

SURROUNDED BY BEAUTY

A TIMELESS BEACH HOME IS CREATED IN A CONTEMPORARY COASTAL STYLE WITH SOFT COLORS TO REFLECT HUES OF DRIFTWOOD, SEAGRASS AND THE GULF OF MEXICO

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In the contemporary living area, Scan Design's lounge chair covered in dark olive leather are paired with simple seagrass stools. A four painting series of colorful squares and a Holland & Sherry area rug in a shimmering silk and wool blend recall coastal colors in tranquil shades of blue and sand.

This newly constructed beachfront vacation home in Fort Myers Beach is elegant, clean-lined, and created with a palette in natural and blue tones that reflect ocean hues. "Our clients, a couple from Flensburg, Germany, a northern town located on the Baltic Sea, value quality and comfort in a home," interior designer Karen Benson says. Along with her colleague interior designer Shana Williamson, Benson set out to create a stylish home that balances contemporary comfort with a barefoot lifestyle.

Located at the south end of Fort Myers Beach, this 4,000-square-foot, three-story property overlooks the Gulf of Mexico. "We wanted to bring out all the outside colors – the water, sand and the big blue sky," Williamson says. "Everything is streamlined, functional and comfortable."

Shades of blue and gray dominate in the den. A leather ottoman from Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams in dark gray rests atop a light-blue wool area rug, while driftwood stools lend an organic feel. A blue watercolor panel divides the space from a quietly elegant living area with stunning beachfront views. Here, a modular sofa clad in champagne linen with a soft sheen and a cantilevered, dark burled wood cocktail table offer a contrast to the room's lighter tones.

ABOVE LEFT: The den's focal point is a striking blue-lacquered wall backed by a white-lacquered floating cabinet, all by Richlin International. "Our inspiration reflects the water," says Richlin's showroom manager Kelly Hall.



In the dining area, the piece *Harbor Reflection* by Tatyana Klevenky, offers an ode to the ocean, as does the chandelier from Five Art Lamps. "Its 15 quartz pendant drops remind me of the foamy white spray of a crashing wave," interior designer Shana Williamson says.

Clean modern lines continue in the dining area, where Natuzzi Italia chairs in sand-colored leather surround a dining table topped with a natural slab of bleached driftwood. A custom floating buffet in rift-cut white-oak complements the ensemble. "Its craftsmanship is beautiful and seamless, and the touch is like velvet," Williamson says. Open-weave sheers of natural hemp netting laced with green and blue hues cover the doors and windows in the main living spaces. "When they are closed, the beautiful sunsets cast shadows on the floor," Benson says.

A stairway created with oak treads and a wood railing with horizontal steel cables leads the way to the kitchen, where pristine white cabinetry and a center island in natural wood blend together to lend a coastal feel. A stunning glass counter tops the island. "We kept to the beachy feel," says Kelly Hall of Richlin International, who, along with the Richlin team, designed the cabinetry. A floating vanity in the master bath is backed by a mirror framed with porcelain tiles that resembles a grid of driftwood. "It's a very ethereal seascape bath," Williamson says.



LEFT: A floating glass partition lines the stairway landing, while oak treads float on one steel stringer. The custom-designed, hand-scraped oak plank flooring is free of knots and flows throughout the home to create a clean, contemporary look.

MIDDLE: Created with a blend of white cabinetry and natural hues, the airy open kitchen is filled with light from a wall of windows. "The use of all white is often thought of as sterile, but we used touches of oak and glass for a clean, coastal and modern feel," Hall says.



RIGHT: In the kitchen, chrome-based barstools from Casa Italia line a glass-topped center island. The natural wood texture fronting the island balances high-gloss white cabinetry. "It has a wavy, bubbly texture that looks wet — like you poured the ocean over it," Williamson says.

The serene coastal motif continues in the daughter's room with a unique headboard styled in a Phillip Jeffries watercolor grasscloth and framed in rift-cut oak. "The seascape looks just like waves where the sky meets the ocean," Benson says.

