

Colorful Coastal

Eschewing the typical blue and white color beachside color schemes, this vacation home redefines coastal style with bold colors and glam touches.

BY AUTUMN KRAUSE | PHOTOGRAPHED BY TREVOR SWENSON OF COASTAL MEDIA SOLUTIONS

GLAM IS THE PLAN. Aston loves a certain traditional Southern charm and elegance in her spaces, but also enjoys marrying them with a big-city vibe of funky, modern glamour. "I enjoy using traditional elements to balance out my funky flair," she says. "So, you might see antique gold frames, vintage art, pleated lamp shades, antique rugs, reupholstered wood frame furniture and vintage accessories in my projects. The fusing of new and old helps add character and soul to any space, making it eclectic and unique."





COMFY QUARTERS. Dreamy blue accents make these interiors feel as invigorating as a breath of fresh ocean air. "Every room contains a various shade of blue," Aston says, "but each one is unexpected, from teal to aqua to navy, avoiding the more predictable beach-home color scheme."

Say the word "beachy" in the terms of interior design

and most will immediately envision a white and blue color palette—but that was the last thing Aston Hetrick Moody imagined for her clients' vacation home and rental property, which is in Pawley's Island, South Carolina. Aston, who is the founder and principal designer at Aston Moody Interiors, LLC, says, "In South Carolina, even for homes not on the coast, the coastal style has become extremely popular. However, my typical style is very colorful, so I wanted to bridge the idea of color and coastal. I also knew that I did not want to go the expected beachy route of white with pops of light blue." Instead, Aston, with the blessing and implicit trust from her clients, expanded the definition of beachy to include vivacious colors and touches of glam, redefining the genre and transforming the home into an oasis of bright hues and effortless style.

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Aston's journey to preeminence in the interior design industry is unconventional, which means she's equally open to trying unconventional things. "I taught high school English for 12 years before this leap of faith into design, for which I have no formal training," Aston says. "Just an eye and an appetite." That eye and appetite drives her to obsessively pore over interior design books, magazines, Instagram and Pinterest. She immerses herself in color and hoards colorful inspiration pics of rooms she loves. Her signature designs involve a range of hues, various textures, glam elements of gold or stone, bold statement pieces, lots of layering and a "more is more is more" maximalism, often calibrated through the prism of traditional, vintage and/or antiques to balance the modern and glam. This bold spirit is just what the South Carolina home needed to elevate it from ho-hum to haute.



ABOVE | OCEAN VIEW. Despite the home's original lackluster interiors, its bones were stunning and Aston knew it was special. "Every room has a breathtaking view of the ocean," Aston says. This porch area operates as a transitional area between in and out, and maintains the same level of attention as seen inside the home.

BELOW | NICELY NEUTRAL. Interesting shapes of the two-part coffee table do all the work here, while the neutral colors of the furnishings don't detract from the jaw-dropping ocean view straight ahead.





| OPPOSITE, TOP | PERFECT PENDANTS. In the kitchen, two pendant light fixtures immediately cue the mind to think of palm leaves (albeit very glam ones). “I had fun creating a coastal feel in unexpected ways, like through botanical motifs,” Aston says.

| OPPOSITE, BOTTOM | OPEN SPACES. An open floor plan works incredibly in a home like this because no walls or overly tall furnishings interrupt the sightlines to the ocean.

| BELOW | LIGHT IT UP. Spectacular lighting features are seen throughout the interiors. This lighting fixture in the dining room is a statement piece that’s simultaneously glamorous yet relaxed with its composition of beads. “People undervalue the importance of lighting. It sets the tone for the room and is often one of the first things people notice if done well,” Aston explains.

The home’s location is idyllic. It’s mere steps from the boardwalk and front beach. However, the previous owners had decorated it in a traditional style that clashed with its geography. They were equestrians and the motif filled the home. Strong, stuffy yellows and reds were the main colors and there weren’t any nods to the home’s location and purpose as a coastal escape. “An overall update was needed for the dated, too traditional, and not at all beachy home,” Aston says. “The house had great bones and stunning ocean-front views from every room, but the interior didn’t equal the value of the home.” The clients craved a coastal feel incorporating color, so Aston was a natural choice to helm the efforts and, since they had collaborated with her before on another one of their homes, they’d experienced her talents firsthand.

LIFE'S A BEACH. Innovative beachy style is Aston's specialty. Check out her top tips for getting all the beach vibes but with none of the kitsch.

- **Spectrum of Colors.** Don't rely too heavily on just one accessorizing color. "For example, don't do all white with everything else in navy," Aston says. "It immediately becomes too much of a theme."
- **Whitewash.** Embrace white on walls or on furniture. "White is classic and timeless and provides opportunity for a variety of accessorizing colors," Aston says.
- **Bright & Bold.** Branch out or add to standard blue for color. Think orange, yellow, chartreuse, pink, coral or teal as accent hues.
- **Photographic Memory.** Aston says, "Layer in candid black-and-white photos of your kids on the beach, in boats, shell hunting, kite flying and dock sitting." The photographs are timeless in black and white and subtly acknowledge the beachy inspiration.

