



## SUNNY ELEGANCE

WRITTEN BY **CHELSEA GREENWOOD**  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KIM SARGENT**

**IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.** In 2001, a couple from Chicago visited Vero Beach to join friends on vacation, and they were instantly taken by the cozy beachfront community and, in particular, an ocean-front site in the Orchid Island Golf and Beach Club. After checking it out, the husband turned to his wife and said, “God isn’t making any more waterfront property.”

“So we ended up buying it from the car phone,” she recalls. “We’ve only been happier every time we’ve been there. It’s a happy, good place.” By 2006, the couple was determined to build just as happy a home on the site, one that leaned toward formal but could still accommodate their visiting children and grandchildren, as well as the outdoorsy Florida lifestyle. So the lady of the house—who had long dreamed of her perfect vacation home—took the lead in turning their vision into reality.

|                               |  |                  |          |
|-------------------------------|--|------------------|----------|
| <b>INTERIOR DESIGN</b>        | Susan Schuyler Smith, ASID, Spectrum Interior Design                     |                  |          |
| <b>ARCHITECTURE</b>           | Harry G. Howle, AIA, ASLA, Harry Gandy Howle, Architect & Associates, PA |                  |          |
| <b>HOME BUILDER</b>           | David S. Croom, Croom Construction Company                               |                  |          |
| <b>LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE</b> | Warren McCormick, ASLA, Warren E. McCormick and Associates               |                  |          |
| <b>BEDROOMS</b>               | <b>5</b>   | <b>BATHROOMS</b> | <b>8</b> |
| <b>SQUARE FEET</b>            | 10,000   |                  |          |







#### WARM WELCOME

A traditional staircase by Stairmasterz in Orlando greets guests in the foyer, along with a Niermann Weeks Montage floor lamp and an Italian lantern from Foundry in New York. Lee Jofa Blossom silk covers a table facing a Louis J. Solomon armchair in Clarence House Raj silk. The saturnia floors feature cabochons.



#### LUSH LIVING

In the formal living room, a Louis XVI bergère, covered in Clarence House Raj silk and purchased at Minton-Spidell, pairs with a Hickory Chair Cloverleaf ottoman upholstered in AST fabric in Rose. The embroidered Aubusson area rug is from Stark, the wooden armchair is from Louis J. Solomon and the tables are all from Interior Details in Vero Beach.

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They brought on board architect Harry G. Howle, president of Harry Gandy Howle, Architect & Associates in Vero. A strict adherent to classical architecture and its history, Howle and builder David S. Croom, president of Croom Construction Company in Vero, designed a Georgian home that would appeal to the couple's traditional taste but allow for an indoor-outdoor lifestyle.

The result is a light pink, three-story structure with a multilevel front courtyard and an elevated main floor that affords breathtaking water vistas. Front and center to those gorgeous views is the family room and kitchen area, with an adjacent screened porch, which together make for a large entertaining venue.







**FAMILY FUN**  
The family room has a Schumacher area rug underfoot. Cowtan & Tout Chestnut Blossom fabric in Yellow covers custom sofas by K&F European Upholstery. The WG Grace Cricket table is from Holland & Company, and the drapes, in Brunswick & Fils Orchidelirium cotton, were made by Gonsman Custom Draperies in Boynton Beach.

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"Our firm works very hard to achieve the blurring of one's sense of whether they are indoors or outdoors by providing transitional spaces for the leisurely enjoyment of a home's outdoor spaces," Howle says. Additional terraces and verandas further add to the effect, while four guest suites ensure that visitors will have a private night's rest when the entertaining is through.

Next, the couple chose Susan Schuyler Smith, president of Spectrum Interior Design in Vero—along with project managers Maria Companion and Shelly Craft—to furnish the home. "When I met Susan, I liked her immediately," says the lady of the house. "I have absolutely no sense of direction. And Susan said, 'Well, I'm the pilot, so I know where I'm going.' That did it."



