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Buoyant Spirit

Marching to a classic modern beat, a beach house boasts charmingly hospitable interior and exterior spaces designed to handle a crowd.

writer Ann Wilson photographer Tria Giovan producer Anna Molvik

No matter their size or location,

vacation homes should evoke a sense of place while emitting an easygoing vibe that encourages relaxing, says Scott Layne, the residential designer responsible for creating this retreat on John's Island near Vero Beach, Florida. "When living in a second home, homeowners should know where they are as soon as they wake up and look out the windows," Layne says. "It's important that there is a good indoor-outdoor flow and that windows and doors are positioned to draw attention to natural surroundings."

The newly built structure allows the family to wake up to views of palm trees swaying and sunshine dancing on the pool thanks to windows and French doors galore. The interiors take their cues from the views, and understated sand, surf, and sky themes and schemes unfurl within the contemporary layout. "Our clients wanted the home to be young, open, and fluid,"

Layne says. "It had to be flexible so they could use it with their kids, when their kids had friends along, and when their own friends came down for a golf or girls' weekend. The idea was to create a home with traditional bones presented in a clean, modern way."

Bright white finishes on classic architectural details, including deep baseboards, crown moldings, beamed ceilings, and paneled walls, deliver venerable profiles in a breezy manner. Gray-stained oak floors provide an equally breezy foundation that is unexpected but in keeping with the homeowners' fashion-forward vision.

Designer Rod Mickley used the buoyant backdrops to highlight custom furnishings, vibrant fabrics, and noteworthy artwork and accents that mirror his clients' personal aesthetic. "Their primary concern was that the house have a casual, beachy look," Mickley says. "They have a fresh, sunny approach to decorating and wanted the home to feel light and airy."

Saltwater hues and beachy forms come into play in the entry hall, where wood-clad walls highlight a framed seascape mounted above an unconventional driftwood-base console table featuring a lacquered top. Subtle blue-green hues surface in shimmering glass backsplash tiles in the kitchen and in fabric banding the bottom of the living room's sheer draperies. Complementary tangerine tones burst onto the living room scene through accent pillows and a leather-covered ottoman. Orange splashes crop up again in the dining room in neat trim bordering raffia-upholstered chairs.

Crisp hues and contrasts continue in a guest bedroom furnished with statuesque iron bedsteads sporting headboards upholstered in bright aqua fabric. "The home has a sense of fun that suits its young and active homeowners," Layne says. "When you're here, you feel good. It's a happy home that makes you want to stay awhile."



A cypress-clad ceiling, tumbled-travertine floors, and stucco walls give the loggia an inviting interior feel and the durability to weather salty breezes and blazing sunbeams. "This is a home that's meant to be lived in and enjoyed," designer Rod Mickley says.







In the dining room, coffered ceilings, paneled walls, and refined furnishings strike a traditional note that's offset by a graphic palm-frond mural. A black-painted table plays off the charcoal hue in the mural while subtly grounding the room's light finishes.



This photo: The living room opens to patios and the pool via transom-topped mahogany French doors. A chandelier sporting handblown Egyptian glass bulbs designed to look like fishing-net floats nods to the home's seaside locale. **Opposite** Inset brick bands underline the shape of the driveway.



Clockwise, from above left: French doors align across the rear of the home to capture light and provide access to a pergola-shaded patio and loggia. Tongue-and-groove boards add dimension to the entry hall. Louvered doors act as an outer gate, supplying a tantalizing transition between the front portico and a courtyard leading to the main entry doors. Semitransparent tiles used as a backsplash in the kitchen glisten like sea glass while showcasing white-painted Shaker cabinets and thick Calacatta marble countertops. Vertically installed rectangular tiles visually stretch the dimensions of a guest bath and mimic the sandy tones of a concrete countertop and limestone floors. A colorful patterned rug adds pep to the library's serene grass-cloth-covered walls; a leather chair and accent pillows on a clean-line sofa echo the rug's jewel tone.



“The home feels fresh, inviting, and unpretentious.”

—DESIGNER ROD MICKLEY



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