



COASTAL CONNECTION

A custom beachfront home incorporates elements of the Gulf throughout

Front Exterior: The home's exterior offers plenty of visual interest. "We wanted the entryway to pop with a darker front door and gables, which we mirrored on the garage doors," says residential designer Rich Guzman, owner of R.G. Designs. "It gives the house a classic look that will only get better with time." For the driveway, landscape architect Christian Andrea of Architectural Land Design created a circular design out of concrete pavers and placed little planting pockets throughout to create balance among the plethora of linear design elements. "I created a stone border around the edge of the planters to keep the mulch from washing out," Andrea elaborates. "I opted for gray and brown shades to complement the earthy color and to conceal the shrubs." The house also has two gumbo limbo trees on each side of the driveway that are native to the area, which the Potter Homes team worked around and protected during construction. "The gumbo limbo trees give the house a more settled look and feel," adds Potter.

Situated on the white sands of Vanderbilt Beach, this rare Gulf-front property in North Naples offers stunning views of the Gulf of Mexico. Interior designer Faith Fix, founder and principal of Freestyle Interiors, worked with the owners, a retired couple from Kentucky, to turn the custom 5,500-square-foot home into their dream abode that celebrates their love for the water.

Fix was introduced to the clients through residential designer Rich Guzman, owner of R.G. Designs, whom she has worked with on numerous projects in the past. According to Guzman, the property's lot size was double that of typical beach properties, which enabled him to design a home with more rooms that have Gulf views. He also used an extensive amount of glass, particularly in the home's two-story grand reception, in order to maximize the visibility of the Gulf.

Well-known beachfront builder Bill Potter and his team at Potter Homes built the stunning residence. "I love the exterior of this home. It's one of the best we've done," exclaims Potter, the company's founder. "Probably the most impressive feature of this home, other than the Gulf-side setting, is the expansive glass window that dominates the great room. There are no window mulls between glass panels. They are specially engineered to withstand hurricane forces." ▶



Grand Reception View: Views of the Gulf and swimming pool from the grand reception are seen through expansive, oversized butted glass windows — by Andersen Windows & Doors sourced locally through Naples Lumber. “Rich did an amazing job with capturing the view, which really is the wow factor here,” says Faith Fix, owner of Freestyle Interiors.



Living Room: Spacious yet cozy, the living room’s main focal piece is a custom pecky cypress entertainment center from Ruffino Cabinetry that frames the television, family photos, and decor with rustic charm. The nickel gap ceiling features stained pecky cypress beams to match, while white oak wood floors from Real Wood Floors, installed by Floorcrafters, are seen throughout the home. “The beige recliners swivel so that you can look out at the view or turn and be a part of what is happening in the kitchen,” says Faith Fix of Freestyle Interiors.



“One of the unique things about this particular home is the way we used the glass and designed the windows to actualize light,” Guzman shares. “When people walk into the grand reception, the windows are manufactured to have a seamless corner so the views are uninterrupted. Because the glass panels are limited to a certain sizing, I had to segment them, but it looks like one big piece of glass and makes you feel like you’re outside. I’ve always loved designing homes that have traditional elements but bring very contemporary ideas. This house blends those two concepts together very well.”

“The clients are family oriented and enjoy having guests over, so they wanted an open flow and a fresh, comfortable interior for entertaining,” Fix says. “We incorporated various calming shades of blue throughout the interior inspired by the Gulf views. Stained cypress and oak were incorporated in different areas bringing in an organic flow of textures and warm tones. We focus on giving our clients peace of mind in that we are here to help their vision come to life.” ▶

Kitchen: The island brings in the blue tones seen in other areas of the home, while stools with upholstered backs add an additional level of comfort so that people can sit for longer periods of time at the kitchen counter. “We designed the kitchen island more like a breakfast nook to enjoy family dining around the island and to provide seating to enjoy the various views of the open floorplan,” Fix shares. The earth-tone granite countertops and matching backsplash create a unique contrast with the white custom cabinets from Ruffino Cabinetry. Fix chose the chandelier from Arteriors Home for its organic, plant-like effect because it reminded her of “something you’d find under the sea.”

Grand Reception: The grand reception boasts an impressive fireplace that spans the entire height of the wall and features a combination of two different stones: mixed white carrara and silver travertine light stone. “Because it’s a two-story space we wanted to break up the mass of the fireplace by using a linear stack stone for the body of the fireplace with a porcelain tile inset that brings in warm tones,” explains Fix.





Dining & Wine Room: To add warmth to the dining room, Fix brought in a wood dining table from Hickory White with comfortable fabric dining chairs by Century Furniture. A barn door glass enclosure showcases the wine cellar while adding beauty and function to the space. "The wine cellar serves as a backdrop for the dining room," Fix points out. "They didn't need an excessive amount of wine storage, so instead of chilling the entire room, we built in a wine fridge under the lower cabinet so they could use that space as a de-corking station."





Master Bedroom: "The interior is designed to focus on the water views and the architectural details," notes Fix. Sand-toned fabrics, textured cabinetry fronts, and pops of blue add charming touches to the beachfront master suite. The lily-pad-themed art piece above the bed pulls in the greens and blues, which "really captured the whole happiness factor."



Master Bathroom: The custom his-and-her vanities by Ruffino Cabinetry have an almost floating effect due to the stone tile design gridwork that disappears underneath them. The shower's sliding glass barn door highlights the chevron pattern marble walls and snow-white honed marble and flooring from Design Works. The freestanding slipper tub from Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery features an elevated seat in wooden tones for lounging and comfort.



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To further enhance the views, landscape architect Christian Andrea, owner of Architectural Land Design, brought in additional coconut palms and strategically placed them in the rear yard to complement pre-existing trees. Pocketing glass doors open directly to the pool area, where stainless steel cable railing lends a nautical touch to the exterior space, with stairs leading down to the beach.

“With tree placement we’re trying to manage the view,” he says. “We landscape the sky and flank the corners of the building to soften it a bit. From the grand reception, the trees are in perfectly silhouetted vertical alignment with the curtains to offer the perfect balance so you’re not seeing too much sky or water.”

As a firm that specializes in beachfront properties, Potter and his team take special care to address details that aren’t typically a concern for landlocked properties. “One of the things that we really focus on is making sure that all of the details are done right. Most of these details people don’t necessarily see, but they can appreciate that something is different, a step above,” Potter concludes. ■

VIP Suite: The second-floor suite has a oversized patio and serves as a private retreat for guests. The upholstered bed, bench, and nightstands from Freestyle Interiors speak to the VIP nature of this guest room, while the stately wingback chair adds dramatic sophistication. The drapery from Casamance features a playful pattern that livens up the room and leads to the expansive patio, where Potter Homes used an aluminum frame with a cable railing system to prevent obstruction of the breathtaking second-story views.



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