

HOMEMADE PIZZA PARTY

ODE TO LILLY PULITZER

PALM BEACH CHIC

COASTAL LIVING

RETREAT TO THE ISLANDS

AMAZING GETAWAYS
FROM BORA BORA TO THE BAHAMAS

INSPIRING INTERIORS
BEACH HOMES
ACROSS THE GLOBE

THE COVE ELEUTHERA,
BAHAMAS

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FOREVER BLUE & WHITE
Our Favorite Color Combo

SOUTH AFRICAN SPLENDOR

Inspired by Kommetjie's rugged coastal landscape, a pair of South African designers use color and texture to create a year-round family retreat

BY ELIZABETH HUTCHISON HICKLIN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ELSA YOUNG/FRANK FEATURES

Overlapping boards of Burmese teak give the family beach house an air of aged elegance, recalling the vernacular architecture of coastal New England.

As part of the clients' directive to brighten up the beachfront home and create a more welcoming environment, designers Kelsey Boyce and Bruce Fyfe opened the enclosed dining space by lowering the existing wall between it and the living room.



Inspired by Kommetjie's natural beauty, layers of organic color and texture—the mantel's whitewashed sandstone, painted grasscloth (Schumacher's Feather Bloom), and a bleached coral collection—define this familial gathering space.



Situated on a picturesque rocky inlet just 40 minutes from Cape Town, with sweeping stretches of white sand beaches and surfable waves set against the dramatic backdrop of Slangkop Mountain, the natural appeal of the small fishing village of Kommetjie is undeniable. As were the weathered good looks of a handsome beachfront home already set in this cinematic location. But the home's formal interiors—at odds with both the rugged setting and the exterior's classic beach-cottage lines—were a problem for a pair of brothers who purchased the property five years ago from a European automotive executive.

"The original interiors were a mix of heavy colors, high-gloss cherry wood paneling, and elaborate frescoes that felt a little misplaced for this spectacular location," says designer Bruce Fyfe, who, with business partner Kelsey Boyce, was tasked with overhauling the interiors to create a more family-friendly retreat. The brothers also asked Fyfe and Boyce to pare back much of the smart-home technology that had been installed by the previous owners—shutters, blinds, lights, and even cabinets that were all remote controlled. Having partnered with the brothers on their individual family homes, the designers were



A glass fishing float nods to Kommetjie's legacy.

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The rugged
landscape of
Kommetjie and
Long Beach



The use of spaansreed on the ceilings is a traditional regional treatment. While it is often painted, Boyce and Fyfe left the reeds unpainted to create a warm contrast to the room's white beams.



Personal touches like the vintage toys on the desk and the South African-made throws add personality as well as a sense of history and place.

Floor-to-ceiling sliding glass doors between the living room and covered porch can be thrown open or closed, so no matter the weather, Kommetjie's stunning landscape is the star.



given carte blanche on the beach house redesign. "Their one directive was to lighten it up significantly and make it feel beachy and welcoming," Boyce says.

The pair opened up the main living area on the home's ground level, turned an unused loft above the garage into an extra-special guest suite with jaw-dropping views of the ocean, and reimagined a subterranean space under the kitchen to carve out a wine cellar. Outside those few structural changes, the renovation was largely cosmetic, beginning with a fresh coat of white paint on all the interior walls.

With a blank canvas to work with, the surrounding Kommetjie landscape—as well as the home's Burmese teak exterior and classic architectural lines, which recall the coastal vernacular of U.S. destinations like Cape

Cod and the Hamptons—proved a natural springboard for Boyce and Fyfe's creativity. "Burmese teak, in particular, is a very hard wood that does well in South Africa from a weather point of view," Boyce says. "It gains this beautiful gray patina as it weathers and gives the property the look of an old, lived-in house. We wanted to continue that inside."

As such, there's an easygoing elegance that permeates the beach house's updated aesthetic. "The furniture and fabric choices look very fresh but quite relaxed," Fyfe says. "There are lots of slipcovered pieces—beautiful linens and cottons." The designers sourced most of the fabrics from American fabric houses like Schumacher and Thibaut, a callback to the home's New England-inspired exterior, but all the upholstered pieces were



In the new garage guest suite (above), a more subdued palette of earth tones and warm winter colors creates a cozy retreat with colorful decorative details (right).



commissioned from local South African makers—as were much of the artwork and a selection of light fixtures, including the whitewashed driftwood chandelier and turquoise pendant lanterns on the covered porch overlooking the ocean. To lend the refreshed space the well-collected vibe of a longtime family home, the designers scoured local antiques stores and secondhand shops in nearby Kalk Bay for vintage finds, such as the model sailboat that anchors the living room mantel.

With the mountains or the sea visible from nearly every room in the house—most notably in the ground-floor living room, where floor-to-ceiling, wall-to-wall sliding glass doors open straight onto the beach—Boyce and Fyfe added layers of color and texture to the design mix, drawing on the seasonality of the immersive Kommetjie landscape. The profusion of blues and greens—aqua, turquoise, mint, pale sky blue, indigo, and sea glass—is inspired by the sunny South African summer. In contrast, more muted hues like sandy brown, cream, caramel, and storm gray ground the space and keep it cozy even amid Kommetjie’s wet, gray winters. Coral and pink accents are a nod to the area’s spectacular sunsets.

Organic elements—from hand-woven, South African-made baskets filled with slubby blankets for cool mornings on the porch to the traditional spaansreed-lined ceilings in the primary bedroom—root the home in the local landscape.

“By allowing us to restore the house to itself,” Fyfe says, to a unique sense of place and purpose in Kommetjie, “we were able to create a home that the entire family loves.”



A whitewashed driftwood chandelier brings rugged grace to a dining area on the covered porch.