



## STUDIO ROBERT MCKINLEY

Media Coverage | **Architectural Digest** January 18, 2017

# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

## A Stylish Montauk, New York, Beach House Designed for Entertaining

The man behind hipster destinations The Surf Lodge and Ruschmeyer's creates a chic yet comfortable compound for one art-loving family

TEXT BY [FAN WINSTON](#) · PHOTOGRAPHY BY [NICOLE FRANZEN](#) · Posted January 18, 2017



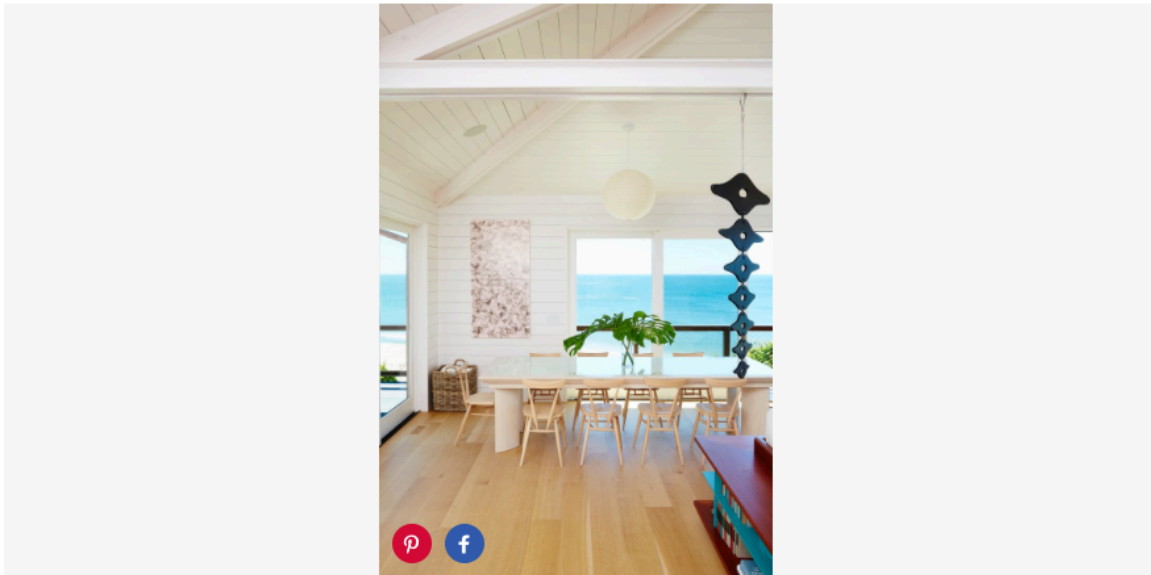
Robert McKinley is the ultimate hyphenate, a hotelier-furniture designer-deejay-artist-creative director who, as the mastermind behind Montauk destinations the [Surf Lodge](#) and Ruschmeyer's, may be single-handedly responsible for the beach hamlet's high hipster quotient. Now he's adding a new accomplishment to his already bulging C.V.—that of residential interior designer.

[McKinley](#), who is based in New York City, was recently commissioned to overhaul a dated 1960s ranch house, situated on a bluff roughly 300 feet above the ocean in [Montauk](#), and turn it into a stylish but welcoming, casual yet luxe weekend home for an art collector father and his grown kids. “He didn't want it to feel uptight or precious,” says McKinley of his client. “The goal was to make the house comfortable for both lounging around in a wet bathing suit and sitting down for a gourmet [dinner party](#).”

