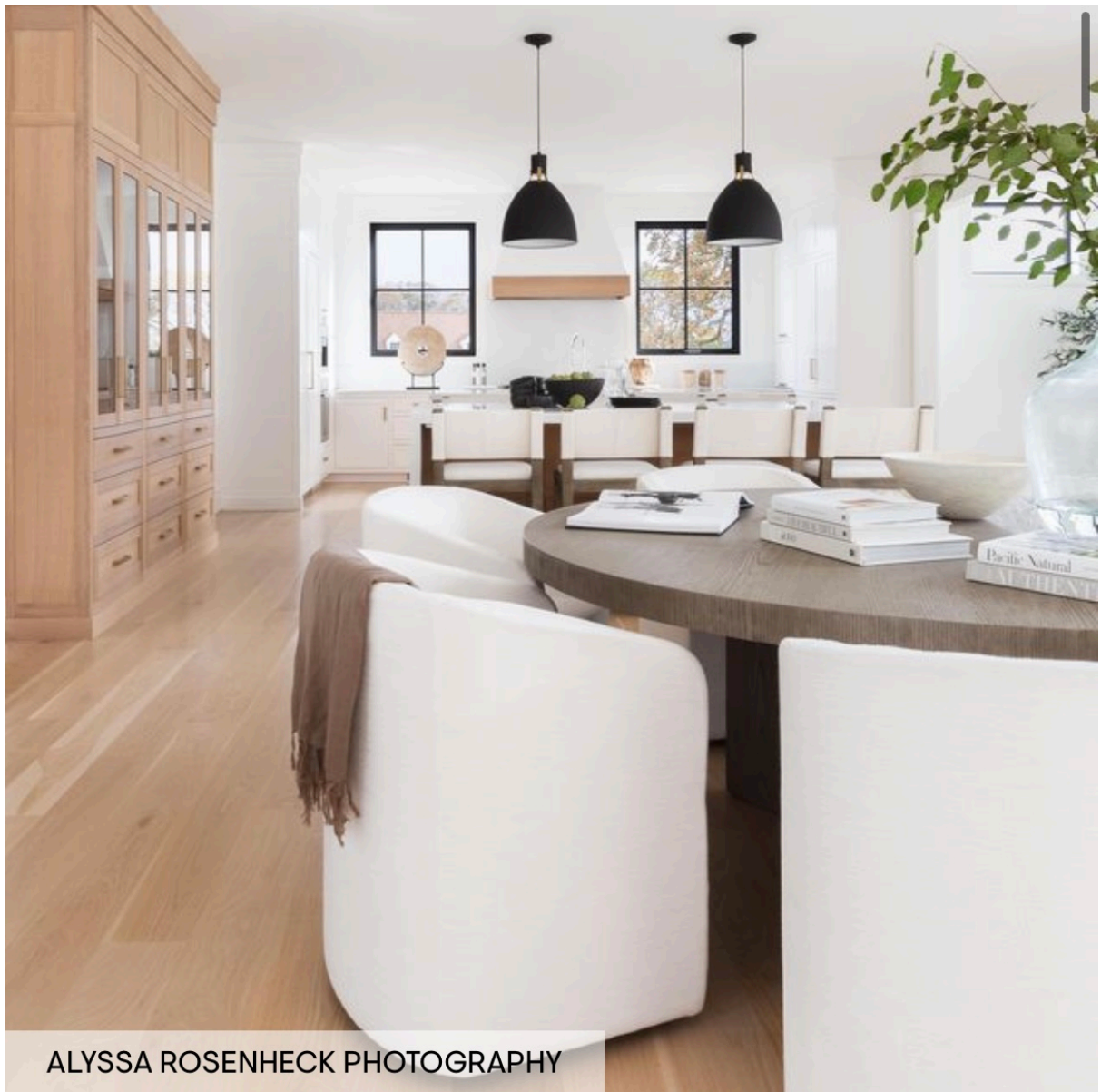


## Leia T. Ward Redefines Coastal Style in This Modern Family Home

Seaside design lives in harmony with panoramic views.



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What makes a seaside home a *seaside home*? Take a quick stroll through a recent project on the Connecticut coast by designer Leia T. Ward and you'll spot nary a blue-and-white accent or nautical motif; instead, the founder of [LTW Design](#) leveraged her penchant for warm-but-minimal modernism to let the home play a supporting role to its most striking feature: the sweeping ocean views.

"Our intention was to redefine coastal," says Ward, also a successful home stager, who met her now-clients after they came to see a house she'd staged on a nearby island. They fell in love with the decor, and eventually enlisted Ward when they decided to build a new house on a different property. "In that way it's really organic," says the designer of her client relationship. "They knew my work, and they just said, 'we want to work with you from the ground up.'"



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The clients enlisted architect [Mark P. Finlay](#) and Nick Frate of [Fox Hill Builders](#) to create a home that would be functional for an active young family (the owners have five children) while also taking full advantage of the property's near-360-degree views of the Long Island Sound. Once the building plans were complete, Ward began the task of outfitting the interiors with a similar goal of combining cozy comfort and and killer location. Read on to find out how she did it.

"When you pull into the driveway, all you see is floor-to-ceiling windows into that living room, so we wanted it to be a showcase a bit," explains Ward. That said, she also didn't want the decor to block the floor-through views, so, she opted for low-profile furniture and [eschewed window treatments](#) in favor of exposed iron window frames and monochrome art instead of busy wallcoverings.



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# Entry



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# Living Room



**A neutral palette and minimal art keeps the emphasis on the views outside.**

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"The color palette has to be cohesive throughout all our projects," Ward says—and it became especially important in a home like this with an open floor plan. In the dining room, she continues the monochrome palette with pops of texture. "We were thinking, how do we make this coastal but also sophisticated, so it could be anywhere in the country." The answer? "A lot of natural materials," including oak, wool, and linen, like on the dining chairs.



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# Kitchen



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Lauren Vallario designed the foundation of the kitchen, with Ward filling in lighting and accessories. Ward also recommended the double island, a feature that's becoming more and more common in her projects. "One island will be completely functional—it has a sink, you can put your groceries there—and then the other island has seats on both sides," like a kitchen table. "We just want to make it really functional, but also uncluttered," she explains.



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# Bedroom



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# Study



**Clean lines and a modern Eames office chair keep a desk area from feeling cluttered.**

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