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# OceanHome

THE LUXURY COASTAL LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

October/November 2012

## Beach-Ready Blueprints

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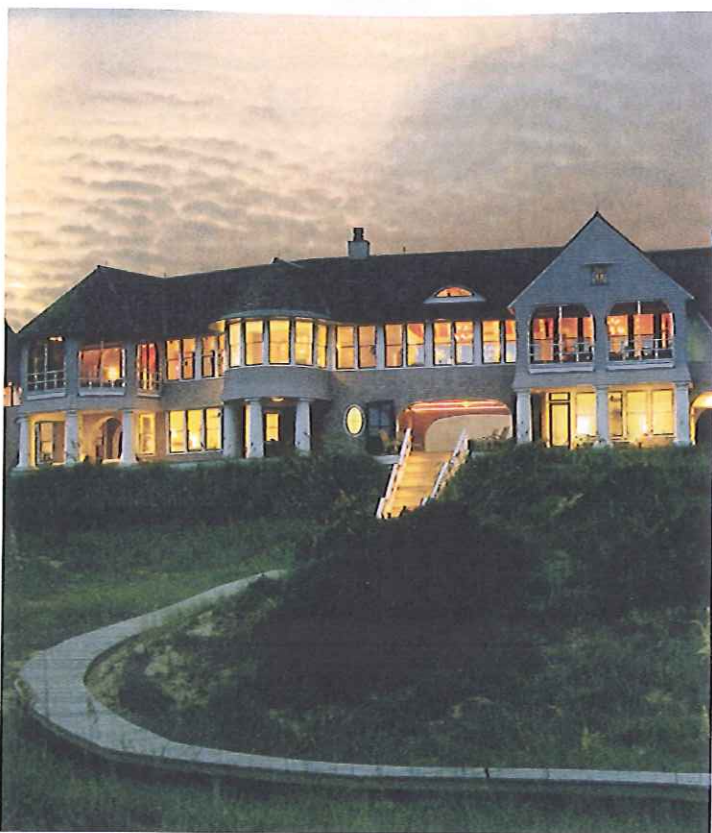
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## A Whale of a View

On North Carolina's Bald Head Island, two architects have designed an allegorical structure to satisfy their clients' exuberant natures—and frame some very fine vistas. By **J. Michael Welton**

**TO GET TO BALD HEAD ISLAND**, slip by ferry across North Carolina's Cape Fear River, hop aboard the requisite golf cart (no autos allowed on the island), scoot along a five-mile trail through a maritime forest, and, finally, turn right and climb a 40-foot-high ridge. There it is: the oceanfront home called Castello Dello Balena, or "Castle of the Whale."

At 4,500 square feet, comprising four bedroom suites and a dining room the size of some homes, this house is big. But that may be its least important feature. "You can't find many places with 270-degree views of the water," says Chris Lokey, the home's master builder. "[The house] is sitting on some of the nicest views on the east coast."

From the house's dining room, the coastal plain of Bald Head known as South Beach languishes in the distance. Out on the water to the left are Frying Pan Shoals, where offshore waves kick up as high as 10 feet. Farther left still is East Beach, which is home to some of the wildest surf on the island.

The home was designed by Wilmington-based architects Dietsche & Dietsche to take full advantage of its elevation. "The clients bought two lots, and at first, they thought they'd build on one and sell the other," says Anna Dietsche. Then, her husband Chuck stepped up with a pair of divergent scenarios: "The first one showed a house on one lot and the other open," she says. "The second one showed a house on both lots, stretched along the dune ridge, so every room has a view of the ocean."

Three bedroom suites and a garage occupy the ground level, while the kitchen, dining room, master suite, and office/studio are located above. Some compare the home, stretched out upon the ridge in three sections, to a whale's body. Its head would be to the left where the kitchen is situated, its stomach about midway down where the massive fireplace sits, and its tail composed of the garage wing with master suite and office atop.

The whole idea, says Chuck, was to satisfy his clients' need to express their exuberance for life. "The [clients were] rational and romantic," he says. "I interpreted [their house] as Moby Dick." But he didn't overlook the site's basic strength, however, especially from the widow's walk atop the tower that connects all three of the home's sections.

"It's got the best views of the entire island," Anna says. [dietschedietsche.com](http://dietschedietsche.com).



**WHALE'S TALE:** The 4,500-square-foot home occupies two adjacent lots.