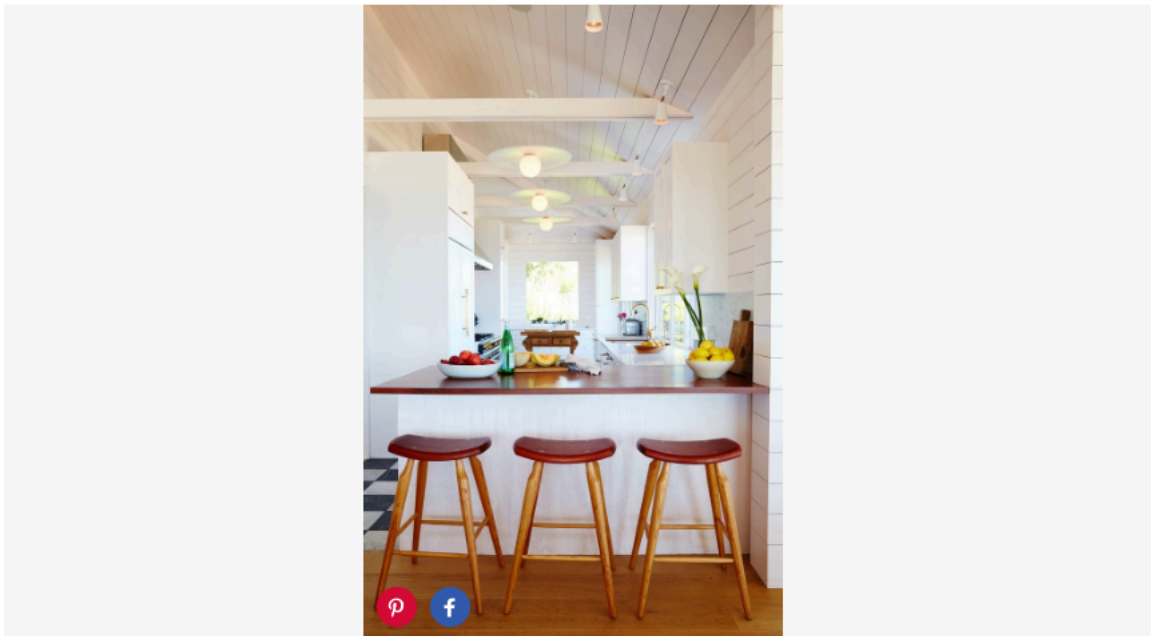
Lucky for the client, McKinley couldn't have been better suited for the job. As man-about-Montauk, McKinley is known for his particular brand of elevated beach-chic style—and that's exactly what he brought to this project. After a gut renovation that maximized oceanfront views, the designer set about appointing the six-bedroom home with a mix of vintage and new furnishings (some are his own creations), nautical touches (shiplap in every room), and organic details (like the black-walnut-slab-turned-headboard). “The key was maintaining the comfort level and relaxed nature of the house while elevating the finishes,” says McKinley. “We didn't want to make it too pristine.” In the end, he got better than pristine: He got beach-house perfection.



“The owner really loves African art, so that was a jumping-off point for us,” says designer [Robert McKinley](#) of the living room design in a Montauk home. The mahogany sectional with attached powder-coated bookcase, a [Studio Robert McKinley](#) design, was placed opposite the sliding glass doors for optimal appreciation of the ocean views. Rounding out the conversation area are two vintage armchairs that were once in an Air France lounge and an ebonized ash cocktail table by [Andrianna Shamaris](#).



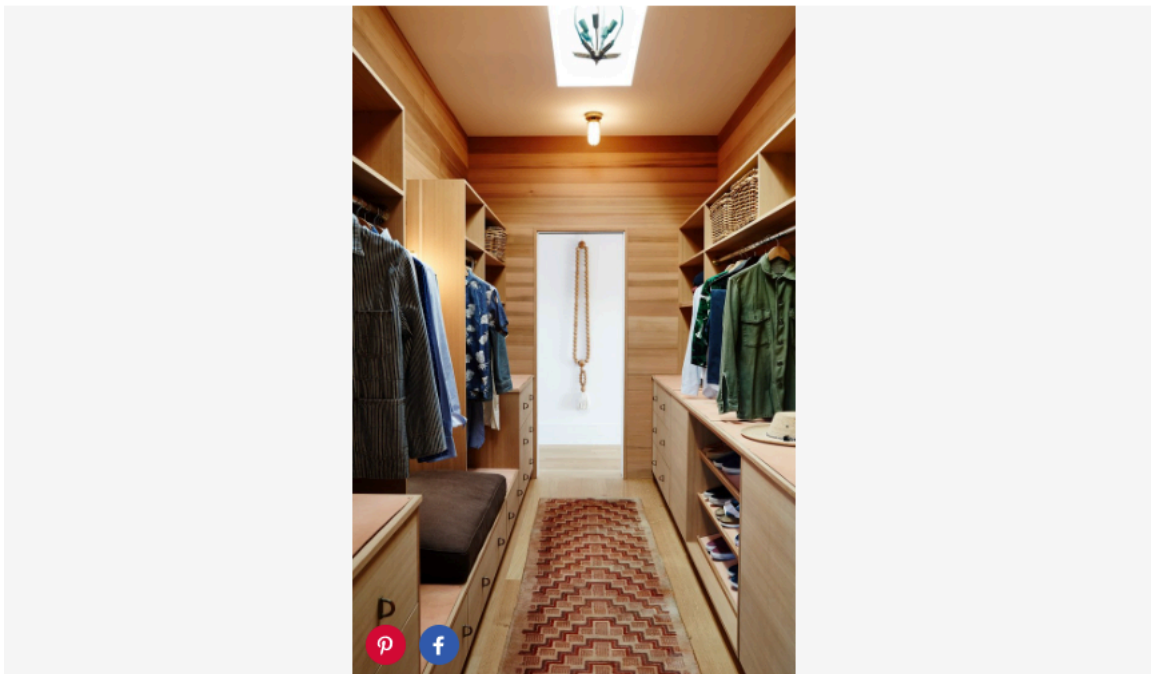
The dining area boasts 180-degree ocean views and a serene palette. “We really looked to the light, ocean-bleached, sun-kissed hues of the beach,” says McKinley of the soft color scheme found throughout the home. The bleached-ash dining table with a poured-resin top (one of his designs) “was inspired by a backlit wave,” he explains. The [Noguchi pendant light](#) hovering over it echoes the larger one hanging in the living room. The arresting sculpture dangling between the dining and living spaces is by [Jill Platner](#).



