BY BETSY CRIBB PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAUREY W. GLENN STYLING BY KENDRA SURFACE SOUTHERN LIVING 77



man cruises past in a top-down, vintage blue convertible—speedy enough to catch a breeze but not so fast that he can't give a friendly wave. "That's what it's all about right there," says Ed Mitchell, the president

and a founding developer of River Dunes, a community just outside the fishing village of Oriental, North Carolina. Positioned where the Neuse River flows into the Pamlico Sound, this is a place where rest and relaxation come easily. It was a no-brainer for the location of our 2022 Idea House—a winsome and unfussy retreat where there's plenty of room for the whole family (and the occasional surprise guest) to stretch out and settle into an unhurried rhythm of leisure.

We engaged a talented team from across the Carolinas to craft our coastal getaway: interior designer Charlotte Harris Lucas of Charlotte Lucas Interior Design, builder Jordan Maroules of SLD Custom Homes, architect William Court of Court

Atkins Group, and landscape architect Daniel Keefer of Witmer Jones Keefer, Ltd. "For me, an escape isn't a spot to go and hide," says Charlotte. "It's somewhere you can feel happy and calm but also inspired and rejuvenated. It's important to have a place that evokes those feelings...not just in you but in the guests who might come over too." The home is designed with the main house in front and two additional structures, a carriage house (which has a bonus suite over the garage) and an artist's studio/guesthouse, flanking a courtyard in the back. "This layout creates opportunities not only for family connectivity but also for getting away," says William. With a winning combination of cohesive indooroutdoor spaces and interiors that subtly nod to the coastal locale, our team dreamed up a waterfront escape that's cleverly current and thoughtfully tied to tradition.



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Frame the Scenery

Since the dining room (at left) looks out over the flower-filled courtyard, Charlotte designed it to feel like a garden oasis. She upholstered the chairs in Schumacher's Floreana fabric in Berry and then used the same textile for the window treatments. "This space can be dressed up for a beautiful summer supper with lots of friends or kept simple as a bright and airy breakfast room," says the designer. "It goes both ways." William notes that transom windows over the doors stretch the views from floor to ceiling, adding to the alfresco vibes. "We have porches around three sides of the house, which can affect the light quality," he says. "So we used as much glass as possible to flood the interior with sun."



Design for Every Day

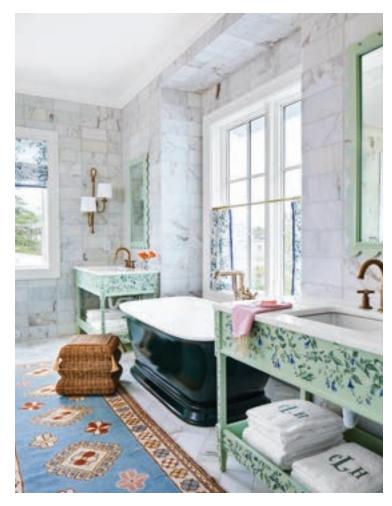
Pictured above, the kitchen-with its Monogram Appliances Custom Brass Hood and peachy cabinetry (in Sherwin-Williams' Corallite, SW 9698)-is filled with cheery shades. Hardworking amenities, like the Monogram Appliances Stainless Steel Warming Drawer, are handsomely incorporated into the design scheme thanks to custom herringbone-patterned panels by Heirloom Carpentry LLC in Raleigh. In the foyer (at right), Charlotte commissioned North Carolinian Madison Mauck of Mauck Made Art to hand paint the throwback stenciled design on the floors as well as the stair treads. Sherwin-Williams' Tread-Plex is a good option for painting floors, because the finish can withstand high traffic, wet feet, and dirty paws.





