VERANDA

WATERSIDE

INSPIRED INTERIOR DESIGN LIVING

by JENNIFER BOLES *foreword by* STEELE THOMAS MARCOUX

CHAPTER ONE

A Fresh Perspective

IN SOME WATERSIDE COMMUNITIES, classic decor like stripes and nautical themes is as much a local custom as clambakes on the beach or bonfires by the lake. These motifs are entrenched in tradition, but when designers employ them in a new way, the results can be as refreshing as crisp salty air.

Along the coast of Maine, summer homes are often understated—low-key interiors have long been the norm. In a Colonial Revival–style house on Mount Desert Island, designer Matthew Carter introduced a high-style polish with bold colors and modern wallcoverings surrounding more traditional and expected furnishings. "When the project is to reinterpret the very idea of a classic summer house, that's the kind of fun you can have," Carter explains.

Designer Suzanne Rheinstein and architect Gil Schafer took a similar freethinking approach when revamping a stately Southern California residence. Rheinstein refined the home's seaside setting by introducing polished finishes reflective of its elegant architecture, like a living room ceiling lacquered the color of glistening sand and wall paneling painted to resemble driftwood. But in a newly constructed guesthouse, the designers shifted sails, devising a barnlike structure that Schafer describes as having "a sense of rustic informality." At first glance, limewashed shiplap walls and a Dutch gambrel roof evoke old New England, but with Rheinstein's choice of pared-down furnishings and contemporary flourishes, the guesthouse feels modern and beachy in its simplicity.

In some cases, designers reenergize traditional decor by using classic pieces colorfully and en masse, as a vibrant drift of hot pink bougainvillea. Lifestyle designer Julia Amory revels in her love of traditional furnishings. "These things make me feel safe and cozy," she says. In her Southampton home, a splashy trove of floral chintzes and wicker furniture creates a lively yet time-honored setting for her young family. In Armory's Palm Beach residence, similar decorations, this time in the quintessential Palm Beach combination of pink and green, are equally enticing. No matter the coastal setting, everything old can be made to feel new again.

A WARM WELCOME

A Newport Beach property, revamped by Suzanne Rheinstein and Gil Schafer, becomes a casually elegant gathering spot for family and friends.

LEFT Built for entertaining, the guesthouse was intended to be casual. "We didn't want the new structure to upstage the main house," says architect Schafer. "We wanted a sense of rustic informality," evident in his choice of limewashed shiplap for the great room's walls, a nod to East Coast style.

RIGHT The great room's high-beamed ceiling gives it a barnlike feel. At the same time, Suzanne Rheinstein's sophisticated yet relaxed mix of furnishings, such as a weathered column and a pair of Napoleon III club chairs, elevates the tone of the space.

LEFT Modern flourishes, including contemporary art, oversize swing-arm lamps, and curvy rattan seating, contemporize the guesthouse's New England architecture.

LEFT Vivid blue cabinetry—the hue of the nearby sea—enlivens a small, well-stocked kitchen in the guesthouse.

RIGHT Rheinstein uses warm, sandy tones for the main house's living room, whose crowning touch is a shimmering lacquered ceiling that reflects sunlight. A lack of floor coverings takes the room's formality down a notch.

ABOVE The main house's family room is awash in watery hues. A laid-back, neutral-colored striped sofa and a coffee table laden with books create an ideal environment for easy living.

"Newport Beach is studded with Colonial Revival houses . . . that call to mind a kind of California fantasy of East Coast living."

—ARCHITECT GIL SCHAFER

ABOVE Enveloped in a verdant shade of spring green, a bedroom in the main house beckons guests with its fairy-tale-like canopy bed. Rheinstein selected an exuberant floral-print fabric by Raoul Textiles for the headboard, canopy, and bedding.

RIGHT A guest bedroom, situated under an eave of the guesthouse's Dutch gambrel roof, is soothing and warm with a soft color palette. The lavish use of embroidered floral fabric engulfs the walls, ceiling, and bed. "Those quirky spaces upstairs are cozy and intimate," Schafer says.