

## Savannah Riverhouse

**Weathering storms and beating the heat are the keys to Southern comfort**

by Gerald Cowart

**Summer in the Isle of Hope, Georgia, lasts about seven months, and it comes in two varieties: hot and humid, and stormy and humid. So understanding the climate, not to mention the history and culture, is an important consideration when reproducing a 19th century house here. If you can build something new that repels both heat and hurricanes, you've done a lot.**



**But that's not all. A new house in a national historic district such as Isle of Hope, a suburb of Savannah, must serve two other masters in addition to climate: the clients and neighborhood. This balancing act is familiar to those who work where tradition runs deep. My clients, a young couple with three small children, wanted the charm of an old house but needed a spacious layout with a generous kitchen and master bedroom. The town, meanwhile, was protective of its Greek Revival "river-houses," the colloquial term for the traditional homes found along saltwater estuaries.**