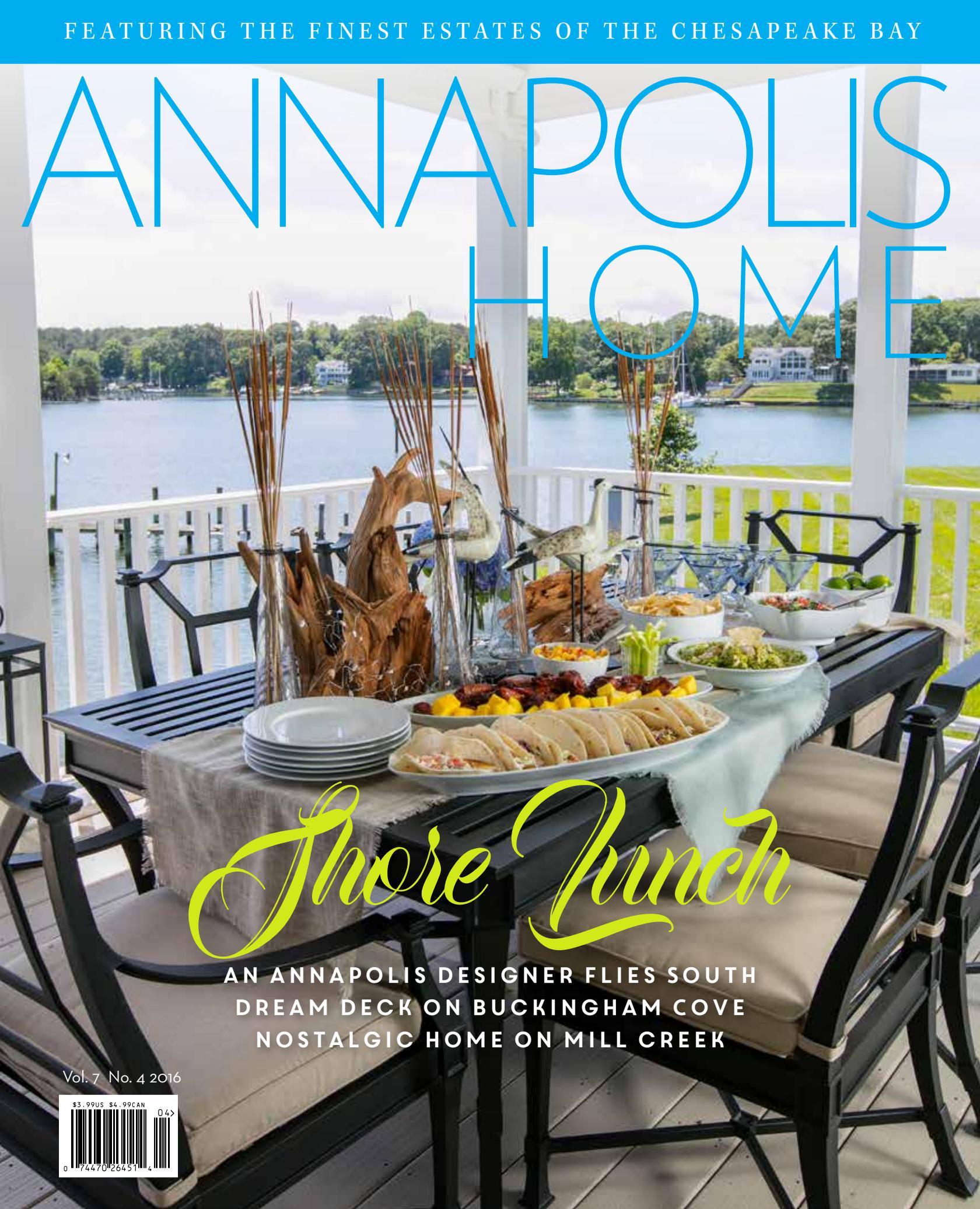


FEATURING THE FINEST ESTATES OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

ANNAPOLIS HOME



Shore Lunch

AN ANNAPOLIS DESIGNER FLIES SOUTH
DREAM DECK ON BUCKINGHAM COVE
NOSTALGIC HOME ON MILL CREEK

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Shore Lunch

BY ROBERT HAYWOOD
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
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In the early 20th century, boaters used to dock up and buy groceries at the site.



