

MODERN LUXURY

# HAMPTONS

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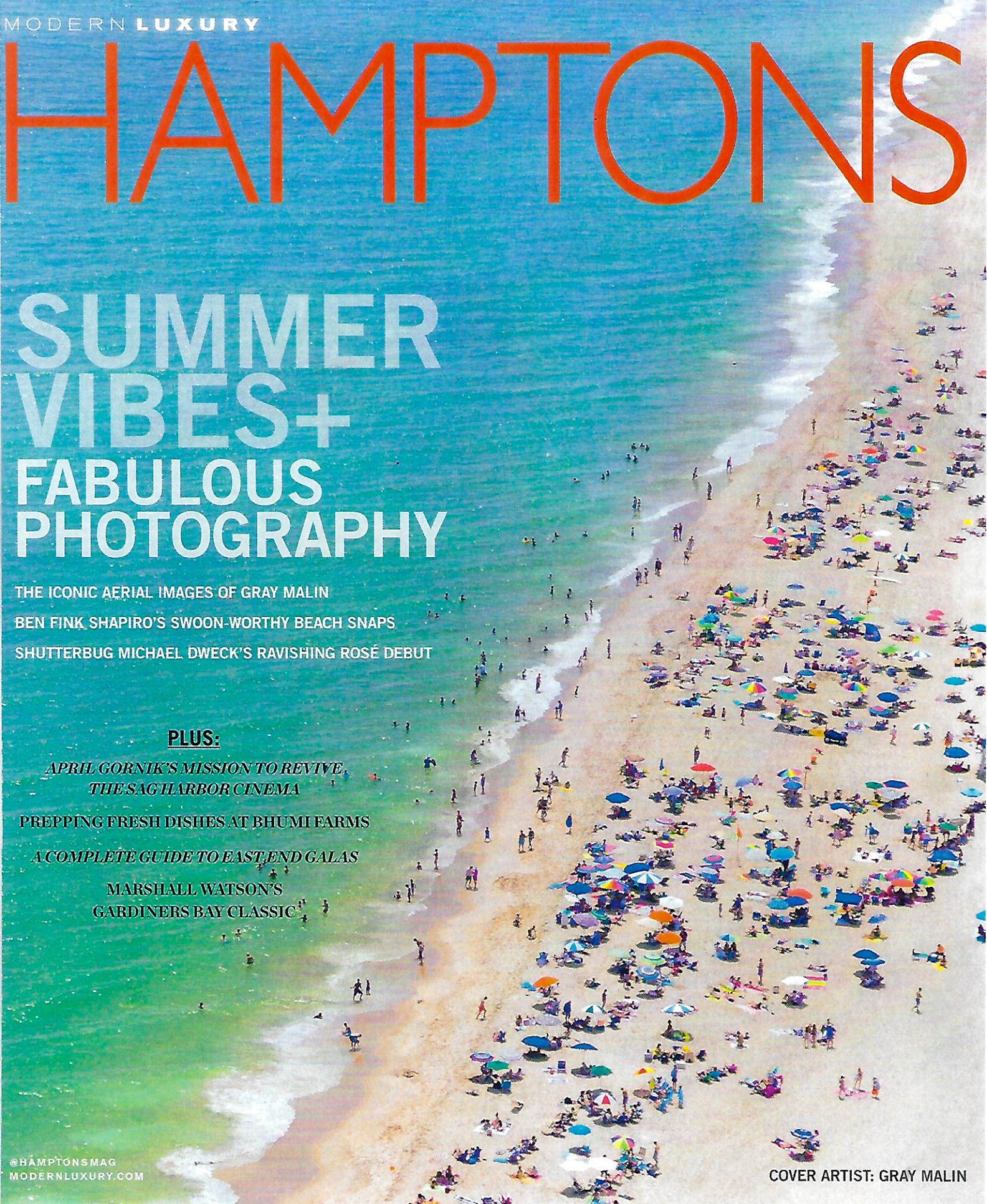
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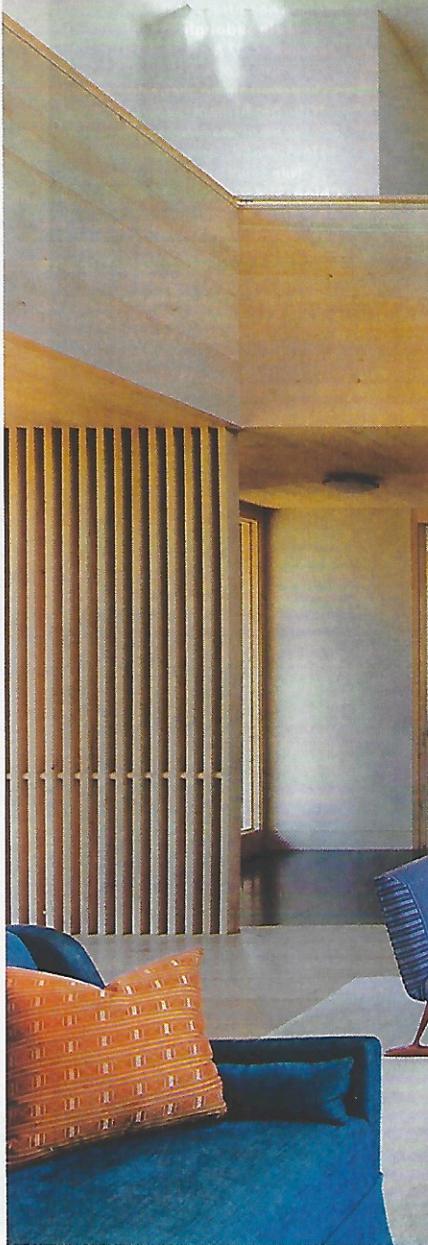
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A COMPLETE GUIDE TO EAST END GALAS

