

# Golden Isle *Grace*

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A coastal retreat honors Sea Island's Mediterranean heritage and exudes a laid-back sophistication that is just right for a growing family



## *Garden Gallery*

In a nod to the owner's love of art, landscape designer Alex Smith designed two agave sculptures for the front of the home, custom-made of zinc by Andrew T. Crawford Ironworks, that hold court atop cast limestone planters.

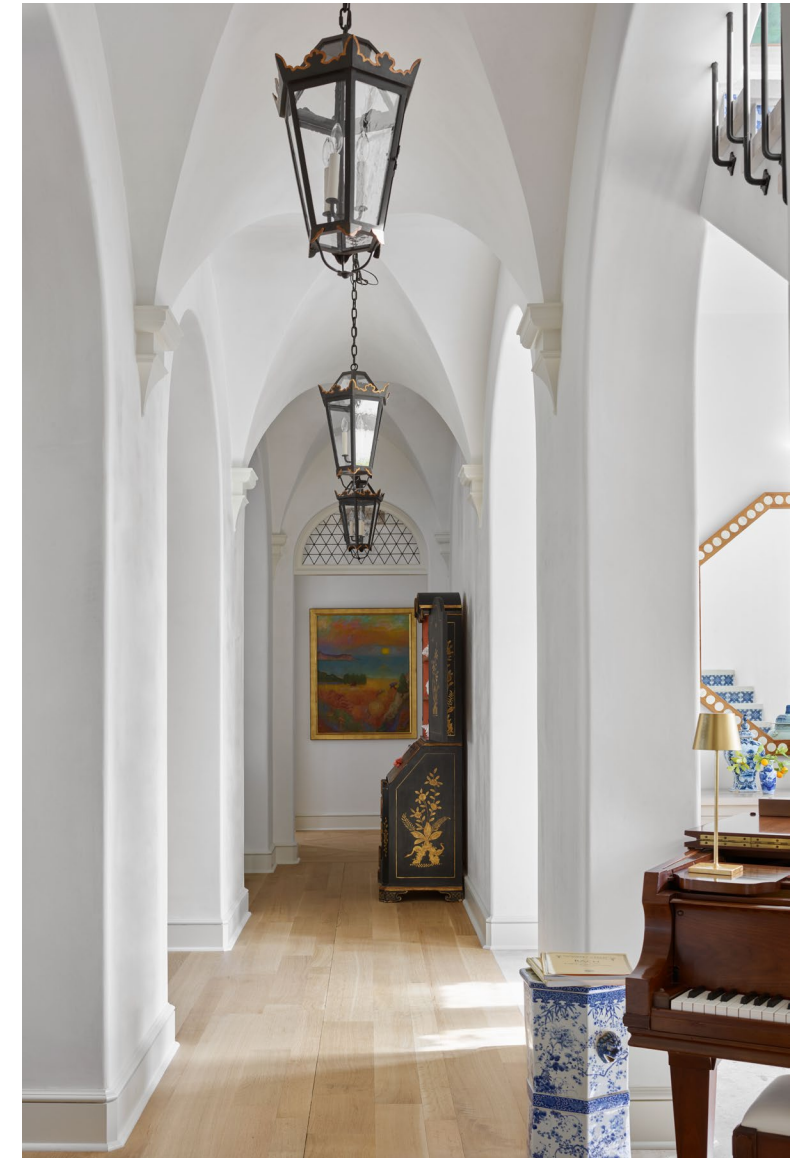




*Fresh Welcome*  
Versailles planters of calamondin citrus and a trefoil-inspired window amp up the French charm along the home's entry.



*Classic Combination* *above* In the entry, a collection of antique blue-and-white porcelain introduces the common thread of colors that designers Adrian Cate and Bethany Vann wove through the home. *right* Architect Thad Truett designed a circulation corridor of gothic arches. Leaded glass transoms at the ends of the hall mimic the entry door detail.