The U-shaped kitchen features an eat-in counter with vintage stools scored at Brimfield. It’s a small and utilitarian space, but there are still luxe materials to be found here: The counters are statuary marble; the eat-in counter is mahogany; and the floors are black and white marble tiles reclaimed from a French chateau.



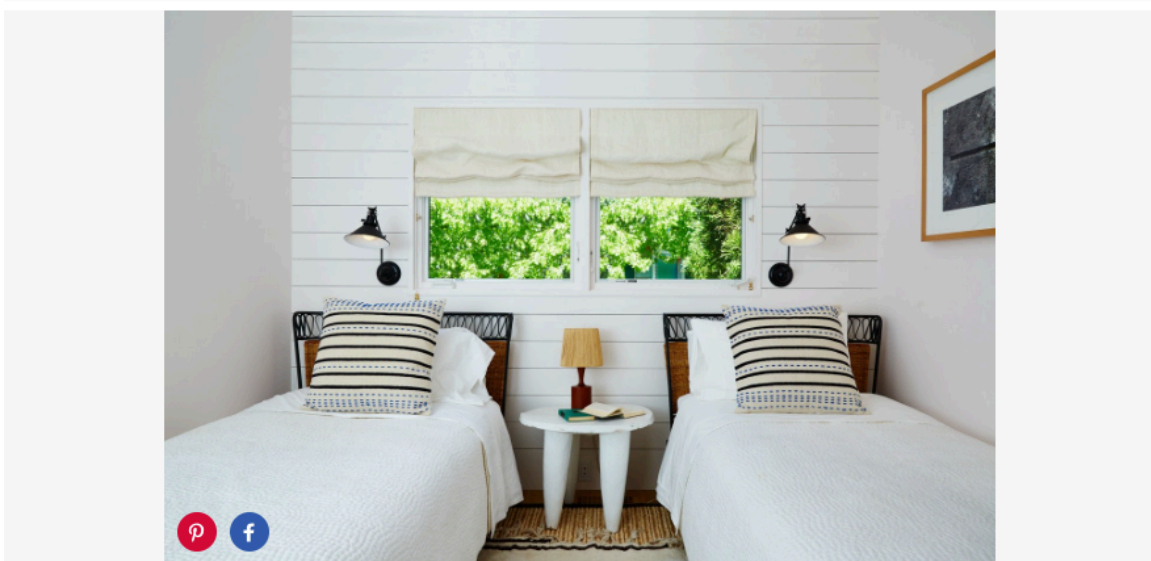
The bed in the master bedroom encapsulates McKinley's elevated yet effortless sensibility. His studio designed the live-edge black walnut bed and side tables with perforated brass shelves; sconces by [Galerie Van den Akker](#) and brass dimming switches by [Forbes and Lomax](#) were installed into the headboard. The wool rug is from [Stark Carpet](#).