Raspberry mojitos and watermelon salad embody the spirit of high summer.

LUNCH.

This short word holds the promise of a lovely afternoon when the setting is the Chesapeake Bay. To celebrate the completion of a project for a home on Mill Creek, interior designer Gina Fitzsimmons prepared the lunch of a lifetime for clients Leigh Reiley and Tray Webb. Mill Creek merges with St. Johns Creek and flows into Solomons Creek.

On a sunny weekday while overlooking the pristine river, we enjoyed what Fitzsimmons calls her *Ches-Mex* menu, her Chesapeake Bay version of Tex-Mex. Her menu included Jumbo Lump Blue Crab Guacamole, Rocco Tacos (made with rockfish) and Watermelon Salad (see recipes pp. 44-45).

Fitzsimmons, a long-time resident of Annapolis, was simply doing what she loves: cooking for friends using fresh ingredients. While cultures across the world have their different character, manners, and rituals, no culture is stagnant or pure. Here is an instance of how Mexican dishes that are now a primary facet of American cuisine have been infused with Chesapeake Bay flare.

The house, like the menu, is coastal and casual. Fitzsimmons explains that Leigh and Tray were drawn to Mill Creek because of its value. The two had been looking for a waterfront home in the Annapolis area. With the high price of real estate, they discovered they could get more land for their money south of Annapolis and still have spectacular waterfront views. A friend made them aware of a four-bedroom home on Mill Creek designed by architect Jeff Love and Associates and developed by Mike Debord. This interior design by Fitzsimmons is just the first phase of what will be an exceptional waterfront estate.



Designer Gina Fitzsimmons knows that tans contain an infinite range of subtle tones that may be combined to induce serenity.



The creek is perpetually in flux. A double wall of windows ensures there is always something to contemplate.



Rocco Tacos are made with local rockfish. Wings and pineapple as well as corn salsa accompany jumbo lump blue crab guacamole.

The property is unique in that it once housed a general store, candy shop, and then an antique shop. Boaters docked at the covered boathouse to shop for groceries. The complex also includes a “Crab Shack” which was once used for feeding soft shell crabs during the molting process.

Working closely with the homeowners, Fitzsimmons used colors and textures of the Mill Creek landscape. Tray says they liked the idea of using “natural colors” to bring the outside in “with blue from the water as the main attraction.” She also drew inspiration from the sitting room rug, which is knotted by hand in shades of taupe, biscuit and sky blue. The blues in the rug are reinforced by the water-blue fabric in the dining room chairs, connecting visually the dining and sitting areas.

Fitzsimmons says her aim is to create “contrast and balance throughout the design.” She believes her clients over the years have often been the happiest with a neutral palette. Many people, she

notes, tire of a room dominated by black, shocks of intense color, or fierce patterns. Still, Fitzsimmons adds rich colors to a room through accent colors, which account for about 25 percent of her design.

While her designs are by no means restricted to beige, she finds that a neutral palette produces a sense of calm and an “open and airy” room. Some people stereotype beige, believing it nothing more than a tired neutral. However, any person who has studied the individual grains in a handful of sand knows that there are infinite beautiful variations as indicated in some of the fabric titles—Miller Oat, Sisal and Taupe.

Guests dine and watch the Mill Creek flow slowly by, its own mysteries sealed in shades of anvil and green. One can’t help but imagine a time when boaters pulled up to the old homestead, bought groceries, gossiped and departed. Now, after a proper welcome feast, Leigh and Tray can officially claim the waterfront lifestyle for which they had been searching. [AH](#)



(From left to right) Photographer Geoffrey Hodgdon, Interior Designer Gina Fitzsimmons, Megan Trachtman, Leigh Reiley and Tray Webb toast to new beginnings.

RESOURCES

Fitzsimmons Design Associates, Inc.
fitzsimmonsdesign.com

Jeff Love & Associates, Inc.
jla-architects.com



This unusual property has had many lives. It once housed a general store, candy shop and antique store.