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MAY 2015

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The Perfect Summer Beach House

Designer Jenny Wolf weaves whimsy, pattern, and comfort into a carefree weekend home for a young family

Written by Irene Edwards Photographed by Patrick Cline



A custom U-shaped sectional by Lee Industries and a raffia-covered table by Palecek evoke a lounge-like mood in the media room designed by Jenny Wolf Interiors.

The showstopper of a striped ceiling in this home's media room should make it clear that this is no stuffy decorator project. "They wanted bright colors and an interior that was super child-friendly," says designer **Jenny Wolf** about the 4,500-square-foot, cedar-shingled summer retreat owned by her clients in the seaside enclave of Long Beach Island, New Jersey. "Their home needed to reflect their laid-back lifestyle." Fittingly, the word that Wolf uses most to describe this four-bedroom house is *fun*.

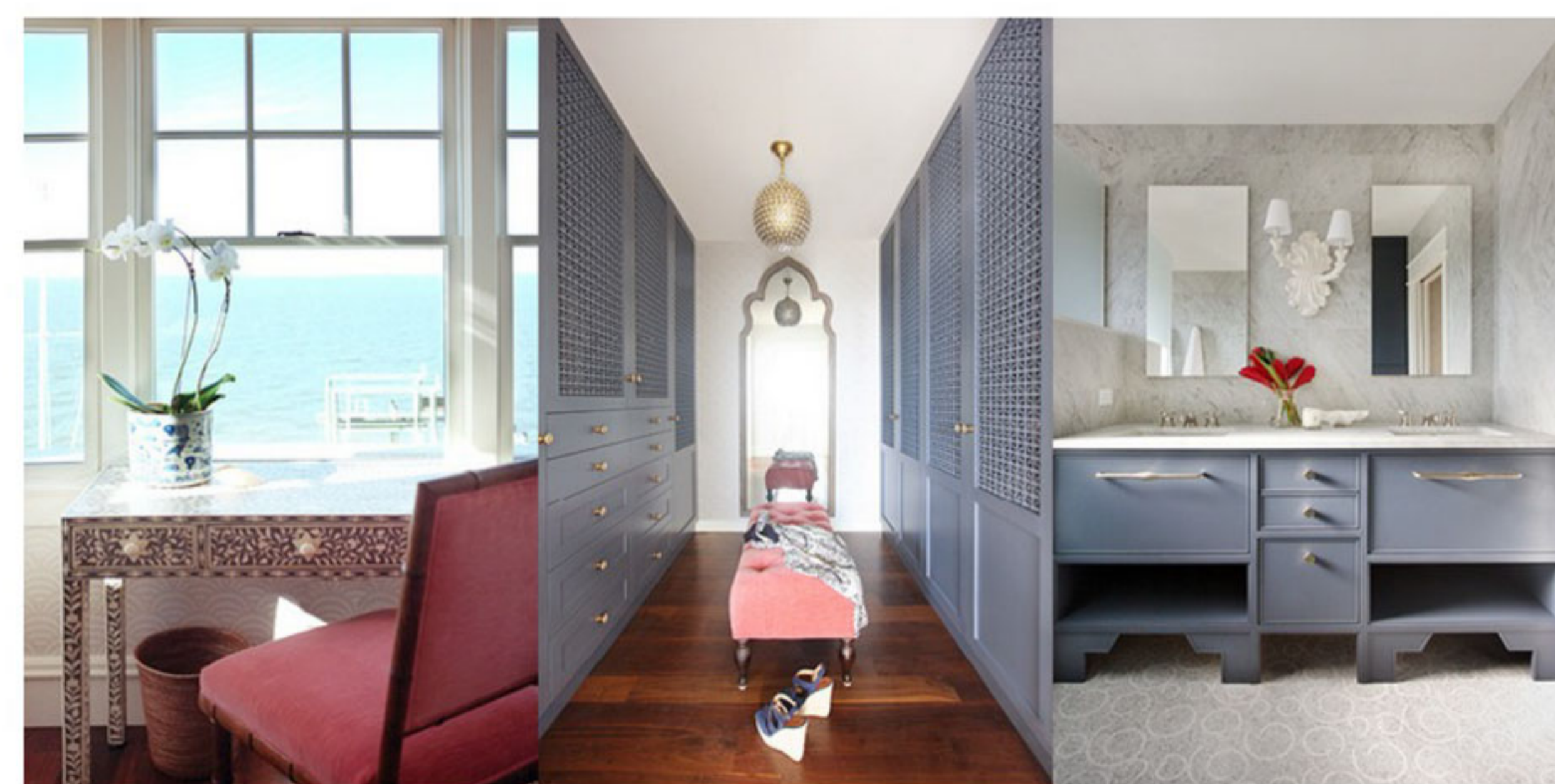


Decorative objects in the home's media room.

