

The New York Times:

Hamptons Homes Blur the Line Between Inside and Out



The awning of a pool house in Southampton, N.Y., frames the view of a gunite pool with an infinity edge, spa and sun shelves. John Kean built the house on spec for the ultimate in indoor-outdoor living. Credit...Daniel Gonzalez for The New York Times

By Marcelle Sussman Fischler

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Twenty-foot-wide glass walls retract electronically at the tap of a cellphone app at the over-the-top \$39.5 million furnished mansion John Kean built last year on four acres in Southampton. They disappear into wall pockets, blurring the distinction between indoors and out.

The living room, with its full bar, dovetails with an outdoor covered terrace lengthy enough for a banquet table for 75 guests.

“You come to the Hamptons to be outside,” Mr. Kean said, describing an indoor yet outdoor alfresco fund-raising soirée he held last summer at the 15,500-square-foot, 10-bedroom, 12-full- and three-half-bath manse that he built on spec.

Another tap and a mesh screen came down, enclosing the terrace and turning the geothermally cooled house into a giant screened-in porch. The screens “keep the air-conditioning in,” he said, and the pesky bugs out.

Increasingly, architects, builders, interior designers, landscape architects and homeowners in the Hamptons are bringing the indoors out, turning terraces, backyards and roof decks into a series of stylish outdoor rooms.

Mr. Kean’s property is at the high end of the Hamptons housing market, where the average sale price is \$1.72 million, but the melding of inside and out is a trend that can be seen even in more modest homes.

“In the Hamptons, the outdoors is more important than the indoors,” said Gary DePersia, an associate broker with the Corcoran Group, who has the listing. “Houses are being designed to accentuate that,” including at least two that he has represented that have underground grottoes offering aquarium-like views into outdoor swimming pools, he said.