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Connecticut Cottages and Gardens

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DESIGNERS'
OWN FABRIC
LINES

SETTING UP
THE NEW
HOME OFFICE

Self-Assured Style

Water Colors

A BLUE-AND-WHITE PALETTE WASHES THROUGH
A PICTURE-PERFECT BEACH HOUSE

BY CATRIONA BRANCA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SARAH WINCHESTER

AS SEEN IN
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Sweet Dreams
Dressed in Matouk
linens, the bed in
the master bedroom
is from the Kristin
Drohan Collection;
fabric is Pindler's
Hemingway in Sky. A
Jill Rosenwald lamp
tops a bedside table
from Made Goods.
A CR Laine Jeanette
chair wears a
Great Plains fabric
by Holly Hunt. The
rug is from Stark.
See Resources.



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HEN INTERIOR

designer Erin Gates was given the opportunity to work on a project with her architectural designer father—Kevin Tubridy of New England Design—she jumped at the chance. Tubridy had fully renovated the house, combining two waterfront properties to provide room for a three-story addition to complement the renovated existing cottage. “He had given the clients my first book [*Elements of Style: Designing A Home & A Life*, Simon & Schuster 2014], so when the wife decided she wanted to redo the interior decoration of the home, as well as update the kitchen and baths, she asked if I’d be interested,” says Gates. “It was my first time working on a house designed by my father, which was really special!”

The client requested a bright, crisp and clean look. “She wanted it to flow together and coordinate from room to room with variations on a blue-and-white color scheme,” notes Gates. “But nothing that screamed ‘beach house’ in a cheesy or cliché way. The layout of the first floor was changed to create a more spacious master suite, including a small but spectacular master bathroom. The upstairs guest bathrooms were done in the same finishes to keep things easy and simple, and the kitchen was given a facelift with new countertops and backsplash, fixtures and a fresh paint job.”

Since this is a busy summer getaway spot for extended family, the homeowners needed everything to be kid friendly. “A beach house by nature should be laid back and comfortable. We had to make sure it wasn’t fussy but still looked elegant and tailored,” explains Gates. “With grandchildren, the beach right outside their door and ample sunlight coming into the house, you have to carefully select fabrics and finishes. The two blue sofas were a pair the client had and loved, so we reupholstered them in a Crypton-protected Thibaut fabric. We made sure that there were great motorized sheer window shades on all the windows to not only prevent glare but also fading of the furniture and flooring. We used indoor-outdoor fabrics on the dining chairs and bar stools, which I see as a must in any home these days!”

The first-floor master bedroom suite was designed as a peaceful sanctuary. “This bedroom is the true definition of a retreat,” says Gates. “The view is incredible, and the layout of the room really makes the most of it with a bank of windows showcasing the waterfront location. We framed these with really showstopping window treatments that added to the ethereal feel instead of adding weight. The horizontal stripe sheers are on motorized tracks layered with motorized blackout shades. And in order to keep this room feeling so peaceful, we helped design a bank of built-ins for ample storage in addition to the walk-in closet space.”

The completed project fulfilled all of the client’s desires. “By reusing the quality items she already had and loved, adding unique and beautiful new pieces to make it feel updated and selecting finishes that are timeless and not trendy, I feel like this new design will last for decades and not look tired or dated,” notes Gates. “The combination of comfort, ease of living and a serene palette all came together into one very special home.”

Coastal Calm In the living room, Oomph Tini II side tables complement sofas in a Thibaut stain-resistant fabric. A custom console through Liven Up Design is wrapped in a Cowtan & Tout vinyl grasscloth. A statement mirror from Made Goods adorns the fireplace. The jute rug is from Dash & Albert. See Resources.



Palette Pleasing (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM ABOVE LEFT) A pair of CR Laine Spool chairs sporting a Mark Sikes for Schumacher fabric flank a side table from Palecek; artwork is by Karin Olah through Gregg Irby Gallery. In the dining room, Lee Industries host chairs and Palecek side chairs surround a table painted Benjamin Moore's Simply White. Pottery Barn hurricanes top a buffet from Somerset Bay Home. A blue marled stair runner is also used wall to wall upstairs. *See Resources.*





Personal Spaces (CLOCKWISE ACROSS SPREAD FROM OPPOSITE PAGE) The master closet walls wear a blue Innovations grasscloth. One bathroom has custom navy vanities with a mirror from Wayfair and Circa Lighting sconces. An existing bed is painted in Benjamin Moore's Van Deusen blue; lamp and bedding are from Serena & Lily; nightstand is from Currey & Co. The master bath vanity top is crafted from Silestone quartz. A faux coral mirror from Made Goods makes a statement in the powder room. See *Resources*.