That doesn't mean there weren't some painstaking design moments along the way. Take, for example, that aforementioned striped ceiling—which involved a team of five perched on ladders outlining the pattern with lasers and painting over a period of five days. "The contractor wanted to murder me," Wolf admits, "but I knew how effective it would be in the space."

Given the generous use of kid-friendly materials and sophisticated flourishes, this is one

beach house that doesn't sacrifice style for durability (and vice versa). "Just because you want to be comfortable doesn't mean you have to stop being sophisticated," says Wolf, who collaborated on the home with her senior project manager, Dakota Willimon. "You can run outside, jump in the pool, and sit on the sofa—and not have to worry at all."



The master bedroom features a sunroom overlooking the water and an adjoining bath and dressing area.

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THEY WANTED THIS HOUSE TO CONVEY THEIR FUN AND EASY LIFESTYLE BY THE BEACH.

—DESIGNER JENNY WOLF

THE MASTER BEDROOM

In this bay-oriented abode, the homeowners' private master suite comes with a sunroom and a bone-inlaid desk overlooking the water. "The palette consists of blues and pops of coral," says Wolf, who wanted a light and airy space with a hint of pattern—thus the neutral gray-and-white fan-design wallpaper by Serena & Lily. The headboard upholstered in a Manuel Canovas textile establishes a crisp color combination echoed by the pair of armchairs covered in Quadrille fabric and piped with coral linen. "My client is a little more traditional in nature," says Wolf. She reinforced the classic mood with tailored textiles and trims.

The adjoining dressing room picks up on the media room's Moroccan-influenced sensibility, with its decorative screens crafted by Manhattan's Mosaic House and cabinetry embellished with brass-and-mother-of-pearl knobs. The blue-gray hue of the millwork is the same as that in the master bathroom: a subtle gradation on the outdoor vistas of sea and sky.



High-contrast piping on the sofas, as well as orange-lacquer side tables, make this living area come alive.



In the guest room, a leafy textile pattern spurs the decorating scheme. The children's bathroom, above center, brings in a similar mint-green hue.



The vinyl grasscloth wall covering is ideal for coastal homes.