Shift into Second

While the primary bedroom is often situated on the first floor, a second-story setup was the only way to go in this house, says William. "We wanted this suite (at left) to look out on the harbor and to be on its own, away from the action," notes the architect. "Moving it upstairs to capture those views became really important." Charlotte kept the focus on the water, too, orienting the four-poster bed from Reid Classics toward the private porch. At the foot of the bed, a silk-covered bench from Coley Home makes a pretty perch to slip off shoes or take in the scenery. She chose a creative paint treatment for the walls and hung a floral painting by Mary Kamerer Fine Art for an added burst of color. Command Brand Universal Picture Hangers secure it to the wall and provide flexibility to move pieces from room to room.



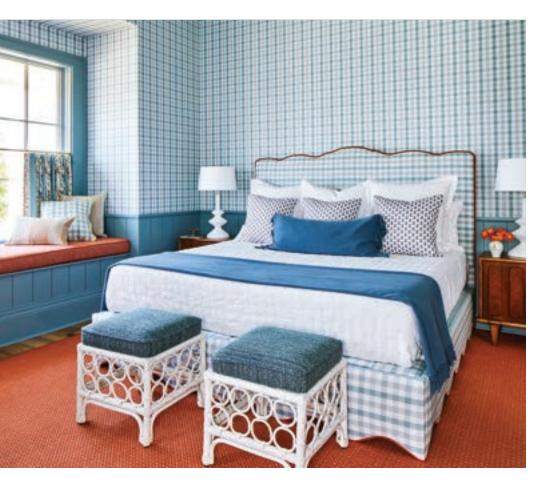
Savor Little Luxuries

Oomph vanities hand painted by Madison Mauck of Mauck Made Art, the Double Bimini Sconce by Regina Andrew, and a vintage Oushak rug warm up the primary bath (above). The primary bedroom vanity (at right) serves as a sophisticated place to prepare for the day. The Monogram Appliances Double-Drawer Refrigerator (which is hidden by custom panels) keeps eye creams and other skin-care items cool and ready for use.



Best Seats in the House Marvin French doors open

Marvin French doors open from the primary bedroom onto the upstairs porch. Lounge chairs offer spots to settle in for the sunset.



Pile On the Patterns

Charlotte pulled no punches when designing the secondstory guest room (at right), covering the walls in House of Harris' playful peach Bamboo Garden wallpaper that is destined to attract admirers of all ages. "I stick to a few rules of thumb for mixing patterns," she says. "Whenever I have a floral, I always try to balance it with a striped or geometric pick-something with structure." For instance, she hemmed in the loose botanical design of the wallpaper with a striped rug from Annie Selke and pops of color from the Reid Classics beds, the Universal Furniture dresser, and the Joelle Mini Lamps by Regina Andrew. On the other wall, a pillow-happy sofa (below) finds its complement in a lively Eleanor Scott Davis Fine Art painting.



Invite Summerhouse Nostalgia

Charlotte anchored the downstairs guest room (above) in a wide swath of soothing blue (Sherwin-Williams' Morning at Sea, SW 9634) and then wrapped the rest of the space in Saybrook Check Spa Blue by Thibaut. "It's such a classic pattern," she says. More than an aesthetically pleasing sanctuary, a first-floor suite is also a practical move, notes William. "This element can make the home effective for multigenerational living," he says.

Be Our Guests
An Oomph vanity in a bright custom yellow adds personality to the downstairs guest bath.



CHARLOTTE'S
OLD-SOUL MOVE
To match the ebullience of the

wallpaper, the designer cloaked the stately Reid Classics four-poster





Steal-Away Spaces

Six nooks and crannies designed to offer a little extra breathing room



SNUG FAMILY RETREAT

Walls covered in Sunbrella's Detail Linen and a desk enveloped in Sunbrella's Pique Midnight soften the upstairs coffee bar and reading bay.



JEWEL BOX WET BAR

Glassware and mugs from the Southern Living Collection Exclusively at Dillard's make this spot a gem. Hide out here for a sip of rosé and a bite of Kerrygold cheese.