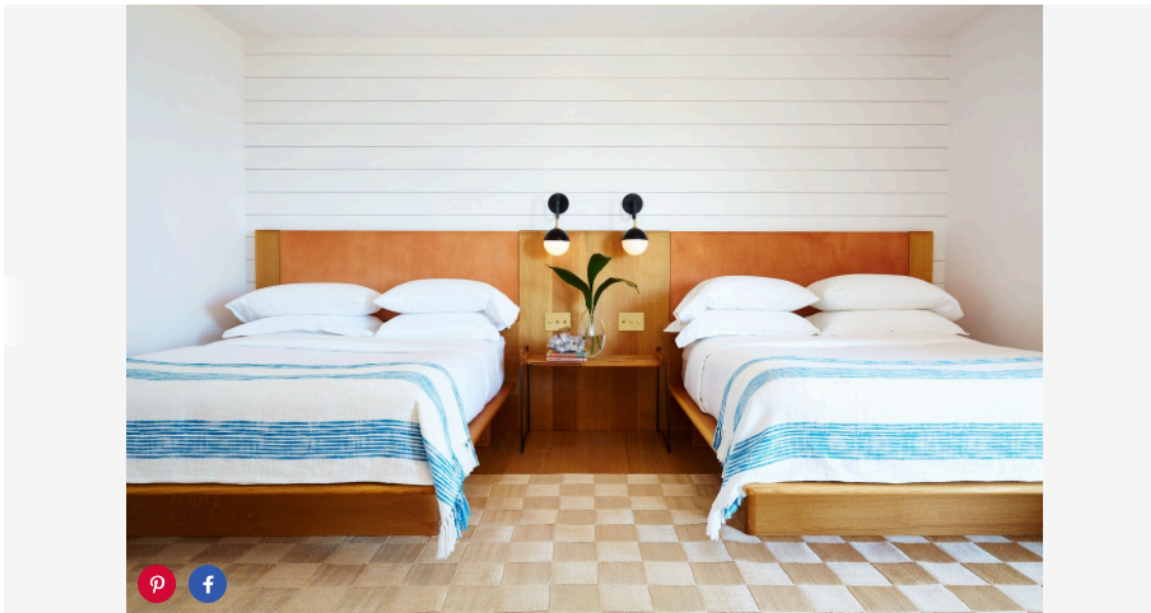
A cedar-lined walk-in closet is just off the master bedroom. Oversized wooden beads that McKinley found at [Melet Mercantile](#) are framed by the closet's doorway.



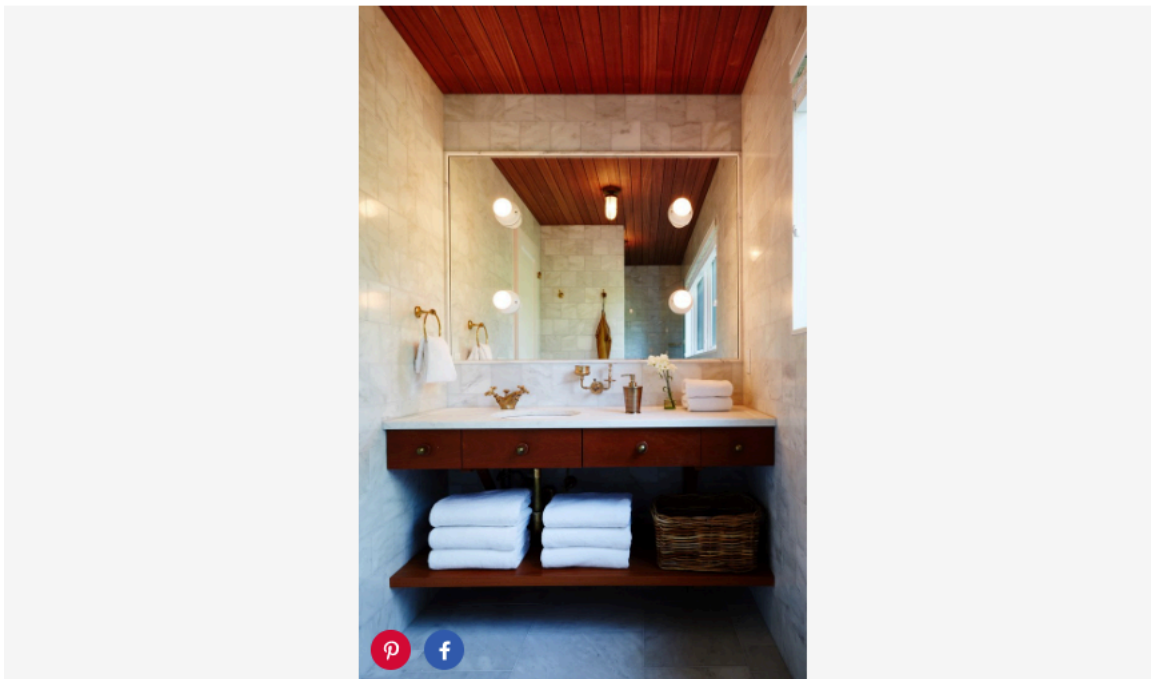
McKinley designed the master bath's custom double sink, which is one of his favorite features in the home and was fabricated in Italy. The vanity top and shelf are live-edge mahogany. Faucets are by [Barber Wilsons & Co.](#), and lights by [Ladies & Gentlemen Studio](#).



