

CREATIVE GENIUS

**TWENTY IMAGINATIVE ARCHITECTURE PROJECTS
MAKING INDELIBLE MARKS ON THE STATE**

Maine architecture has a storied past. In Portland alone, buildings range from the Colonial Tate House (1750–1820) to the Renaissance Revival United States Custom House (1868–72) to the postmodern Portland Museum of Art addition by Henry Nichols Cobb of Pei Cobb Freed and Partners (1983). For a variety of reasons, design evolution often means buildings that were once “in style” aren’t anymore. And whether or not you deem a particular building beautiful, what there’s certainly no arguing about is that Maine architecture continues to evolve at a rapid pace.

Need proof? You’re holding it in your hands. In this, our annual Architecture Issue, we’ve rounded up 20 recent residences and commercial buildings that speak to the caliber of design happening around the state. Many have a quiet beauty, an inherent simplicity that echoes the qualities that help define Maine in both its landscape and culture. Some projects are designed to be a seamless transition from sea to land to structure, while others have an eco bent along with a bit of unflagging grit. (A home designed by GO Logic and built far beyond the last power pole in Palermo comes to mind.)

The projects range in scope—from a contemporary residence with a planted flat roof to a three-story urban penthouse to a 19,000-square-foot office building for an insurance company—but what is notable about many of them, as architect Scott Blanchard of Eric A. Chase Architecture puts it, “is what you don’t see.” The firm updated a turn-of-the-century farmhouse with solar panels that store summer’s excess energy to be used during winter’s sun-shy months. Indeed, sustainable design strategies are used in abundance: Fiorentino Group Architects planted a fine fescue lawn that requires less water, and BrightBuilt Home constructed an entire house off-site—both saving on the cost of construction and saving the home from the elements while it was built. These projects speak to a level of sustainability that simply wasn’t possible just years ago.

What will Maine architecture bring in the coming years? If the following pages offer a glimpse of where it’s going, if they serve as a roadmap to the future being built around us, then we’re on the right path. In color, form, line, shape, space, texture, value, and scale, these projects are making their artistic, imaginative, optimistic, and indelible marks on the state. Here’s to making beautiful history.



A CLASSIC WATERFRONT COMPOUND

It took five years of permit agency negotiations to find a mainland base for utility connections to the Inn at Cuckolds Light, located on an island half a mile offshore. Once the mainland utilities were installed, the small 0.62-acre parcel was made even smaller by utility easements and shoreland restrictions: only 5,520 square feet of buildable area remained.

Knickerbocker Group efficiently designed a traditional Maine compound, capturing the expansion potential in a grandfathered main house and guesthouse, and siting a new barn for use by the sea captain who manages the offshore inn. All three buildings are positioned to take in spectacular views of Cuckolds Light and maximize privacy for guests.

The main house sits on the water's edge. The lower level, formerly an enclosed storage space with a dirt floor, was converted into an elegant open-air room with a cedar ceiling, porcelain tile floor, stone fireplace, and mahogany-framed screen panels between shingle-clad columns. The materials were selected for warmth and beauty as well as weather resistance, since storm surges will inevitably reach the home and flood the FEMA-compliant foundation below.

On the main level, the living areas encircle a central fireplace, finished with plastered concrete and integrated firewood storage made of diamond-lattice steel. Pickled fir beams and columns delineate the individual spaces while unifying the living areas. The winding stairway offers an open visual connection among the three floors.

At the guesthouse, the small footprint necessitated a layout as open and airy as possible, accentuated by numerous windows with large panes to take in expansive views and flood the intimate space with light. The barn serves as the office for the sea captain and a lounge for arriving guests to relax in before boating to their island retreat. As a whole, the compound embodies the classic detailing of a traditional Maine farm, with elegant finishes in hues of blue and gold that contribute a nautical edge.



Architect, Builder, Interior Designer, Millwork & Structural Engineer: Knickerbocker Group

Project Architects: Adam Maltese, Andy Munsey, Rick Nelson & Randy Smith

Countertop & Tile: Blue Rock of Maine

Doors, Mirrors & Screens: Pen-Bay Glass

Electrical, Wiring & Lighting: Wood's Electric Company

FEMA Consultant: Associated Design Partners

Foundation: Ellinwood Foundations

HVAC & Plumbing: Yereance & Son Plumbing & Heating

Insulation: Foam Pro

Landscape Architect: BETA Group

Landscape, Hardscape & Site Work: Back Meadow Farm

Masonry: Isaac N. Labbe Masonry

Structural Steel: M.E. Tomacelli

Tile: Old Port Specialty Tile Co.

Windows: Marvin

Photographer: Darren Setlow