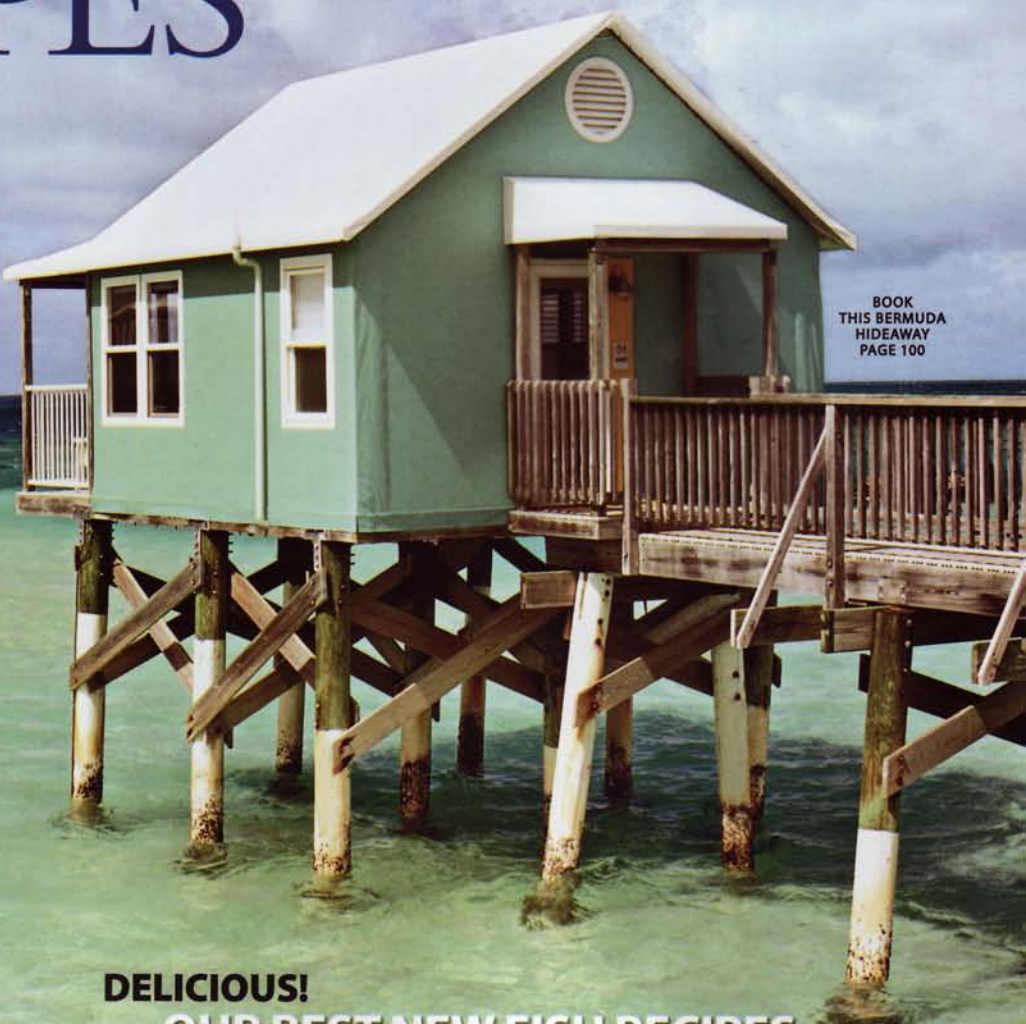


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MEET THE OWNERS

Driven by a longing to return to the shore and the goal of building something inheritable, architect Steve Herlong and his wife, Susan, designed a family home for daughters Gracie, 18, and Stephanie, 15, and their Westie, Kipper.

THEIR INSPIRATION

Having port-hopped through Europe on a sailboat, Steve and Susan have a love of lighthouses. When the couple bought property on Sullivan's Island, South Carolina, they researched local light stations. "We were charmed by images of the first wooden lighthouse on the island; sadly, it was lost to a hurricane in the 1800s," Steve says. "We incorporated its design into our house."

THE SCENERY

Less than 15 miles from downtown Charleston, Sullivan's Island combines the laid-back attitude of a beach town with the camaraderie of a year-round population. Virtually every building on the 2½-square-mile barrier island has a water view—of either the Atlantic Ocean or the Lowcountry marshes and Intracoastal Waterway.

SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

To satisfy strict codes that limit the size/footprint of houses and mandate that new construction look "compatible" with existing houses, Steve reserved the bolder design choices for this 4,200-square-foot house, like the lighthouse tower, for its waterfront side. He elevated the four bedrooms/four and a half baths to the second story, and kitchen and living space to the third, above the flood zone. >>



beacon of history

Inspired by a local lighthouse destroyed by a hurricane in the 1800s, architect Steve Herlong created an eco-savvy home for his family on Sullivan's Island

special feature
**BUILT
TO LAST!**
see how three
families live green
at the beach



UPSTAIRS PORCH

What you see: floor-to-ceiling vistas of the Lowcountry marshes lining the Intracoastal Waterway

What you don't see: view-obscuring railings. Metal cables run horizontally between the posts for safety and a sleek nautical detail without blocking the seascape. The Herlongs called on a friend who rigs sailboats for the job.

Highlight of the house: saying goodnight to the sun from three stories up. The octagonal porch becomes the perfect perch for taking in the sunset at happy hour.

OUTDOOR ROOM

What you see: an outdoor living room enclosed by the house's structural supports, which the Herlongs covered in marsh-mud-color stucco and crushed oyster shells

What you don't see: the reinforced masonry piers underneath their decorative casing and other structural steel elements used throughout the house's construction in an effort to spare it from the same fate as the historic lighthouse that inspired its design

Everyone loves ... the shady spot under the house, complete with outdoor fireplace for cool nights when the sound of the surf is too enticing to stay inside. >

"TO ME, GREEN ARCHITECTURE MEANS DESIGNING AN EFFICIENT AND ENDURING HOUSE. IT JUST TAKES A DIFFERENT WAY OF THINKING"

—Steve Herlong



LIVING ROOM

What you see: a cypress, V-groove, barrel-vaulted ceiling inspired by the shape of a boat hull.

What you don't see: closed-cell spray foam

insulation wrapping the entire exterior and attic space. It regulates the temperature inside the house by absorbing cool air in winter and warm air in summer.

ECO-CHIC CHOICE

The Herlongs sealed their distressed walnut floors with natural tung oil for a protective finish that "is easier to apply and requires less maintenance than urethane seals," says Steve.

HOME ECO-NOMICS COST-SAVING WAYS TO BUILD GREEN AT THE BEACH

Traditional style enthusiasts can take solace in skipping the science project-like gadgets and instead trying Steve's smart spending ideas.

■ **Line exterior walls and attic spaces** with closed-cell spray foam insulation (icynene.com), which keeps heating and air-conditioning bills in check by regulating temperature swings inside the house, thereby decreasing the use of costly (and unclear!) power sources that typically fuel heating and cooling systems.

■ **Upgrade old HVAC units** with a variable-speed heat pump (bryant.com) for greater efficiency. "You should see a payback in just a couple of years," Steve says.

■ **Install insulated, double-paned glass windows** (marvin.com), which protect against harsh coastal conditions and eliminate drafts.

■ **Choose a tankless water heater** (foreverhotwater.com) that heats water on demand, rather than all day long, requiring less energy.

■ **Reduce excessive water usage** with plastic low-flow plumbing inserts. "They're really easy to install, and you still get great water flow," says Steve. "Better yet, they cost about a nickel each, so the payback is huge!"

■ **Consider drip irrigation**, an efficient system that loses almost no water to runoff, evaporation, or deep percolation, reducing the likelihood and expense of overwatering. >



KITCHEN

What you see: a light- and breeze-filled space, thanks to a pair of large, high-impact-resistant casement windows. Reclaimed wood

countertops and a tumbled travertine tile backsplash add natural warmth to the space.

What you don't see: the double-duty cooling effects from the roof overhead. Made of light-colored steel, the covering reflects the sun's heat and extends about 2 feet beyond the house's wall, creating ample shade for the windows below.

MASTER BEDROOM

What you see: walls clad with cedar-shake shingles and a rough-hewn cedar ceiling painted a nautical blue-and-white scheme, all to create the look of a seaside porch inside

What you don't see: improved indoor air quality, resulting from the release of fewer potentially harmful gasses from the low-VOC (volatile organic compound) paint used in the house 🌿

More info: page 130

STEAL THIS IDEA!

Paint window trim and sashes a bold color to give a jaw-dropping view the attention it deserves. "The turquoise paint in the light, airy bedroom directs your eye to the window and really frames the view," says Steve, who worked with Herlong & Associates designers Theresa Bishopp and Sarah Melançon on the house's interiors. They repeated the blue throughout the home.