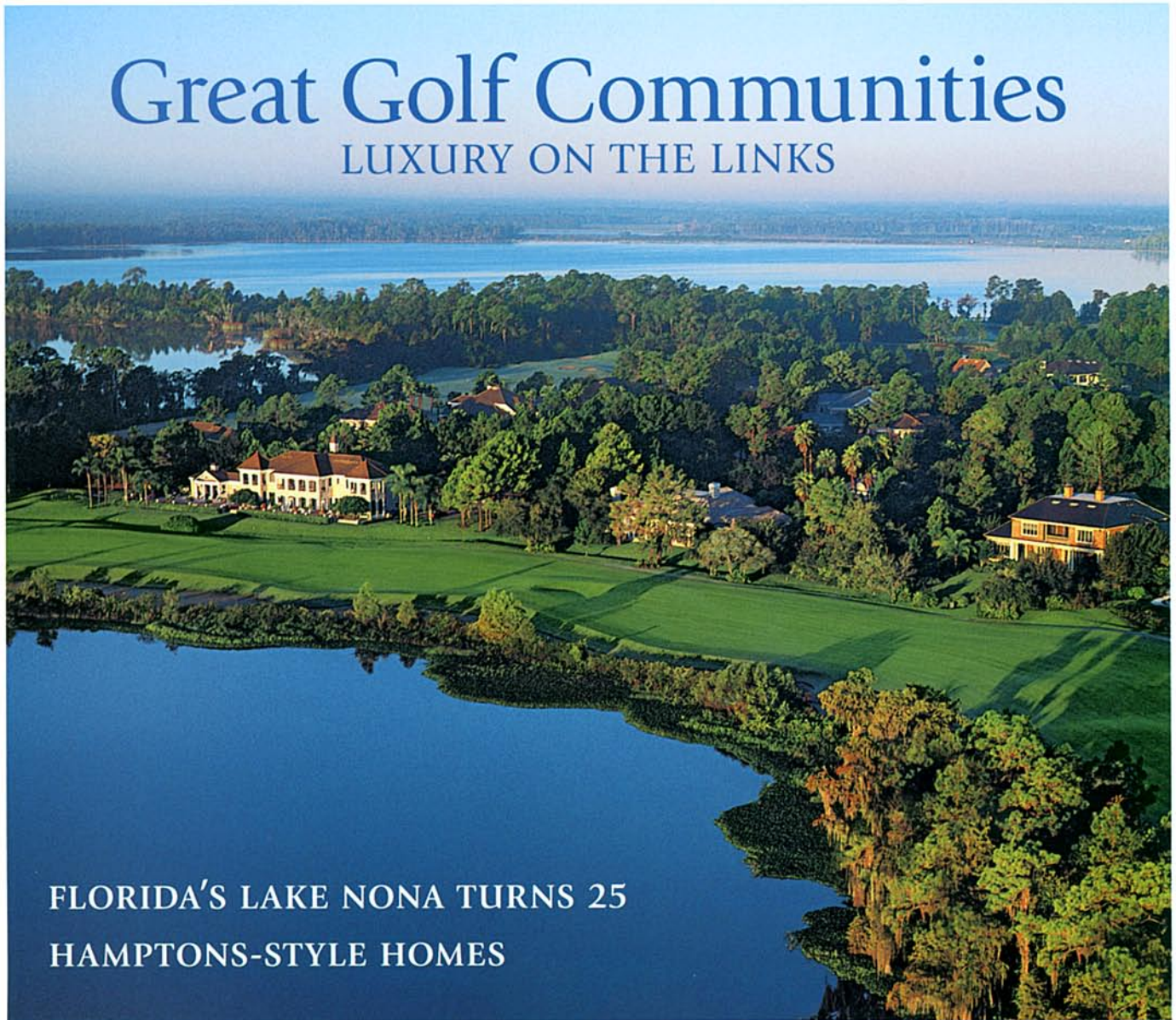


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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: JEFF HEATLEY; RICHARD WATTE; CONDERO STUDIOS/ CONDEROSTUDIOS.COM

ARCHITECTURE



A SENSE OF

JEFF HEATLEY

For traditional shingle-style designs,
the secret to success is not what you build,
but where and how you build it.

BY SHAUN TOLSON



PLACE

A Frank Greenwald-design
in the Hamptons offers new twists
on the shingle-home theme.



While traditional shingle homes have small windows, contemporary versions let in plenty of light. Opposite: Modern kitchens provide a showcase not afforded them in traditional shingle homes. Both by Frank Greenwald.

WHEN IT COMES to the summer retreats for the wealthiest families in the northeast, Newport, R.I., and the Hamptons may well be uttered in the same breath. Today, both attract a similar demographic, whether for weekend getaways during the summer months or for more routine visits throughout the year. However, during the roaring 20s and beyond, Newport and the Hamptons felt much farther

apart than the Block Island Sound that separated them. The Newport crowd was bold—almost flamboyant—in its display of wealth; the Hamptons, by contrast, were defined by modesty, and the architecture that came to define the area also emulated that.

As wealthy vacationers made their way across Long Island during the early part of the 20th century, the traditional, shingle-style cottages that had dictated the landscape and reflected a lifestyle begot from fishing and a long-past whaling industry evolved into larger estates, but they retained that traditional appearance. Because the Hamptons fostered a more tranquil lifestyle, the homes of Long Island's east end did not require the large, opulent rooms and floor plans that Newport's social scene demanded.

The challenge facing architects today is creating homes that still echo that style and history but are built to accommodate the lifestyles of the area's current residents. "Everyone loves these old shingle houses around here," says Frank Greenwald (www.frankgreenwaldarchitect.com), a Hamptons-based architect, "but to live in them is difficult because the ceilings are short and the windows are small with little panes."

According to Greenwald, 80 years ago, a traditional home in the Hamptons was not centered on rooms like the kitchen—a place that today is a common gathering area and entertaining space. During the early 20th century, servants were common, which meant only certain sections of the home were occupied by the homeowners.



Today, that's all changed. Given the home atmosphere that his clients expect, Greenwald must create modern designs; but he still aims to reflect the traditional shingle style, provided that's what his clients want and it feels appropriate for the land upon which the house is built. "I've got a library of the big old homes out here and I love reinterpreting that traditional shingle style," he says. "But today I love twisting them and bringing a more contemporary feeling to that vernacular, and that's what we're doing more and more of."

As a way of example, he points to a home in Wainscott, N.Y., with a spacious kitchen accented by white cabinets and hardware with an antiquated look and feel. It's a completely modernized kitchen, but it draws subtle reminders to the decor that was prevalent some 80 or 90 years ago.

He also highlights a contemporary home with an exterior appearance that plays off a coast guard tower motif, but the home's interior is far from rustic. "It's incredibly warm with stone and big board floors," he says. "You wouldn't say that it's a traditional shingle-style house, but it has a lot of traditional elements that are cleaned up and modernized, and that's what my clients want today."

Though the Hamptons have a distinctive style and feel, Greenwald says the area isn't limiting when it comes to design possibilities. Ultimately, he takes his cues from what his clients like and says that together they build a home that has character and a unique style. "It's contextual," Greenwald explains. "It's making a house fit into the context of what's here. That makes it classic and timeless and it makes it appropriate."



This Frank Greenwald-designed home pays homage to the past with a coast guard tower motif.