One of McKinley's favorite rooms also happens to be one of the house's smallest. This guest room, despite its challenging square footage, feels airy and fresh, in part because of the white shiplap walls. The entire home is painted in [Whitewater Bay](#) by Benjamin Moore. "At the beach, you have to make sure you pick the right white that has a little bit of pink in it to warm things up and reflect light beautifully," he says. Sconces from [Rejuvenation](#) hang over the vintage Italian iron-and-rattan beds from [Wyeth](#).



The owner often hosts overnight guests in his home. “We thought it would be fun to make this room feel a bit like a hotel getaway by the beach,” says McKinley, who designed the beds and joint headboard. “It’s oiled white oak with hand-stitched leather inlays.” The sconces are by [Atelier de Troupe](#).



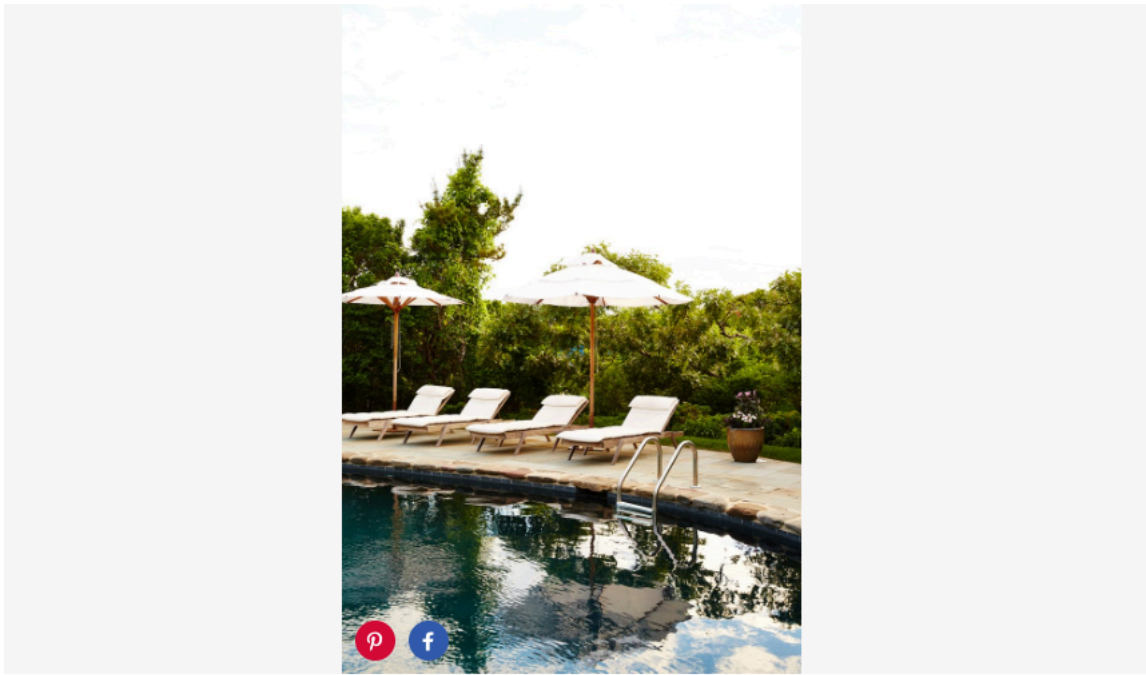
This guest bathroom was inspired by the simplicity of Japanese spas. The ceiling is made of mahogany, “a great way to warm up the floor-to-ceiling marble,” says McKinley.



A colorful Alexander Calder tapestry hangs over a bed from [Modernica](#) in this bedroom. Flanking the bed are [Serena & Lily](#) nightstands. The sconces and dresser are vintage finds, and the arched mirrors are by [Bower NYC](#).



McKinley had the house's exterior covered in cedar shiplap siding and redesigned all the decks. A custom spiral staircase, in a color to match the sea below, was added to connect the master bedroom to the pool deck. Stainless steel mesh was used for the deck railings for both its nautical imagery ("it reminded us of netting," says McKinley) and transparency (better views).



McKinley worked with [Brady Mitchell Anderson Landscape Architecture](#) on the plant and saltwater pool designs. The [Giati](#) umbrellas and [Henry Hall](#) lounge chairs were all purchased from [Walters Wicker](#).

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