdoor living (see floor plan below). The sunny hallway also mitigates the home's height (top) and brightens cozy interiors (above).



Second Floor

