

A Taste of Nantucket

A family of four channels the coast in their five-bedroom cottage in Edina.

by Taylor Hugo

Eric and Katharine Nelson have loved living in the Highlands neighborhood of Edina ever since they first moved to the area in 2015. So when they had the opportunity to sell their home, they didn't have to go far to find the perfect location for their new build—down the block, to be exact.

"When this lot came up, we said, 'OK, let's build our dream home on this site,'" Eric recalls. "The driving factors were staying in the neighborhood, wanting to be on the water, and this property becoming available at the time that it did."

This isn't the first home they've built from the ground up. As a managing partner of custom homebuilder REFINED, LLC, Eric has had a hand in constructing more than 100 homes throughout the Twin Cities, including three for his own family.

"A lot of people that are in the industry would say it's sometimes hard to select things because you know of so many options, which certainly can be the case," he says.

"In some respects, though, it's easier because you have all the information at your fingertips. Decisions and the vision are easier to see."

This "last house," as Eric calls it, differs from the old-world Tudor and modern farmhouse they've built in the past. With no intent to sell in the future, the homeowners took time to make sure all their must-haves were achieved, including a three-car garage, an open-concept floor plan, plenty of space to entertain, and a full three-point line sport court. Perhaps the most important requirement, however, was ensuring the house was situated to take full advantage of the views of Highlands Lake, which also influenced their decision to play up a "coastal cottage" aesthetic throughout the 7,231-square-foot home.

"It definitely has a cleaner, coastal vibe—light and airy," Eric says. "That was a huge design direction, and I think we kept pretty true to that as you go through the entire house."

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BUILDER:
REFINED, LLC
Alyssa Lee Photography (Family)
Spacecrafting (Home)

↳ The interior has a beachy, coastal feeling with natural light, trendy shiplap walls and ceilings, and wooden beams.



Outside, the classic cottage-style silhouette features an asymmetrical frame and steeply pitched rooflines, while white cedar shake and smooth Hardie board siding is accented by three-panel windows flanked by light blue shutters, stonework, and columns. But it's the copper standing seam roof and gutters that "finished off the design perfectly for the exterior," says Eric.

Interior designer Bridget Burns of B. Burns Designs, Inc. looked to Nantucket for inspiration when choosing furniture and color palettes inside the five-bedroom, five-bathroom home. Working with a clean canvas of predominantly white walls and ceilings, and natural matte finish oak wood floors, the spaces were brought to life with pops of blue décor and natural textures—from shiplap and

wooden beams to lighting, chairs, and rugs in fabrics like jute, sisal, grasscloth, and ratan.

The result is an inviting, approachable home that welcomes the outdoors inside year-round—especially in the living area that opens to the kitchen. "Given our winters, I told Eric and Katharine that they might want to make it a four-season room but pretend, in the finishing of it—the floor, the walls, the ceiling—like it's a porch," says Burns, highlighting traditional exterior materials like bluestone floors, whitewashed cedar shakes, and stonework that were used to achieve that goal.

Burns was also instrumental in cohesively combining the homeowners' different approaches to decorating. "They do

➤ This floral wallpaper in the mudroom became a favorite finish in the house and brings the entire color scheme together.

have slightly different design aesthetics. Katharine tends to like softer elements, where Eric leans toward more modern, clean, minimalistic lines," she says, pointing to one floral wallpaper in particular that took some convincing. "I kept telling Eric that it was really important because it was tying the entire color scheme together." Now, that mudroom pattern is one of Eric's favorite finishes in the home.



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ERIC, HOMEOWNER & BUILDER



"The designer and my wife were more willing to take chances," Eric adds. "It took me a little while to get on the same page as them, but I'm very happy that I did. There were times when Bridget or Katharine would push the envelope a little bit beyond where my comfort zone might be, which was great."

Since moving into the completed home in January 2019, the Nelsons have settled into their new routine, from Eric working in his home office that overlooks the lake to evening basketball games with his 8- and 13-year-old daughters in the below-ground sport court. At the end of the day, Katharine and Eric can unwind with a glass of wine on the balcony off their master bedroom, complete with a fridge.

"We love the location in the neighborhood and the wildlife," Eric says. "The house flows really well and it's a super happy home. We've entertained more in the last year than we have in the last seven years. It's just such a wonderful space and our objective is to share it with people."

The home is situated to take full advantage of the views of Highlands Lake, including from the balcony of the master bedroom. ➤

