

## A LEGACY HOME FOR THE GENERATIONS

FINALLY FINDING THE PERFECT LOCATION, MIDWEST OWNERS RAZE A 100-YEAR-OLD HOUSE TO MAKE WAY FOR A GRACEFUL NEW BEACH ABODE — WITH WHISPERS OF YEARS GONE BY

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“Not trendy ... anti-trendy:” this was the initial directive given to interior designers Faith Fix and Alex Thies by their new clients. The owners clarified themselves with the hopes that their soon-to-be-built, Fort Myers beachfront home would be casual, warm, traditional and timeless. “And that is just what we got — this is everything we have dreamed of,” the Midwest-based owner says.

But the two-year project was definitely complicated. Upon builder Tom Potter’s recommendation, the Freestyle designers joined the team alongside residential designer Rich Guzman to take on the challenge of creating this new 5,500-square-foot home. Sea turtle nesting sites, anti-erosion steps, and deep pilings against in-coming storms were as much a consideration as the interior and exterior design. Indeed, from fabric choices to living levels to hurricane-proof windows, the home and its environment were wedded

**LEFT:** Overlooking the infinity edge pool and the Gulf of Mexico, the three master suites and two additional guest en-suites each have waterfront views. Environmental considerations and strict building codes were strictly followed.



together. “Even the color choices were a part of the physical setting,” says Thies, the lead designer. “With a palette lifted from the water, sand, sky and life along the beach, the integration feels like a natural evolution.”

There’s something else that delights the designer. “The original house was 100 years old. We were able to salvage some of its architectural elements and design them into the new home,” says Thies in reference to the mullioned glass panels flanking the great room’s built-in and original window millwork turned into picture frames. But the concept of modern casual elegance takes over from there.

Ground-level garages, along with pickleball and shuffleboard courts, make use of code-necessitated non-living space. On the main level, the entry steps into a foyer where an Escher-like stairway ascends with multiple landings — each presenting with panoramic views and purposefully open rooms.



**ABOVE:** Glass-paneled doors from Smith & DeShields open to an elevated entry, where stairs rise to intermediate landings. Eyes are drawn up and around to a series of custom paintings that add an aqua splash to the neutral palette in complement to the beach beyond.



AS SEEN IN  
NAPLES EDITION  
**FLORIDA DESIGN**

IN THE GREAT ROOM, A SEMI-FORMAL LIVING AREA SITS ALONGSIDE A “SIPPING” AREA STYLED WITH THEODORE ALEXANDER CLUB CHAIRS AND A CUSTOM EURO-HEIGHT COCKTAIL TABLE. A MERE GLANCE AWAY, ROBERT JAMES BRUSHED OAK DINING CHAIRS OFFER AMPLE SEATING IN THE ELEGANT DINING SPACE.





COCKTAILS ARE SERVED AS BARSTOOLS FROM CURATE HOME SEAT GUESTS AT AN UPSTAIRS BAR AREA THAT PROVIDES THE PERFECT HANGOUT FOR VISITING FAMILY OF A DIFFERENT GENERATION. WITH BALCONIES EXTENDING ALONG THE HOME'S REAR, SUNSETS ARE ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE.



"You could spend all day in the great room," the owner says. The first of two seating groups styled with a Kravet sofa in blue-gray chenille and steel-blue, sawed-oak framed chairs, feels slightly formal. In the adjacent "sipping area," a wire-brushed oak table, custom-designed and elevated to a Euro-height, is circled by swivel club chairs to shape a social spot to enjoy an evening glass of wine.

"To set the dining area apart, but avoid separating it with impediments to the view, we lowered the dining room's ceiling and centered the table on a beautiful shell stone inlay," the designer says. It only takes a turn of the head to find the kitchen, the wine bar, and a family-friendly table ready for enjoyment. The artistic striae of the waterfall counter merges seamlessly with a unique walnut table seating six. In shades of white and pale blue, Jessica Charles' channel-backed counter stools complement the cabinetry.

A second, upper-level bar area looks out over wrapping balconies and the shimmering Gulf. At the bar with a matching maple wood pub table, guests can chat or follow a game, play board games or thrill to a sunset, all the while admiring the tiled back bar wall and distinctive art.

With three master suites, one of two additional VIP guest en-suites off of the main level opens directly to the loggia and its much-fancied swing. "From the color of the drapes to Loloi's area rug reminiscent of the designs the wind makes in the sand, this particular room takes its inspiration from the beach," Thies says.

**ABOVE LEFT:** White cabinetry from Distinctive Kitchen Studio lines the culinary space, where Arteriors' driftwood chandelier resonates with the quartzite countertops by SunMac. Nearby, a clever wine display becomes wall art above the wet bar.