MARSHALL WATSON'S  
GARDINERS BAY CLASSIC



"Increasingly, people are saying, 'Well, I want something modern, but I don't want it to look dated in 10 years,'" notes James Merrell, whose architecture firm designed this space.



# MODERN TIMES

*An all-star team of tastemakers in real estate, home décor, and design weighs in on the trends that are coming, going, and here to stay.*

moderated by MICHAEL BRAVERMAN

**Let's begin with an in-your-face question: What's hot?**

**Elsa Soyars:** One thing I see as a trend is a little bit of a California style. Out in our Hamptons, people are attracted to more of a relaxed, natural palette.

**Frederico Azevedo:** In landscaping, I see a complement to what you just said, [going] past midcentury [style]. Like, midcentury was very in until now for interiors. Then, past midcentury, we see the 1960s and '70s, and even the '80s are coming back now. Free-form pools are totally back.

**Matthew Breitenbach:** I think the whole buyer pool of the Hamptons is changing. They seem to really love the modern aesthetic, an open aesthetic. Traditional homes with modern interiors were hot for some years. But I feel the traditional has become oversaturated, and the new generation of buyers is into more of the modern design—straight modern as well, even at lower price points.

**Scott Smith:** We're seeing more color being introduced to the kitchen. And 10 years ago, the dining room was sort of obsolete. Now dining rooms are coming back. In addition, we're doing a lot more libraries. People want to have an escape from the main area of the house to a nice, cozy library with a fireplace, where they can watch TV or read a book.

**Michael Schultz:** I think it ties back to how the Hamptons have become a year-round community again, which is amazing. I mean, look at how busy it's been. Restaurants open—there's a pulse out here. The younger families are here every weekend.

**Theresa Caccavale:** We're getting a lot more into the closets and keeping the rooms a lot simpler. You know, getting the dressers built into the closets, more minimal furniture. We do a lot of lacquer finishes and supermatte, too. Flat, clean, a little pop of color.

**Are you seeing more patterned floors and terra-cottas or...?**

**ES:** It depends on the client's vibe. I'm Portuguese, so I grew up with tile all around me, from God knows how many centuries ago. I see more painted tiles that are matte finish. They don't degrade, and you can do an amazing backsplash or mud area, or a cool bathroom. In floors, I definitely see more limed finishes, like French oaks. Even natural. If you have beautiful oak, why cover that?

**Matt, what kinds of changes have you**

**seen since you last joined us here?**

**Matthew McGrath:** Well, we are more traditional, and our clients start out very traditional, but then we see they're constantly pulling toward more modern things for the interiors. Even if they're not ready to go ultramodern on the exterior, suddenly the whole inside of the house has a very modern feel.

**What specifically do you add to bring that to life?**

**MM:** A lot of clean lines. Square, not-so-ornate profiles, trims, and such. With the kitchens, two-tone. In one kitchen, you can even have three different finishes. It used to be that all rooms would almost match. Even vanities would all have a trend throughout the house. We're now seeing every room being very different.

**Do you see vintage pieces in the kitchen?**

**MM:** A little bit. More repurposing of items in bathrooms, turning them into vanities or things like that.

**James Merrell:** I think history is available to us. You can kind of do anything if you do it well and you do it in an interesting way. It could be colors, or it could be the lack of color. That's a very personal thing. The people buying modern houses are probably, when they start to personalize it, going to do things the architects wouldn't have liked. Not in terms of additions but in decorating and finishing.

**MB:** I agree with what you're saying. As a broker, I ask people, "What are you looking for? Is it modern? Is it traditional?"

Sometimes they don't even understand what we consider traditional or modern. We know exactly what we mean, but, to Matt's point, "modern" to a lot of people is a traditional house with a modern interior.

**FA:** I think trends fade, but style remains. Style has a starter value. It's what people look for in all places they go. They are looking for a style to dignify themselves.

**JM:** Increasingly, people are saying, "Well, I want something modern, but I don't want it to look dated in 10 years."

**FA:** Style doesn't date, but I think the ideas of clients have to be translated. Sometimes a client asks me for an English-style garden. What they are really talking about is just a natural garden that has nothing to do with the English style. I have to listen to what they want, even though they label it in the way they thought.

**JM:** A lot of young people who grew up with family houses out here want

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