DREAMY ARTIST'S STUDIO

Natural light and garden hues spill into the backyard getaway through the Marvin Skycove, which serves as a cushy window seat for journaling or napping.



PRETTY POWDER ROOM

Your guests will likely visit the restroom, so invest in the details, says Charlotte. She updated the retrofitted vintage wicker vanity with a coat of paint.



HAPPY CARRIAGE HOUSE

A suite above the garage offers guests a little privacy—and a dose of Americana—with hand-painted stenciling on the walls and a sunny Schumacher floral fabric.



SMART BACK KITCHEN/LAUNDRY

Even the most hardworking corner of the house feels like a mini getaway, thanks to the Alexa-activated GE Profile Sapphire Blue washer and dryer.



A LOW-MAINTENANCE YARD SOLUTION

Artificial turf covers the courtyard. "It's a nice way to have a little green space that you don't have to keep up," says landscape installer Rachel Tipton, who owns nearby Harbourside Garden Co. Azaleas from the Southern Living Plant Collection deliver a big dose of classic Carolina charm.

Meet the Team



THE ARCHITECT

William Court

COURT ATKINS GROUP

courtatkins.com

"We had the chance to tell the story of how a home can become a multigenerational oasis," says William. "You might have more people in the house than you'd planned for, so we designed for that and created a place that would accommodate these different scenarios."



THE DEVELOPER

Ed Mitchell

RIVER DUNES

riverdunes.com

"This is a place that families will come back to generation after generation. We're trying to create a stage for memories, and that's what all master plans should be," notes Ed. "We feel privileged to be able to build and develop here and to live on a body of water like this."



THE BUILDER

Jordan Maroules

SLD CUSTOM HOMES sldcustom.com

"Outdoor living is a big focus of mine, and we design a lot of our coastal homes to prioritize that," says Jordan. "Those spots become secondary living spaces. The outdoor kitchen and the courtyard create more areas where you can spend time with family and friends."



THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Daniel Keefer

WITMER JONES KEEFER, LTD. wjkltd.com

"We wanted to capture the feeling of a historic Southern garden that complements the architectural design and character of the community," says Daniel. "The arbor above the walkway features vines of varying textures and provides shade."



THE INTERIOR DESIGNER

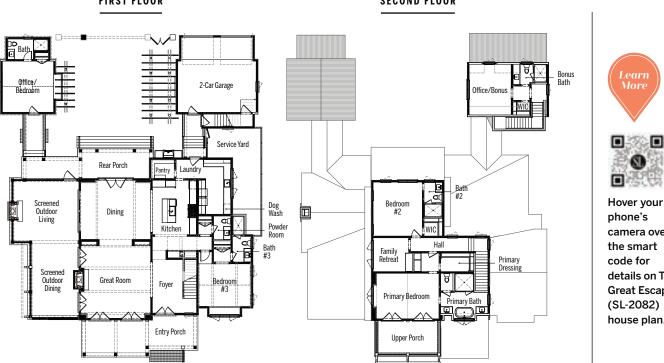
Charlotte Harris Lucas CHARLOTTE LUCAS INTERIOR DESIGN

charlottelucasdesign.com

"My style is rooted in a kind of Southern sophistication, but it's really fun. There's nothing too formal or forced about anything I do, really. It's all about being livable and providing a warm welcome into a home," says Charlotte, who worked her magic with help from project manager Catherine Whittaker. "For this house, I was inspired by older homes on the coast. I like the idea of re-creating some of those elements in a new place; it's about using past techniques with modern materials."

The House Plan









phone's camera over the smart code for details on The **Great Escape** (SL-2082) house plan.

START DREAMING ABOUT YOUR OWN GREAT ESCAPE

With a two-story front porch, three bedrooms in the main home, and an additional guesthouse and carriage house, there are plenty of places to find peace and quiet here. Buy the plan: houseplans.southernliving.com/plans/sl2082.