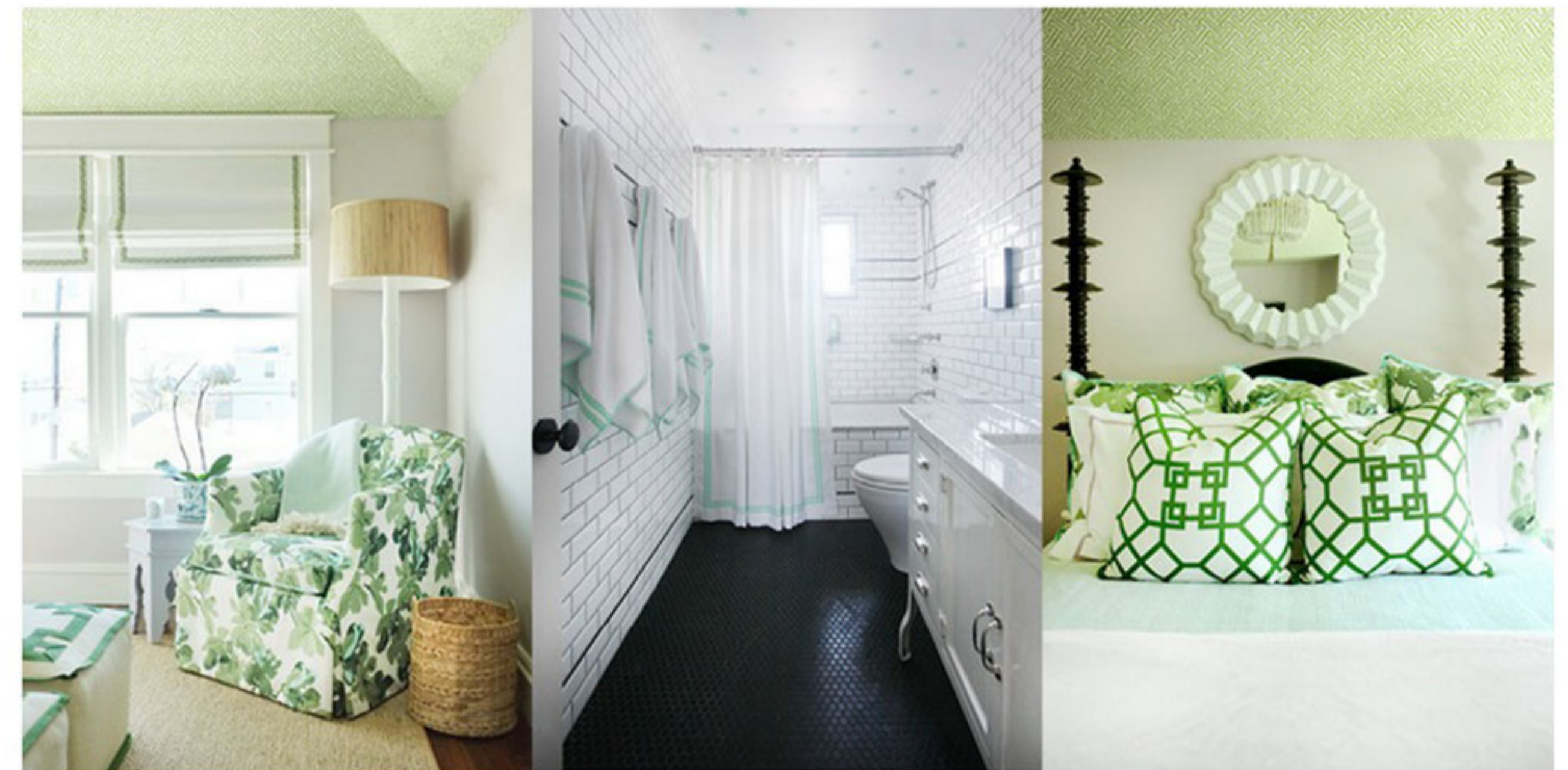


A rattan tray acts as a textural table element.

THE LIVING ROOM

The most visible space upon entering the home introduces its dominant decorating themes: beachy motifs, bold hits of color, and textural elements well suited to high-traffic zones. With a braided jute rug to ground the room, two Thibaut sofas covered in Quadrille's indoor-outdoor Zigzag fabric and piped in hot pink create an intimate seating area. Orange lacquer side tables bearing cork-shaded turquoise lamps provide poppy contrast.

"All the walls in the living area are papered in a vinyl grasscloth because there's a lot of moisture in the environment," says Wolf. Accessories such as framed sea fans and rattan trays displaying coastal objects reinforce the seaside mood.



In the guest room, a leafy textile pattern spurs the decorating scheme. The children's bathroom, above center, brings in a similar mint-green hue.

THE GUEST ROOM

A Peter Dunham leaf-print fabric sets the tone for a cheery space. Quadrille's China Seas Java Java wallpaper—"a kind of lime green," in Wolf's words—covers the vaulted ceiling, complementing the lavender wall color and a Moroccan-style side table in a similar hue. "We cut the space with a black four-poster bed and then softened everything with a sisal rug and a grasscloth lampshade to bring in texture," explains Wolf. The custom-upholstered stools from Ryan Studio sport a classic trellis trim.



Tassels and a whimsical light fixture grace the girls' room.



Pompoms and pillows embellish a cozy reading nook.

THE GIRLS' ROOM

An infusion of lively hues and eye-catching patterns make this a memorable retreat for the clients' twin eight-year-old girls. The pairing of fuchsia and kelly green is tempered with walls, bed linens, and accessories in soft creams and whites. The seating nook overlooking the water has drawers underneath for toy storage and is the perfect place to curl up with a classic childhood read. Decorative flourishes add even more character: pom-pom trim on window treatments and adjoining sconces, as well as hot-pink tassels on the dresser.



With its versatile palette and upholstered daybed, the boy's room is set up to grow with him.

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THE LITTLE BOY JUST HAD ONE REQUEST: TREE WALLPAPER FOR HIS BEDROOM.

—DESIGNER JENNY WOLF

THE BOY'S ROOM

Even the home's youngest residents got their chance for design input. In the case of the client's five-year-old son, Cole & Son's Woods Wallpaper was what captured his imagination. ("The kids also wanted to have stars somewhere, which is why they ended up painted on the ceiling of their bathroom," says Wolf with a laugh.) A charcoal-gray-and-yellow palette and Roman shades in a tie-dye-like pattern from Clarence House are unexpected yet age-appropriate—just like the home itself.



DECORATING A FAMILY-FRIENDLY BEACH HOUSE

As a mother of young children, designer Jenny Wolf knows how to draw on durable materials to create a mood of refined ease. Here, four elements that make this summer retreat work.

INDOOR-OUTDOOR FABRIC

"Mix fun, bright colors and patterns. A level of protection is key," says Wolf. "You don't want to stress about sitting on your sofa in a wet bathing suit."

JUTE AND SISAL RUGS

"I use them a lot in my designs; they add warmth, texture, and a coastal atmosphere," says Wolf. "Also, jute is very soft—much more kid-friendly than seagrass rugs we've used in the past."

STATEMENT LIGHTING

"Interesting chandeliers, sconces, and pendants ground a space and give it a little edge and formality. They also help ensure that rooms feel airy even with all this color."

WINDOW TREATMENTS

Little details (such as the pink pompom trim in the girls' bedroom) help draw the eye and frame views. The media room's Roman shades set the tone for the entire space.