**ABOVE:** Coastal comfort goes a long way in this VIP guest suite with its contemporary platform bed from Restoration Hardware. Lighting from Surya shimmers atop the owners' beach-inspired bedside cabinetry from Palu. Century Furniture's linen-clad armchair corners the private suite, where Stout's patterned draperies pull open to the loggia and stunning Gulf views beyond.

"This house was built with the pool and the sea at its center," Thies says. Wrapping around a lap pool with its sunken spa, the view from the loggia extends beyond the balmy Gulf to the horizon. Able to be cached behind automatic screening, the loggia, with its whitewashed cypress swing and hearthside social grouping, provides the perfect spot for open-air entertainment.

"We had been coming to this part of the country for over 20 years," says the couple, who've owned several condos in the area along the way. "But at last, this feels like home." Hoping to make it a frequent destination for their children and eventually, grandchildren, the owners call this their "legacy home ... a place for the generations."



**ABOVE:** This master bath reminds the homeowners of a luxury hotel's spa. With granite and stone tiles along the walls, a rectangular Jacuzzi tub for soaking, soft lighting to set the mood, and an oversized shower, it seems it couldn't get any better.





Summer Classics' furnishings, the fireplace, and a swing from Lowcountry Originals are the ultimate draws. Echoes of the house that once stood here, from the tongue-and-groove ceiling to that swing, keep the lineage intact.

**SOURCES**

**STAIRWAY ENTRY**

Stairway and railings fabricated by Potter Homes, Bonita Springs, FL  
Front doors - Smith & DeShields, Naples, FL

**LIVING AREA**

Sofa and lounge chairs - Kravet, Inc., DCOTA, Dania Beach, FL  
White wall unit and ceiling treatment fabricated by Potter Homes, Bonita Springs, FL  
Sipping area club chairs - Theodore Alexander, High Point, NC  
Sipping area cocktail table - Robert James Collection, Chula Vista, CA  
Drapery fabric - Cowtan & Tout, DCOTA, Dania Beach, FL  
Living area rug - Loloi Rugs, Dallas, TX  
Sitting area rug - Stark Carpet, Hollywood, FL

**DINING AREA**

Dining table and chairs - Robert James Collection, Chula Vista, CA  
Light pendants - Pottery Barn, Naples, FL  
Shellstone tile inset - DeMarco Tile Distributor, Naples, FL

**KITCHEN**

Cabinetry, island, hood, wood-topped table and wet bar - Distinctive Kitchen Studio, Naples, FL  
Countertops - SunMac Stone Specialists, Fort Myers, FL  
Backsplash - Tesoro Decorative Collection, Alpha Tile, Fort Myers, FL  
Counter stools - Jessica Charles, Hickory, NC  
Light fixture - Arteriors, Carrollton, TX  
Barstools - Curate Home, High Point, NC  
Wine wall - Custom designed by Freestyle Interiors, Bonita Springs, FL

**UPPER LEVEL BAR AREA**

Bar and shelving - Distinctive Kitchen Studio, Naples, FL  
Countertop - SunMac Stone Specialists, Fort Myers, FL  
TV - AVL Pro, Inc., Naples, FL  
Barstools - Curate Home, High Point, NC  
Pub table - Vanguard Furniture, Conover, NC  
White chairs - Theodore Alexander, High Point, NC

**VIP GUEST SUITE**

Bed - Restoration Hardware, West Palm Beach, FL  
Palu bedside cabinetry - Owners' Collection  
Table lamp - Surya, White, GA  
Armchair - Century Furniture, Hickory, NC  
Wood cabinetry - Vanguard Furniture, Conover, NC  
Drapery fabric - Stout Textiles, Colmar, PA  
Area rug - Loloi Rugs, Dallas, TX

**MASTER BATH**

Tub - Jacuzzi, Chino Hills, CA  
Display shelves - Distinctive Kitchen Studio, Naples, FL  
Wall treatment - Realstone Systems, Troy, MI  
Flooring - Atica Perla, Bella Tile & Marble, Naples, FL  
Wall treatment and flooring installation by Potter Homes, Bonita Springs, FL

**LOGGIA**

Shellstone fireplace fabricated by Potter Homes, Bonita Springs, FL  
Swing - Lowcountry Originals, Atlanta, GA  
Armchair and chaise lounges - Summer Classics, Pelham, AL  
Pool - Jackson Pools, Inc., Fort Myers, FL

**THROUGHOUT**

Flooring - Naturally Aged Flooring, Moorpark, CA  
Installation by Floorcrafters, Inc., Fort Myers, FL