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FEATURES

Star Quality

A change in roles prompts the refresh of a coastal Georgia home

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A round dining table repeats the curves of the arched loggia. “It’s big enough for entertaining, but not so big that the homeowners don’t feel comfortable when it’s just them having dinner together,” Huff says.



Exterior Mediterranean architecture suits the home's beach location.

approaching retirement, this Georgia couple was ready to flip the script. Leisure would dominate their story line—and their second home, a getaway on Sea Island, Georgia, would rise from domestic understudy to undisputed star.

“The house had worked great as a vacation home and rental,” designer Will Huff says. “But when the couple decided they were going to make it their full-time residence, they wanted to elevate this home—make it special.”

That cued an edit to refresh rooms that were still living in the early 2000s, when the home was built.

“We didn’t need to make significant architectural changes,” Huff says. “Details like ceiling beams and arched doorways were already there. We changed out countertops and hardware in the kitchen, which made a big difference. But everything else was paint and decorating.”

The power of paint makes its presence known from the first step into the great-room. Light, bright walls visually expand the space and echo the breezy attitude of the home’s beach setting. Whites and neutral tones on furnishings, paired with sprinkles of soft blues, further the airy aesthetic.



Great-Room "I love the symmetry of the living area," designer Will Huff says. "I wanted a sophisticated, dressy look that's also kid-friendly. The homeowners' grandchildren love to sit in the Jan Showers corner chairs and tell each other secrets."



Before



Dining Area Graceful French chairs and a cascading chandelier set an elegant tone for formal dining. A large mirror tucked into the arched buffet nook reflects the adjacent living area. Huff also used the same jute carpet—appropriate for a home on the beach—throughout the great-room to visually connect the living and dining zones.



Before



Kitchen Huff kept the kitchen's functional L-shape layout but lightened the space with a fresh coat of paint and new white countertops.



Before

“We kept antique pieces that are special to the family, like the trumeau mirrors, but mixed in new items like the Jan Showers corner chairs and the coffee tables,” Huff says. “If everything is old and brown, a room feels stodgy. New pieces give a space life.”

Art also plays a role. To top the fireplace, Huff swapped a vintage tapestry for a bolder contemporary work. “I love how modern elements give a room a ‘current’ feel,” Huff says. “They add just the right amount of edge.”

Like the living area, the adjacent dining space kept its classicism while shedding heaviness. White paint and fresh upholstery—a sophisticated damask on host chairs and a pretty yet kid-friendly outdoor velvet on side chairs—perk up existing chairs. Antique lamps repeat the blue notes of the velvet. An onyx bowl adds a touch of glamour. New and old, painted and stained, elements mingle like guests at a dinner party.

The kitchen, meanwhile, enters the modern age with updated hardware and paint on existing cabinetry. Tired granite countertops and backsplashes made way for gleaming, easy-care white quartz. A cumbersome chandelier and chairs also exited, setting the stage for unobtrusive lighting and low-profile barstools outfitted in wipeable blue upholstery that mirrors the color glimpsed inside iron-framed display nooks.

The chorus of blue and white continues in the primary bedroom, where Huff draped yards of fabric from iron rails to create a sumptuous canopy. “It’s so inviting and luxurious,” Huff says. “It’s something I’ve wanted to do for a while, but I hadn’t had a brave enough client until now.”

Blue never overpowers, appearing only on the inside of the fabric panels and again, in an ethereal hue, on the duvet and shams. In this adults-only space, Huff splurged on custom fabric to wrap the homeowners in luxury.



Sitting Room Hits of color enliven the family-focused upstairs sitting room, which connects to a relaxing guest space.



Primary Bathroom Huff removed shutters from windows in the bath and put in draperies that introduce a whisper of color. An antique chest provides storage as it layers in classic character. "I kept cherished old pieces of theirs to preserve their special memories," he says.



Guest Bedroom A delicate blue-and-white floral fabric provides a soft, pretty foil to a classic iron canopy bed, gilt mirrors, and a palm-leaf chandelier in the inviting guest room off the upstairs sitting room.



Desk Area Next to the bed, Huff tucked in a table that the homeowners use as a writing desk.

In the upstairs sitting room, the grandkids' domain, fun comes first. Playful contemporary art hung over the extra-comfy sofa inspired peppy pink-and-blue pillow coverings that speak to youthful exuberance.

The family also loves to kick back in the loggia, where dining and seating areas take in serene pool views under a sky blue ceiling that tames the summer sun.

“With the redo complete, this house really is special,” Huff says. “I love how it feels—light and sophisticated. Every space is inviting and comfortable, yet beautiful at the same time.”

“MODERN ELEMENTS ADD
JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF
EDGE.”

—Will Huff



Primary Bedroom One of Huff's favorite features of the home, the suspended bed canopy was an engineering feat. "There was no room for error with panels," he says. A fabric skirt allows for hidden storage under the bed.