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## No detail spared for bayfront luxury living

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**1 OF 3 PHOTOS:** The Exotic Seaside Retreat's covered first- and second-floor wood decks enhance the coastal-living experience. (Steve Earley | The Virginian-Pilot)

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By [Lia Russell](#)  
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As the first bayfront Homearama offering in Norfolk's East Beach, the \$1.695 million "Exotic Seaside Retreat" by Seaside Homes is the ultimate beach house.

"This house is all about the beach - being able to see that water, and not just from the second floor," said Kyle Riley, who built the house with her husband, M.D. Riley, and son-in-law, Brian "Hutch" Hutchinson. "If you miss that view, then you've missed your target."

The 3,608-square-foot dwelling, House 10 on the Tidewater Builders Association's showcase of 10 custom homes, has 120 feet of bayfront vistas and four bedrooms, including a first-floor master suite. There also are five bathrooms, an office with coffee bar, a media room with 25-foot ceiling and adjoining kitchenette, a gourmet kitchen that opens to living and dining rooms, a mud/laundry room and a two-car garage with carriage house apartment.

The house, designed by Bill Harris of Allison Ramsey Architects, is still available for purchase.

All but three rooms of this dream home have direct views of the Chesapeake Bay, which is about 75 yards away.

To enhance the coastal-living experience, the house features a wrap-around porch, covered first and second floor Brazilian ipe wood decks and a two-story cupola.

The home's foundation is elevated, so that the first floor is 7-1/2 feet above the ground, providing water views from both floors of the house.

Seaside Homes has built nearly 60 homes in East Beach, so the company understands the challenges of beachfront construction, according to the builders.

"One of the concerns is to build the house to withstand the elements," Riley said. "The wind, salt, moisture, storms and sand can be brutal to a bayfront home."

Starting with the foundation, and including windows and doors, everything is more securely set, she said. Even the garage doors are wind-rated.

The Rileys wanted to create a timeless waterfront home reminiscent of coastal New England retreats.

"It's not cottage-y or cutesy," Riley said. "We've used rustic coastal colors throughout - more like what you'd find in Cape Cod or the Hamptons. Everything is kind of different from what people are used to seeing out here."

The front door opens into a foyer that flows into the living room, kitchen and dining room - an open floor plan for easy entertaining. Immediately evident is the way the colors of the beach flow through the wide Anderson windows into the home, with an interior decorating palette that mimics the natural taupe, wheat, brown, green, white and blue elements of the outdoors.

Jacobean custom-stained, 5-inch white oak covers all the home's floors except for the bathrooms and laundry room, which are tiled. The house includes an inspired variety of unique tiling throughout, including rectangular, scalloped and triangular shapes, iridescent finishes, frosted glass and natural stone. The master bath features quartz counters, Kohler fixtures, and a cast-iron tub with ceiling-mounted bath filler. The tub gets filled from water pouring out of the ceiling directly above it.

The kitchen, which boasts commercial stainless-steel Thermador appliances, has an oversized, dual-level granite island with breakfast bar. While some cabinetry was sacrificed to accommodate a wall of beach-side windows in the kitchen, the large, well-appointed nearby mud/laundry room more than makes up for it.

All of the home's spacious closets are custom-built by Seaside Homes and include built-in drawers, shelving and molding.

Kyle Riley and Exotic Home decorated the house with tasteful beach-inspired furnishings, upholstery and paints. Window treatments include side panels and woven wood blinds in natural colors.

The exterior areas of the house are an important element of the Exotic Seaside Resort. Five hard- and soft-scaped outdoor garden rooms, artfully designed by landscape architect Jane Cantin, provide open and semi-private exterior retreats including a dining and living area and outdoor shower.

Cantin used a clever combination of grass turf, plantings of Little Gem magnolias, ligustrum, boxwood, Indian hawthorne, hydrangeas, white drift roses, gardenias and a variety of ornamental grasses including pennisetum, miscanthus, pink muhly, and dwarf mondo to delineate the outdoor spaces and to harmonize with the surrounding beachscape.

"The color scheme is very natural and relaxing to the senses," Cantin said. "We didn't want anything to stand out. It's a very harmonious effect."

The house is a testament to coastal living, and, for Riley, a perfect complement to the East Beach community lifestyle.

"There's never a time that there's nothing going on here, and it makes people feel connected," she said. "It's a very inviting and friendly place to live."

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