

readers' choice

BY MAUREEN FRIEDMAN

In addition to the six award-winning projects selected by the *Fine Homebuilding* editors, we also asked our readers to select their favorite homes. The 10 projects nominated for consideration are below and the following pages feature the first, second, and third place winners. For more on each project, visit FineHomebuilding.com/houses.

Home on the Intracoastal Waterway

Architect
Gardner Architects
Photograph
John Cole



Family-Centered Modern Home

Builder Horizon Pacific Contracting
Photograph Joshua Lawrence Studios

Net-Zero Spec House

Builder
Mountain Sun Building & Design
Photograph
Courtesy of Mountain Sun Building & Design



Timeless Tradition

Architect
Jan Gleysteen Architects
Photograph
Richard Mandelkorn

Stillhouse Creek

Builder
VPC Builders
Photograph
Courtesy of VPC Builders



Touisset Small-House Renovation

Architect
Katie Hutchison Studio
Photograph
Katie Hutchison

Harmony Ridge

Architects
Nir Pearlson and Tony Rosas
Photograph
Lee Auerbach



Long Reach Retreat

Architect
Kaplan Thompson Architects
Photograph
Irvin Serrano

Fitch Renovation

Builder
Bruce Laukka
Photograph
Scott B. Smith Imagery



Home With a View

Architect
Lindsay Massey Architect
Photograph
Tim Maloney

1 READERS' CHOICE FIRST PLACE

Home on the Intracoastal Waterway

Located in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, this house sits on the Intracoastal Waterway in a coastal maritime forest with sandy dunes, grassy marshes, and perennial wetlands. The house is made for the beach—it's not a transplanted suburban home. A place for the grill, kayaks, laundry, outdoor showers, and beach storage are as important as spaces for sleeping, eating, and gathering. The house is sited to maximize the ideal views to the canal and wetlands to the west, while providing a variety of protected and shaded exterior spaces. The most punishing sun comes in from the west, so the configuration of the home and its exterior spaces (the design of the courtyard; the orientation and design of its fenestration and that of the solar control devices, trellis, and exterior shades) combine to resolve this conflict between orientation for context and orientation for climate. The design directive also included siting for maximum privacy while offering expansive views to the landscape. The glazed entry foyer divides the house and offers continuous views from the street side through the foyer to the canal



SLIDESHOW For more photos of the Readers' Choice winners, visit [FineHomebuilding.com/houses](https://www.finehomebuilding.com/houses).



1 READERS' CHOICE FIRST PLACE

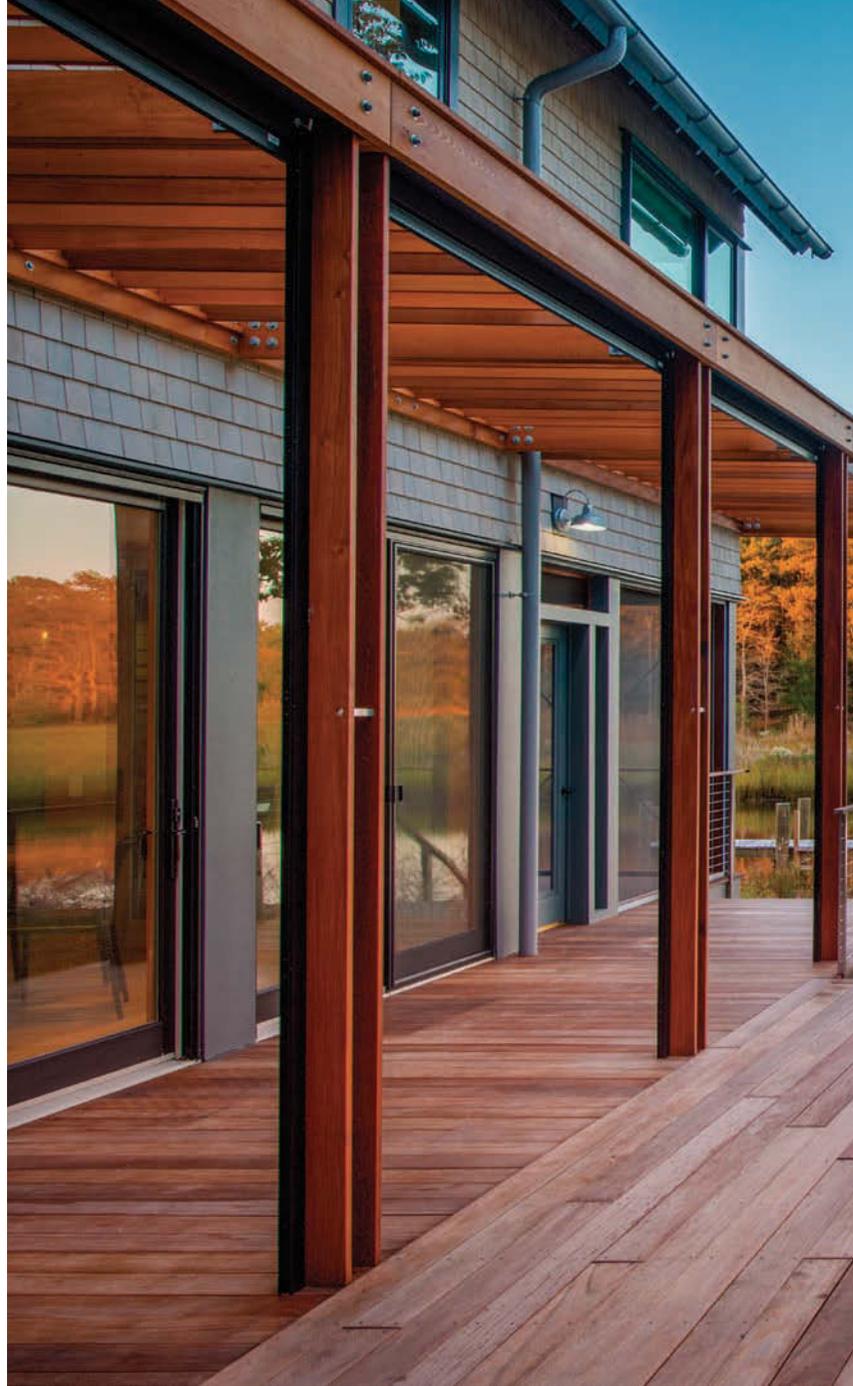
and marsh. The kitchen bridges the interior and exterior, linking a porch with the living and dining areas.

