

Paul Rice and Ward Welch tackled the kitchen in the first half of their redo. Walnut shelves replaced upper cabinets, which made the room feel small.

SPECIAL
MAKEOVER
SECTION



makeover #1
**same size,
super style**

In a two-phase renovation, a pair of New York architects transform their tiny Amagansett shack into a swanky weekend retreat without adding a square inch



When architect Paul Rice bought a 1920s fisherman's shack on a quiet street in Amagansett, New York, a laid-back hamlet on the eastern end of Long Island, it had rotten siding, a worn-out roof, and only 500 square feet of space. But it sat on a fairly sizable lot located only three minutes from the beach, so Paul and partner Ward Welch snapped it up and began planning their weekend hideout.

After taking stock of the investment—in time, energy, and budget—required for a total renovation, Paul and Ward, who is also an architect, decided to divide the project into two phases: First, they would overhaul the main house and create more outdoor living space; later they planned to add a pool, build a pool house in place of the toolshed, and finish the garden.

But before that could happen, they took the house down to the studs. Because of the site's limitations, the town's strict regulations, and the couple's cost considerations, they didn't

build beyond the original footprint, but they needed to shore up the cottage with a new foundation, install the cedar-shake shingle siding, and replace the roof. That meant spending one summer overseeing the work while camping out—using a portable toilet and washing dishes with a garden hose.

Once the cottage was structurally sound, Paul and Ward focused on making the most of the limited interior space. They removed a wall separating the kitchen from the living room to form one large cooking, dining, and living area. Then they divided an awkwardly long, narrow bedroom into two compact bedrooms; space-saving features such as sliding doors keep the now smaller sleeping spaces from feeling cramped. To open up the dark rooms, Paul and Ward vaulted the >

MAKEOVER MOVES

- ▶ Paul and Ward divided one unwieldy bedroom into two smart, comfortable ones (above). Built-in closets tuck behind the chimney.
- ▶ A vaulted Carolina pine ceiling, glass doors, and new windows let in light and helped the small house breathe.





LESSONS LEARNED

1 It's OK to take things slowly. Not tackling everything at once can make the most of your budget and help remodeling become more manageable.

2 You don't have to live with tricky rooms; redefine them. Sometimes putting up walls, even in small houses, can create new spaces that live better.

3 For a beach home, think of your outdoor space as an extension of the house. The right plantings, pools, and patios can make your home seem larger than it really is.



Ward Welch (left) and Paul Rice

ceilings and added windows and single-pane glass doors. Utilitarian spaces, such as closets and the bath, were relocated from the house's perimeter to its interior to let in more light.

Most importantly, the couple managed to more than double their usable space by adding three distinct outdoor living areas: an arbor-covered dining room off one side of the living

room; a bluestone patio with a grill off the kitchen; and a raised mahogany deck (outfitted for lounging) off the other side of the living room. An outdoor shower and landscaped lawn completed the picture.

After a four-year pause (to recover from the first redo), the second phase of renovation began, expanding on the improvements to the outdoor areas. "We spend so much time outside here that we didn't really want to add more interior space—we wanted to respect the scale of the home and make what we had more resort-like," says Paul. They added a sunken 15- by 23-foot rectangular pool and a square hot tub surrounded by bluestone. On the footprint of an old toolshed, they built a pool house/guest room equipped with a kitchenette, living area, and full bath.

Lastly, Paul and Ward turned their attention to landscaping the mini-compound. Boxwoods, sedum, lavender, and coneflowers surround >



MAKEOVER MOVES

Paul and Ward added a pool and hot tub, a patio made of bluestone and dry-stacked Pennsylvania fieldstone, and the surrounding flower beds. They also replaced the original toolshed with a gray-sided pool house.



MAKEOVER MOVES

- ▀ Adding outdoor rooms, like a dining area under a wisteria-covered arbor off the living room (top) more than doubled the living space in summer.
- ▀ Installing the cedar-clad outdoor shower (above) just outside the kitchen door allowed it to share a wall with the house's indoor shower, which simplified the plumbing.

the hot tub and pool. The entire property is enveloped by privet hedges, Leyland cypress, and horizontally run cedar fencing. Trellises with climbers and creepers line the south wall of the main house, while herb and cutting gardens flank the pool house. "We wanted a look that was fairly manicured," says Paul. "So we kept the space very controlled and added color with plants that flower sequentially all summer—so there's always something in bloom."

Now, Paul and Ward's small-but-smart space is decidedly sophisticated, and fully equipped with features typically included in designs for houses 10 times the size. "We have the marble countertops and the high-end appliances, plus double showerheads in the bath," Paul says. "Amenity-wise, this house has everything a bigger house has, just on a smaller scale. And we live in every square inch, which is all we could ever ask for." >

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Project Notes

BEFORE



TOOL-SHED

REMOVED AN INTERIOR DIVIDING WALL



LIVING

BED

KITCHEN

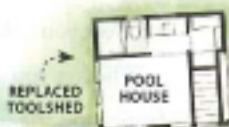


BEFORE

THEN: An interior wall divided the living space, and a single bedroom meant no separate guest room. The bath and mudroom hogged all the natural light, while the kitchen was dark. A toolshed ate up valuable space on the property, and the yard was overgrown and underused.

AFTER

REPLACED TOOLSHED



POOL HOUSE

POOL



LIVING

BED

KITCHEN

BED

CARVED OUT TWO PRIVATE BEDROOMS

NOW: An undivided living/dining/kitchen area opens up the house, while a pair of compact bedrooms give Paul and Ward's guests privacy. Additional windows and glass doors usher in more natural light. The pool house, pool, patio, and outdoor rooms more than double the property's living space. 🌿