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Inside & Out

Southern home

58+
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ROOMS TO
LOVE

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Fresh Colors for Every Room

Ocean Oasis

Designer Ellen Kavanaugh creates a peaceful paradise for a couple looking to turn their favorite vacation destination into their full-time place of residence.

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Previous pages: One step across the threshold rewards visitors with a plethora of colors ranging from the great room's lavender sheers to the green-and-white hall wallpaper of blossoms, leaves, and twirling vines by South African designer Mally Skok. Opposite: An antique Gustavian bench is paired with vintage Turkish carpet. This page, clockwise from above left: The exterior view of the one-story beach house and hall includes the homeowners' chocolate Labrador retriever, Jones, waiting for his beach walk. The dining area is anchored with a custom white lacquered table, 19th-century gray-painted Swedish host chairs, and six caramel leather Knoll dining chairs.

For a plethora of reasons, the North End of Palm Beach feels as if it exists on another planet. Beyond the ancient-looking banyan trees, the seaside community hints of a laid-back lifestyle that lies behind crisply trimmed hedges. Bordered by the Atlantic on the east and Lake Worth on the west, the charming, densely landscaped neighborhood is in no short supply of sandy beaches and is just removed enough from one of the nation's most glamorous enclaves to exude its own more casual vibe.

The North End oozes a kind of mystical draw that appeals to many, including a Pennsylvania couple that chose to relocate when their younger son left for college. "I was lucky enough to come to Palm Beach with my parents when I was a child," says the wife. "And I longed to relive those happy memories somehow."

The empty nesters first rented a North End oceanfront property for three blissful winters. "We reconnected with old friends and were happy there, but when the house was rented to a long-term tenant, it forced our hand to find something to buy," says the wife. During the ensuing year-long search for their perfect home, the husband and wife developed invaluable contacts, including interior designer Ellen Kavanaugh and builder Tim Givens.

When realtor Gary Pohrer called to say he had found the perfect house for the couple, they were thrilled to learn that it was on a large North End lot just a block from the beach, and it had been totally remodeled by Givens. The renovation, which reduced the neglected and overgrown ranch house down to its studs, also removed an





Opposite, above: The great room's wall of windows and doors overtly beckons to the sun-kissed outdoors. Art by Susie Bettenhausen is paired with a colorful sea-foam green longboard that navigates the Atlantic's winter swells. Left: The kitchen is an entertaining dream with white marble counters. Below: A loggia with an open-beamed ceiling, stuccoed concrete columns, and wood-burning fireplace is the go-to outdoor gathering spot for the family. Opposite, below: The compact office features a custom-made partner's desk the couple shares, flanked by McGuire rattan chairs with Pierre Frey seat cushions. "Textural and organic pecky cypress walls work especially well with all the purple accents in the room, including the hand-blocked wallpaper on the ceiling. Surprisingly, it sets the tone for other similar accents, such as the eggplant leather recliner next to the boxy rattan storage cabinet," says Kavanaugh.





unattractive motor court from the front, effectively “leaving no stone unturned,” says Givens. The job that took ten months to accomplish ended with a pool and garden installation, and by the time the couple saw the pristine beach house, it was love at first sight.

They then agreed on a timeline and budget and hired Kavanaugh. “Our client arrived on her beach cruiser bike for the initial walk-through, which we thought was very cool, and certainly defined this energetic, athletic family’s persona,” says Brienne Engelhart, Kavanaugh’s team member on the project. “From there, we all segued directly to our design studio, where we pulled fabric and wallpaper samples and discussed her dreams and aspirations.”

Since Givens created interesting living options within the open floor plan of the 4,480-square-foot interior, Kavanaugh says it made the project even

more enjoyable because it presented the designers with a clean slate. “Along the way, it evolved into a true collaboration that allowed no wasted time to second guess where it was going,” she says. “It metamorphosed into a very fluid and organic project with lots of things to love.”

The west end of the home includes a serene master suite and two additional bedrooms along with a Cypress-paneled den that has a custom-made, shared desk where the husband and wife can both work. The east side offers another bedroom that is favored by the husband’s parents, and the airy detached loggia with beamed ceiling and wood-burning fireplace is a beloved gathering spot. “All in all, it became the most pleasurable project imaginable,” says the wife. “Everything about it was fun. I always believed that a good designer makes your taste better, and that’s what Ellen and her team did.”

Above: The master suite is outfitted with sliding doors to the pool and a soft, quiet color palette. A custom four-poster bed is dressed in Matouk linens with a pouffy Moroccan coverlet edged with playful, oversized tassels. Opposite, clockwise from above: A large guest room often used by their sons is furnished with two double beds anchored by custom-made headboards upholstered in Quadrille’s Gypsy Dance. Another guest room favored by the husband’s parents is a quiet oasis furnished with a pair of Phillip Jeffries raffia beds and a framed Hermes scarf. A crisp grass cloth-papered powder room off the hall boasts Lucite sconces with black silk string lampshades.