It's all about the sea, albeit a warmer one, for this couple whose close collaboration with the designers was both productive and fun. "Karen and Shana are wonderful designers who made this home feel like our own," the wife says. "We have beach views from almost every place in our house and we just love sitting on the patio where we can enjoy gorgeous sunsets."

IN THE DAUGHTER'S ROOM, A PALECEK RATTAN CHAIR CLAD IN BLUE CHENILLE IS SHAPED WITH WHIMSICAL ARMS IN A SMALL CIRCULAR PATTERN. THE CUSTOM PLATFORM BED DESIGNED BY BENSON & ASSOCIATES IN RIFT-CUT OAK, INTEGRATES CANTILEVERED BEDSIDE TABLES.

BELOW: The elegant floating vanity in the master bath is faced with waterproof leather in beige taupe and topped with a glass counter that incorporates double sinks. Reflected in the mirror is a high-gloss porcelain tile wall.



SOURCES

DEN
Ottoman and small accent tables - Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Miami, FL
Wall unit - Poliform, Richlin International, Estero, FL
Wall mirror - Custom designed by Benson & Associates, Fort Myers, FL
Fabricated by 3Form, Salt Lake City, UT
Area rug - Kravet, Inc., Fort Myers, FL
LIVING AREA
Modular sofa - Natuzzi Italia, Naples, FL

Chairs - Scan Design, Fort Myers, FL
Cocktail table - Teracea, E.M. Soberon, MDC, Estero, FL
Occasional table - Charleston Forge, Boone, NC
Woven accent tables - Made Goods, City of Industry, CA
Drapenes - Custom designed by Benson & Associates, Fort Myers, FL
Fabricated by Top Treatment Custom Drapery, Fort Myers, FL
Artwork series - Natural Curiosities, Los Angeles, CA
Area rug - Holland & Sherry, New York, NY
DINING AREA
Dining table - Teracea, E.M. Soberon, MDC, Estero, FL

Dining chairs - Natuzzi Italia, Naples, FL
Artwork series - Heidi Schmitz, Munich, Germany
Large artwork - Addison Gallery, Delray Beach, FL
Light pendant - Fine Art Lamps, Miami Lakes, FL
Dining table and chairs on patio - Jardin de Ville, MDC, Estero, FL
KITCHEN
Cabinetry and island base - Poliform, Richlin International, MDC, Estero, FL
Island countertop - Renaissance Glassworks, Richlin International, Mirror Design Center, Estero, FL

Countertop - Cambria, Le Sueur, MN
Bar stools - Casa Italia, MDC, Estero, FL
MASTER BATH
Cabinetry and countertop - Topex, Richlin International, MDC, Estero, FL
Mirror - Custom designed by Benson & Associates, Fort Myers, FL
Fabricated by Southern Door & Hardware, Cape Coral, FL
Wall tiles - Porcelanosa, Miami, FL
Light pendant - Arteriors Home, Carrollton, TX
Flooring - Daltilo, Dallas, TX

BEDROOM
Bed and headboard - Custom designed by Benson & Associates, Fort Myers, FL
Fabricated by Cabinets of the Carolinas, Greenville, SC
Headboard fabric - Philip Jeffries, Fairfield, NJ
Wedge headboard pillow fabric and chair fabric - Kravet, Inc., Naples, FL
Wedge headboard pillows fabricated by Spes Upholstery, Fort Myers, FL
Sconces - Curry & Company, Atlanta, GA
Chair - Palecek, Atlanta, GA

Chair fabric - Kravet, Inc., Naples, FL
Ottoman - Surya, White, GA
Area rug - Capel, Troy, NC
THROUGHOUT
Cabinetry design - Richlin International, Estero, FL
Doors and hardware - Southern Door & Hardware, Cape Coral, FL
Lighting and electrical design - Security Electric, Inc., Fort Myers, FL
Stairway and flooring - Feil Wood Flooring, Inc., Fort Myers, FL