FOR THE OWNERS OF A marsh-front home on Sea Island, this is a meeting place. It's a place to gather with their beloved family, to commune with the natural bounty of the barrier island, and to reconnect with favorite pastimes. It's a place where sophistication and relaxation meet too—where joy can be sparked by the patina of a treasured Parisian antique or the sight of children running free.

This motif of confluence and balance is also evident in the home's architecture, grounds, and interior style. Architect Thad Truett drew on Sea Island's Mediterranean Revival vernacular to create a home that sports a formal facade that marries pleasingly with its laid-back rear and pool cabana.

Atlanta-based landscape designer Alex Smith drew on these themes to craft grounds that reflect Truett's

vision. A parterre garden of Grace Hendrick Phillips' boxwoods, dwarf mondo grass, and crushed limestone reinforces the facade's classical entry of engaged columns and entablature pediment.

On the marsh side, a sweeping loggia and soaring windows overlook the river and wetlands beyond. The landscape here is strong and simple, says Smith, who placed a live oak and native grasses along the seawall to create an infinity-edge pool effect, with the plantings respecting and relating to marsh grasses.

"Above all, we aimed to create a timeless home that you wouldn't want to change in 20, 30 years," says Truett. In a twist on tradition, Truett and interior designers Adrian Cate and Bethany Vann of Johnson Vann Interiors painted exterior accents a cheerful blue that pays homage to the home's coastal station.





### *Parisian Dining*

The dining table and chairs, found by the homeowner in Paris, were re-covered with seats of blue leather and soft blue checked fabric on the inside back. The Rose Tarlow light fixture adds a touch of Mediterranean romance.

Inside, the hue is a strong but balanced force too. “The very first time we met with the homeowner, she brought a Delft blue-and-white paperweight in and said, ‘I want my house to feel like this,’” says Cate. “She loved its beauty and simplicity, and the house really feels like that.”

In the kitchen, a box of antique blue tile discovered by the homeowner in a favorite antique shop was sunk right into the plaster of the backsplash. Instead of double islands, which would have felt heavy, Cate and Vann installed a counter-height grasscloth table swathed in blue lacquer, which has become not only a visual focal point but a hub of activity, where adults can perch with coffee and laptops and kids can fuel up for beach adventures.

Blue-and-white chinoiserie wallpaper peeks through the dual archways that frame the range and open to the mud hall. Beyond, a glossy blue butler’s pantry hosts the homeowner’s collection of serveware found in a St. Simons antiques store.

In the sunroom, the palette and furnishings play off the outdoors. “We made a point not to put any window treatments in the sunroom to maximize the view,” says Cate. Natural textures—





### *On Brand*

*above* The trefoil-inspired window has become something of a branding moment for the home, a depiction of it gracing the homeowners' stationery. The custom cabochon floor pattern and Paul Ferrante light fixture strike an elegant balance. *right* The lounge chairs are upholstered in a Cowtan & Tout animal print and the antique chairs that flank the fireplace are upholstered in Hodsoll McKenzie fabric.





*Mediterranean Delight*

Cypress-toned wood beams warm up the white kitchen, while Durango travertine floors are at home in Sea Island's sandy setting. Serena & Lily chairs are topped with cushions in a Brunswick & Fils check.





*Eye for Art*  
A large-scale work by artist Corey Mason adds color and movement between built-ins in the kitchen, while “the style and scale of the Matthew Quinn Collection cabinet hardware adds a contemporary touch,” says Vann.



*True Blue* *above left* The butler's pantry is the perfect spot to display and organize all of the homeowner's pretty china settings, serveware, and table linens. *above right* Cate and Vann crafted a practical and family-friendly mud hall with built-in lockers for beach gear, but infused formality by applying Lee Jofa wallpaper in Willow Lake. “Though it's a traditional chinoiserie pattern, it's printed on grasscloth, which makes it more coastal,” says Cate.



whimsical wicker palms and large-scale rattan pendants—mimic the tawny marsh grasses, and the continuation of blue feels like it was pulled straight from the river and sky.

