

VOLUME 10, ISSUE 2

MARCH 2006 \$3.99

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AOL Keyword: CoastalLiving

picture perfect

Interior designer Suzanne Kasler gets her Florida getaway ready for its close-up.

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There's nothing like a photo shoot to prompt an interior designer to finish a project. When *Coastal Living* set a date to photograph Suzanne Kasler's beach getaway, she shook the sand out of her flip-flops and got busy.

The home, in the Carillon community on the Florida Panhandle, was already fabulous. But

In bamboo frames, grouped vintage batik screen prints from an Atlanta flea market suited Suzanne's need for over-the-sofa art. The minimal investment looks museum-worthy. Right: John, Suzanne, and Alexandra



DESIGN TIP

Make a statement with unique artwork.

Seek one-of-a-kind accessories for personal flair. Flea markets, art shows, and antiques shops are good hunting grounds.



DESIGN TIP
Blur the lines between styles by mixing modern, vintage, and traditional design. "If you do something all one way, you lose interest," says Suzanne.

Suzanne thought it needed some finishing touches. She and her husband, John Morris, and their daughter, Alexandra, regularly enjoyed the serene retreat, visiting from their Atlanta home on weekends. After working on the beach house from the ground up for the better part of a year, Suzanne finally had a sunny place to get away from her office and its piles of fabric swatches, paint samples, and resource books—at least until we called.

To ready her home for our camera, Suzanne loaded a U-Haul with accessories and enlisted the help of a couple of friends. "As a designer, I'm always trying to get people to think about that last layer. It may look finished, but it's not," she says.

The basic plan was easy to build on. Suzanne and architect Ken Rich collaborated on a design that favored Georgian style and classical leanings,

Bold pewter-and-orange Ultrasuede cushions on Parisian flea-market chairs (above) make for a pleasant juxtaposition of old and new. Alternating stripes give the almost-indestructible seat coverings even more punch.





The Kaslers' house sits back from the water. Undeterred from claiming her view, Suzanne designed a portable cabana. "With the shade," she says, "you can stay on the beach all day long."



DESIGN TIP
Add the "wow" factor with standout pieces, such as the fabric-covered light fixtures in the kitchen.

infused with contemporary elements and a modern floor plan. "I didn't want a cottage," says Suzanne. "I wanted something more refined, with a strong architectural background."

The resulting design evokes island sensibility with its porches, metal roof, smooth stucco exterior, and sun-bleached color scheme. A second story, a detached guesthouse, and symmetrical proportions give the 2,500-square-foot house a feeling of grandness, but inside, the scale is livable. Because the house is devoid of hallways, the rooms flow seamlessly into each other. There are no fancy moldings or extravagant adornments—just timeless,

The kitchen's contemporary design elements—concrete countertops, streamlined cabinetry, and frosted glass—balance the traditional look of wicker chairs and a farm table. Right: Hot-glued to the built-in bunk beds in the multiuse landing, sea stars become sculptural accessories against white painted woodwork. Orange pillows and a throw bring neutral walls and furnishings alive.





DESIGN TIP

For graphic impact, choose bold paint colors and furnishings with strong silhouettes. In the upstairs guest bath, green walls defy the home's mostly white paint scheme.

functional spaces customized with careful thought. Simply decorated rooms feel larger, says Suzanne.

That philosophy manifests in restrained use of color and purposefully placed accents. "You can get a lot of impact with a little," Suzanne says. With a pale background—white walls, white cotton slipcovers, and sisal rugs atop whitewashed pine floors—details stand out as prominently as a regatta's sails against a deep-blue sea. Pulling in items off the U-Haul, Suzanne added cheery spots of color, elegantly patterned fabrics, and enough seashells to make it beachy.

So was all of this just for our two-day flurry of photographs? Probably not, Suzanne admits of the extra accessories she trucked in. "But we are going to take back the plants." 🐚

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In the master bedroom, inexpensive wood brackets support hefty chunks of coral. This affordable look makes up for Suzanne's splurge on the custom embroidered sheets.



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