The challenges of building on a waterfront site with a moderate flood risk and in a 90-mph wind zone were met through a series of structural and planning moves at the inception of the project. The house is raised on piles 4 ft. above base flood elevation and breakaway walls were used for elements within the base flood elevation. A stormwater management system retains and detains stormwater, allowing it to percolate into the soil. The project also focused on passive and active sustainable strategies in order to decrease energy demands and burden on the local utilities. Carefully positioned operable windows and skylights allow for natural ventilation and take advantage of the stack effect. Energy costs were minimized by creating a strategically shaded, highly insulated building envelope and employing a geothermal system, an energy-recovery ventilator, and LED lighting throughout. Careful stewardship of the home and its landscape led to greater biodiversity and habitat restoration on the site.

Architect: Amy Gardner, Gardner Architects, Silver Spring, Md., gardnerarchitectsllc.com

Builder: Beachwood, Inc., Showell, Md., beachwoodinc.com

Photographs: John Cole, johncolephoto.com







2 READERS' CHOICE SECOND PLACE

Family-Centered Modern Home

This contemporary home in British Columbia conveys a strong modern style that holds up to the demands of a family with five young children. It features clean lines, elegant finishes, and durable, low-maintenance materials that mix man-made and natural elements. Antiqued exposed beams run the length of the house and book-matched walnut walls and locally-sourced ledgestone soften the angular modern elements. Skylights and windows bathe the main floor with natural light and give a sense of airy openness.

The south-facing home was sited and designed to minimize sun exposure in the summer and maximize solar gain in the winter. A combination of interior waterproofing, high-performance insulation detailing, and air-barrier design helped achieve the R-28 wall assembly. The exterior walls are 8-in. steel-reinforced concrete, designed with a seismic engineer to ensure high performance in the case of an earthquake.

Architect: Coast and Beam Architecture, Victoria, B.C., coastandbeam.com

Builder: Horizon Pacific Contracting, Victoria, B.C., horizoncontracting.ca

Photographs: Joshua Lawrence Studios, courtesy of Horizon Pacific Contracting





3 READERS' CHOICE THIRD PLACE

Net-Zero Spec House

This Asheville, North Carolina, house was crafted with careful attention to detail. Due to the site's steep slope, a bridge was built from the parking area to an entry between the main and upper levels. Living spaces were kept open and interior windows allow light to travel throughout the space. With the main level half a floor below the road, the kitchen window and doors look out into the garden rather than the parking area.



A master suite with covered porch and second bedroom with bath and covered porch are located on the top floor. The lower level, as light-filled and airy as the other floors and finished to the same quality, can be part of the house or closed off for an office or rental unit. The neighborhood requirement that all homes be net zero and Green Built Platinum certified influenced many decisions in the construction process, including the use of 2x6 walls with advanced framing, spray-foam insulation, and an 8.2kw PV system on the roof. An airtightness level of 0.58 ACH50 was achieved.

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Architect: Rusafova-Markulis Architects, Asheville, N.C., rusafova-markulis.com

Builder: Mountain Sun Building & Design, Asheville, N.C., mountainsunbuilding.com

Photographs: Ryan Theede, ryantheedephotography.com