FULLY FUNCTIONAL. Vacation homes need to be durable to withstand sandy feet, salty sea air and kids plopping down in wet bathing suits and towels. Here is how Aston suggests making a beach home stylish yet functional.

- **High Performance.** "Performance fabric on sofas and pillows are a must," she says. These fabrics are exactly right for the conditions of summer vacation.
- **Low Maintenance.** Rattan stools and chairs immediately cue coastal charm but are also easy to wipe down.
- **Inside Out.** "Don't hesitate to use outdoor rugs inside," Aston says. "I suggest placing outdoor rugs and runners in main-living, high-traffic areas."
- **Got You Covered.** Washable white coverlets make every bedroom feel fresh and airy, while also being functional.

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TOPICAL TREATMENT. "Knowing we were not going to change the countertops or the tile made us choose our paint colors wisely," Aston says. "We chose a creamy-white paint so as not to overly contrast the remaining/existing tan counters and tile." Another cosmetic update challenge: When swapping out cabinet hardware, Aston had to consider the placement of the current holes since they were not refinishing the cabinetry, just painting.

Aston got to work, avoiding the expected hokey beach vibe from the start. "Immediately, we wiped the entire slate of the house clean with a fresh coat of crisp white paint over the entire house, cabinets, molding and walls," Aston says. "We went with the same semi-gloss finish of Sherwin-Williams' Marshmallow, one of my favorite paints. It has warm undertones and gives the room a creamy, not too stark, feel." Then, though the color scheme isn't traditionally coastal, she created an island feeling through texture, botanicals, art and accessories.



[ABOVE] TWINNING. The upstairs bedroom with twin beds is more traditional, with a green and blue color palette. “You see this in the curtains and art. The gold lighting is sophisticated, but the rattan bedside table adds a casual layer to the room and the shark sheets make it kid-friendly,” Aston says.

[BELOW] IN THE NAVY. For the last guest room, Aston went with the nautical color of navy, but paired it with light blue, bright green and coral for a new take on a traditional color. “We did this through a fabulous print by Pepper Home in the curtains and lumbar, and with a beautiful statement lamp in blue-and-white swirl,” she says.

[OPPOSITE, TOP] ISLAND TIME. Vacation islands can sometimes be tricky for renovations, particularly if there are narrow roads or reachable only by ferry, but Pawley Island is connected to the mainland by two bridges, providing immediate access to a rapidly developing town. “However, the island itself has maintained its relaxed, original, non-commercialized feel,” Aston says.

[OPPOSITE, BOTTOM] ART IMITATES LIFE. The downstairs room with two double beds was inspired by a Teal Art print featuring a beach dotted with colorful pastel umbrellas. This allowed Aston to bring in light-blue Pepper Home curtains and a fun pink Laura Park lumbar pillow on each bed.



Most of the art is beach art, but Aston used a mix of modern acrylic paintings, pastel prints and dried, framed botanicals. The furniture includes light wood, rattan chairs and stools, and white sofas. “A subtle light and airy feel was bought with natural woven rugs, rattan mirrors, and clear and colored glass lamps,” Aston says. “Layered in gold frames, lighting and accessories add a touch of glam.” Pops of coral, teal and bright blue add the punctuations of pizzazz that Aston is known for. “My clients usually hire me with color in mind, so I always want to

deliver on that front,” she says. The built-ins have a Thibaut wallpaper with subtle aqua coral, the sofa pillows also display coral, but none of it is overt: “Most people may not even notice this without searching—and that was the goal: subtlety,” Aston says. Runners by Dash and Albert provide another opportunity for vibrant hues. Aston also chose to keep the blue backsplash in the kitchen and bar because the beautiful shade of blue worked well with the overall plan.

COLOR POP. The middle guest bedroom features pops of teal and chartreuse—two of Aston’s favorite colors. She loves using them anywhere. A glass lamp and palm sheets give it a coastal feel without being hokey or expected.



| TOP | MIRROR, MIRROR. To increase the impact of the primary bathroom, Aston removed a big slab mirror and replaced it with these two round mirrors, allowing for a more dramatic result.

| ABOVE | AT THE OFFICE. The home office attached to the bedroom contains a white desk and a camel leather chair for a touch of sophistication. The adjoining porch has a bright-blue base with pops of pink to finish the design with one of Aston’s signature colors.

| OPPOSITE, BOTTOM | PERFECT PRIMARY. In the primary bedroom, you’ll find a statement wall papered in a Serena and Lily design, a rattan bed, pelican art and oversized white shell-shaped lamps. The rug and white bedding anchor the room, and the dramatic pendant and curtains are a traditional finish to the fun happening below.

The renovation was cosmetic, but you’d never know it! The home feels completely refreshed and curated in an unexpectedly delightful way. “In the end, I wanted to create a Pacific Coast vibe but with a touch of that low-country charm with my signature elements of glam and color to polish it off,” Aston says. It’s clear she delivered on all fronts! **CB**