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# Evolving Beyond the Stoner Age

Marijuana dispensaries freshen up their look to appeal to new customers. BY ANNA P. KAMBHAMPATY | PAGE 6

Clockwise from top: weed stores in Los Angeles (Willow); West Hollywood, Calif. (the Woods, center right and bottom right); Los Angeles (Green Queen); and Toronto (Superette, bottom left and center left).

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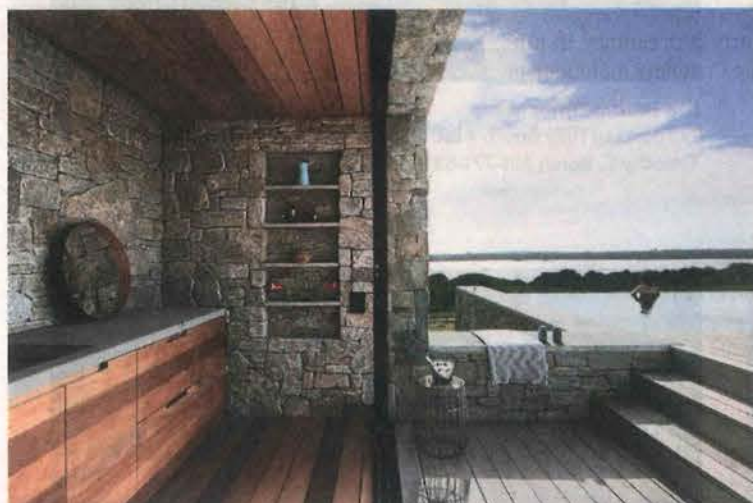
## On a Hilltop, Letting the Sun Shine In



PHOTOGRAPHS BY BATES MASI + ARCHITECTS



ERIC STRIFFLER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



JEFF HOLT



A beachfront home that's perched on one of the highest sites on Long Island's East End.

By TIM MCKEOUGH

For years, the cottage that Charlie Fisher and Rebecca Irwin owned in Amagansett, N.Y., was all they desired in a second home. At 1,200 square feet, the 1960s structure was nothing fancy, but after a basic renovation it was appealing enough to be featured in *Dwell* magazine, and they treasured every sunny day they could escape to it from Manhattan with their three young children.

Over time, circumstances changed. As their children grew up — Henry is now 21, Emily is 19 and Grace is 14 — the house began to feel cramped. Mr. Fisher, 52, now the chief financial officer of a technology start-up, and Ms. Irwin, 51, who works in finance, advanced in their careers. And they began to long for a little more privacy after living for so long in a house hemmed in by neighbors.

"It was a great spot, and we loved it," Mr. Fisher said. "We just outgrew it."

For something with more space indoors and out, they began dreaming of building a house from scratch. The question was where.

Increasingly, they found themselves driving east, to Montauk. "I am a very enthusiastic but very mediocre surfer, so I was go-

ing out to Ditch Plains a lot," Mr. Fisher said, referring to one of Montauk's beaches. "And we were spending time there hiking and just enjoying the beauty of the area."

So when their real estate agent, Krae Van Sickle of Saunders & Associates, suggested a five-acre hilltop property just north of Ditch Plains Beach, they were intrigued.

"What we found when we got there was this unbelievable spot," Mr. Fisher said. "It's one of the higher, if not the highest, points in Montauk, where you have 360-degree views out to Block Island Sound, all the way out to the lighthouse, to the ocean to south and then out across Lake Montauk."

The lot came with a rundown 1950s house they knew they'd eventually tear down, but it allowed the couple to sell the Amagansett house and have a place to stay as they began designing a new home with an architect.

They bought the property in December 2014 for about \$5.1 million, and moved in. Then they called Paul Masi, a fellow surfer and the principal of Bates Masi + Architects in East Hampton, whose work they had long admired. After visiting the property, Mr. Masi conceived a plan to emphasize the views by adding earth to increase the height of the hilltop and installing a pair of granite retaining walls to contain a large portion of the living space within the mound.

"Not only do these retaining walls allow you to inhabit the ground, but they also slice

Charlie Fisher and Rebecca Irwin's home in Montauk, N.Y., top, designed to look from the front like single-story cottages with gable roofs. Clockwise from upper right: the kitchen and dining area, with glass walls that can be rolled out of the way; one of several fireplaces throughout the home; the living room; a side view of the house, revealing its lower level; a pool with a view; and Ms. Irwin and Mr. Fisher with their daughter Grace and their dog, Bear.

It's meant to feel cozy and luxurious, 'but still like a beach house.'

into the landscape and set up these vignettes of different parts of the view," Mr. Masi said.

The living room, dining area and kitchen of the 5,350-square-foot house are nestled between the retaining walls and enclosed on the other two sides by floor-to-ceiling sliding-glass panels. When the weather is warm, the glass walls can be rolled out of the way, making the center of the home feel like a covered outdoor space. (Screens can be pulled across to keep insects out.)

From there, the house climbs up. On one side is a den with a staircase ascending to the primary suite; on the other is a second two-story wing containing five bedrooms, a mudroom and a lounge. Because each wing has its lower level buried in the hill, from the outside they resemble single-story cottages with gable roofs.

For most of the interior, Bates Masi envisioned minimalist details and hardwearing materials like split and tumbled granite, whitewashed oak and exposed steel. Aiming to ensure a comfortable feel, Mr. Fisher and Ms. Irwin hired Jenna Chused, of the interiors firm Chused & Co. in New York, to help select decorative finishes, furniture, lighting and art.

"They wanted a softness to the house," Ms. Chused said. "The idea was to make it feel comfortable and luxurious, but still like a beach house."

In the primary bathroom, she selected concrete tile from Tabarka Studio with a

white-and-black pattern and inlaid brass details for the floor; tadelakt plaster for the walls; and shapely mirrors by Gio Ponti to hang above the vanity. She furnished the living room with sculptural, lacquered nesting coffee tables by Pierre Augustin Rose, a big Howard sectional sofa from Egg Collective and vintage chairs by Jindrich Halabala. Around the dining table, she added deep upholstered seats from Thomas Hayes below a pair of vintage pendant lamps she found at a Paris flea market. And in the kitchen, she worked with the couple to customize every cabinet and drawer to reflect how they would use the space.

Merit Builders demolished the old house in December 2017, and by the summer of 2019 had made enough progress on the new one that Mr. Fisher and Ms. Irwin could use it, even as finishing touches continued into November 2020. The total cost was roughly \$6 million.

Now that it's complete, "we're thrilled," Mr. Fisher said. "And one of the silver linings during Covid was that we got to live there in a way we hadn't anticipated. We envisioned it as more of a summer house, but we've been able to be there through all the seasons. In winter, there are fireplaces throughout and it's warm and cozy."

And in summer, there's surfing, of course — although being closer to Ditch Plains hasn't done much to improve Mr. Fisher's skills. "Still mediocre after all these years," he lamented. "But still enthusiastic."