**SEAT YOURSELF**  
The fuchsia of the kitchen walls is echoed in Brunswick & Fils' Ondine Tea Rose chenille on Franklin barstools from Hancock & Moore. The custom pot rack is from Ann-Morris Antiques in New York. Sub-Zero and Thermador appliances are subtly integrated into Wood-Mode cabinetry and Calcutta Gold marble countertops.





#### FINE DINING

A custom, hand-painted, silk Sans Souci wallcovering from de Gournay sets the stage in the formal dining room, where a Swedish crystal chandelier from Niermann Weeks casts a glow on the clients' own table and chairs. The Hepplewhite sideboard is from Holland & Company, the Sherwood brass candlesticks are from Interior Details and the Chateau Chantilly mirror is from Carvers' Guild.

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Smith—who has worked with Howle and Croom in the past—helped the homeowner organize the different influences that she wanted to incorporate in the design, including her love of cheerful colors, flowers and all things French; collections of family photos, books and art; and items from another home in Illinois that they were closing down.

The overall look is a fresh take on traditional, with a high attention to detail—and a British accent, says Smith: “Some of the antiques and things were English, and the colorations were for the most part pastels.” A rich material palette of dark wood and light stone sets a formal tone, while French antiques—as well as the color combination of blue and yellow—satisfy the wife’s European leanings. Cotton, linen and silk fabrics keep things light for the balmy climate.





**STUDY GROUP**  
In the library, custom mahogany cabinetry presides over wing chairs from Hickory Chair and a Palencia area rug from Glen Eden. A Hancock & Moore Stafford Swivel-Tilt Chair pulls up to the husband's own desk, next to a custom sofa by K&F European Upholstery, in Brunswick & Fils Millefoglie chenille. The fireplace surround is by Coastal Millworks.





#### SERENE SCENE

In the master bedroom sitting area, the clients' existing chairs and sofa were reupholstered in Gramercy and Manuel Canovas fabrics, respectively, by K&F European Upholstery. The drapes are Lee Jofa in Eden Embroidery, Blue, and the carpet is by Wilton. The chest in the forefront is from Interior Details, and an Empire side table from Baker, Knapp & Tubbs sits under the center window.



#### SWEET RETREAT

Kemsley wallpaper from Cowtan & Tout adorns the walls in this guest room, and Glen Eden carpet dresses the floors. The Park Slope coverlets, shams and bedskirts are from John Matouk & Co., and the drapes are in Norbar Mateo White fabric. The Louis XVI benches are from Louis J. Solomon; the Left Bank bedside table is from Hickory Chair.

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In the main living area, a vibrant fuchsia paint on the walls underscores the space's function as the public heart of the home, but both Smith and the homeowner prefer the tranquil master bedroom, with a color scheme of blue and white that echoes the sky and sea visible through the bay windows.

Rounding out the design team was another frequent collaborator, landscape architect Warren McCormick, president of Warren E. McCormick and Associates in West Palm Beach. He says that, because the home had to be elevated to meet flood criteria, it assumed an imposing scale.





**VERANDA RIGHTS**

An Archipelago loveseat and matching lounge chairs from Century Furniture offer comfortable seating on the oceanfront veranda; pillows with Kravet Lush Lipstick fabric provide pops of color.

**STYLE SELECTION**

This lounge chair from the Richard Frinier Collection for Century Furniture utilizes authentic British and Dutch Colonial plantation shutter-back styling and is stained with a Sumatra finish. *Archipelago Lounge Chair, shown at \$3,825; centuryfurniture.com*



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"In order to reduce the visual mass, we designed a curving driveway, with a large central planting island," he says. A quatrefoil-shaped fountain in the entry walkway "provides an intermediate focus as you go up the steps as well as a pleasant level of sound." The rest of the lush landscape comprises tropical plantings "arranged in a measured fashion," McCormick says, including ficus, bougainvillea, hibiscus and a variety of palms.

In the end, each member of the design team credits the high level of collaboration for the successful final product. But does it pass the happy test? "It's exactly what we wanted—it's a happy house," says the wife. "It's just filled with sunshine and good vibes." **L**