And though the space is grand, it feels cozy. “Whether it’s a quiet dinner party or a full house, this home really lives well,” says Vann. “The terracotta floor brings a warmth to the space and makes it feel like it might have been an old porch at one point.”

The formality is dialed up in the living room, but not overly so. Cate and Vann began with a pair of Zuber panels, which serendipitously framed the fireplace perfectly. From there, the palette was informed by the hues in the Oushak rug. A pair of tuxedo sofas upholstered in chenille invite repose and animal-print chairs add energy. “We kept a careful eye to balance out our selections so it didn’t feel stiff,” says Cate.

The serene primary bedroom leans traditional, but “the gray

colorway in the floral Schumacher chintz is a little bit edgy,” says Cate. The homeowner’s dressing room, wrapped in a scenic Iksel panel and outfitted with jib doors, feels like a chinoiserie jewel box garden room, says Vann.

Upstairs, the homeowners paid special attention to hosting their ever-growing brood of grandchildren, whose number doubled from six to 12 during the construction of their beach retreat. Two bunkrooms and a kid-friendly living room, plus a newer hangout above the garage dubbed “the nest,” are primed to host the young clan for what the homeowners lovingly call “cousin camp.” These days are helmed by the grandparents and filled with the bounty of the Golden Isles and the wonder of each other—swimming, sand dollar hunts, beach walks, biking, and shaving cream fights. It’s a meeting place that will make memories they will treasure for a lifetime. *See Resources, Back of Book.*





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—Thad Truett



*Sunny Disposition* above Club chairs in Lee Jofa’s Oscar de la Renta Las Palmas fabric round out the cozy seating arrangement in the vast sunroom. *right* A Mecox pedestal table is just right for a game of cards by the water, while a blue antique clock stands sentry.



*Better With Age*  
The homeowners discovered the antique bar on a trip to Paris and retrofitted it for the space. A botanical light fixture from Visual Comfort & Co. and an antique lamp from Mario Buatta’s collection light the space.





*Al Fresco Dining*  
Westminster Teak tables  
and cane-and-rattan  
Palecek chairs are ideal  
for entertaining. The pecky  
cypress ceiling channels  
the natural beauty of the  
Golden Isles.



*Pattern Perfect*  
The windows on either  
side of the bed in  
the primary bedroom  
overlook the pool.



*Elegant Accents*  
*above* The green antique mirror  
complements the pink wallpaper  
in the dressing room, which  
boasts statement hardware from  
Matthew Quinn Collection. *above*  
*right* In the primary bathroom,  
the soaking tub's pewter tones  
reflect an old-world appeal. *right*  
The antique desk and chair in the  
primary bedroom are set in a box  
bay window overlooking the river.







*Petite Retreat* left “We felt purple was a friendly color for girls of all ages,” says Vann of the happy-hued granddaughters’ bunkroom. Window treatments in Quadrille China Seas fabric, a papier-mâché chandelier from Stray Dog Designs, and the Serena & Lily hanging chair add a playful air. above To avoid blocking the window in the peppy girls’ bath, Cate and Vann placed an oversize makeup mirror on the countertop. The art is by Anne-Louise Ewen from House of Cardoon.

“Whether it’s a quiet dinner party or a full house, this home really lives well.”  
—*Bethany Vann*





*Green Thumb*

*left* One of Smith's associates painted the watercolor depicting the garden, which hangs above the wooden work surface in the potting shed. *below* The kitchen courtyard is a prime spot for enjoying morning coffee. Smith designed the custom fountain with a terracotta medallion inset from Wyatt Childs, Inc., and created the herringbone patio with two types of antique brick.





### *Outdoor Oasis*

The pool house hosts a gym and an art studio, with an outdoor lounge bedecked in Walters Wicker with China Seas fabric. Cate and Vann paired whimsical umbrellas from Santa Barbara Designs with Kingsley Bate chaise lounges and Messel green accents.