

Comfort on the Coast

Amid the bright white homes of Alys Beach, **ASHLEY GILBREATH** and **GARY JUSTISS** craft a classic home full of warmth

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Private Oasis

With the living room adjacent to a pedestrian walkway, architect Gary Justiss gave careful thought to the window placement. To fill the gap between the bottom of the windows and sofa, interior designer Ashley Gilbreath utilized a custom screen.



ALYS BEACH'S BLEACH WHITE Bermudan architecture has made it a design icon—and Instagram darling—on Florida's Emerald Coast. "The community is really known for its stark environment, but in the best of ways," says interior designer Ashley Gilbreath. "The 'Alys aesthetic' is very monochromatic, very white and very clean."

But what to do when a client with a penchant for traditional interiors tasks you with designing a home in this more

modern enclave? It was a request Gilbreath and architect Gary Justiss were happy to oblige. "We really focused on highlighting the wife's taste for warm and classic, while still including some contemporary Alys style," explains Gilbreath.

The homeowners, a semiretired couple who split their time between Atlanta and 30A, came across the property midconstruction and scooped it up with a vision of creating the perfect seaside retreat to host their children and grandchildren.

Inside Out

left Wrapped in Ipe wood, the front zaguan is furnished similar to an interior room. "Blurring the distinction between indoor and outdoor spaces was an important part of the design," says Justiss. *below* Many homes in the community feature colored exterior accents for a playful pop of interest amid the white masonry buildings. The homeowners selected a vivid blue as a nod to the ocean.





Central Hub

An oversized woven chandelier from Gilbreath's shop, Parish, adds major impact in the dining room. Teak chairs from Selamat were chosen for their durability. "Everything we selected in the home was intended to be wet-bottom bathing suit-friendly," says Gilbreath.

To accommodate their large family, Justiss, who was also the home's original architect, added a fifth bedroom where a flat roof area was previously designated. In perhaps a stroke of serendipity, Justiss had already designed the space for expansion. "Structurally, it was always meant to handle a future floor," he says.

For the interiors, Gilbreath used warm tones—like a rich cognac color repeated on a living room chair and velvet headboard in a guest bedroom—to mirror the coziness of traditional design. The couple's existing art collection also provides a dose of color.

Meanwhile, woven light pendants, driftwood accents and other interesting textures (the hallmark of thoughtful design according to Gilbreath) keep the home firmly rooted in its seaside locale.

Like many homes in Alys Beach, a zaguan entry gate welcomes guests from the palm-fringed cobblestone alley into the home's pool courtyard. "Zaguans function as an entry hall, as you don't actually have a foyer in the square footage of the house," says Justiss. For this home, he and Gilbreath suggested wrapping the space in Ipe wood to create a warm and welcoming entrance.

Textural Beauty

Basket light fixtures from Parish introduce texture to the clean-lined kitchen, as do counter stools from Palecek that feature a woven jute rope backrest.



Quiet Corridor

A nook in the primary bedroom is outfitted with custom wrap-around headboard panels for a cozy effect. Sconces from Arteriors Home hang above nightstands from Bungalow 5, while a bench from Parish sits at the foot of the bed.



With A View

above A small yet well appointed sitting area in the primary bedroom features a fringe ottoman by Lee Industries. An exterior door adds depth to the room's neutral palette and frames a view to the courtyard pool.



Sun-Kissed State
Poolside sofas by Summer
Classics offer a comfy spot
to soak up the sun.

“This was a big decision,” Gilbreath recalls. “Given its cost, we considered painted walls, but the Ipe wood was ultimately put back into the budget because it was really important to have those rich, warm tones as you enter to set the stage for the rest of the house.”

Aesthetics aside, zaguanes are also key to the mechanics of a home in steamy climates. “They’re a common concept in South America, where courtyards are really considered rooms. Their true purpose though is to provide cross ventilation,” explains Justiss. A rear zaguan in this home, used as an outdoor cooking station, provides a path for breezes to cut through hot, still air in warmer months.

Folding glass doors from the living room open onto the courtyard, blurring the lines between inside and out and offering the couple and their family plenty of room to unwind. “And that’s really the intention of it all, right? Family,” says Gilbreath. “Families come down here to escape and make memories together, and we love providing the beautiful backdrop to make it happen.” See *Resources, Back of Book*.



Layer of Luxury
 A velvet Pindler fabric graces a guest bedroom's headboard for a luxurious touch. Unique accents such as decorative tortoise shells and a rattan bench were sourced from Parish.

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Seeing Double
 The petite proportions of this guest bedroom called for custom headboards. Sconces from Fair hang above both, while a nightstand from Bungalow 5 is nestled in between. The lamp is from Circa Lighting.



Chic Corners

above Previously designed as an attic, the home gained an upstairs den when the fifth bedroom was added. Now it serves as a comfy and casual spot to hang, but true to Gilbreath's design sensibilities, antique wooden sieves bring history and texture to the space. *right* The fifth bedroom serves as a second primary and features a four-poster bed from Selamat.