

Charlotte

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HOMIE

DESIGN & DECOR

Outdoor Living

How to Bring the Outdoors In

Look Inside David Smith's
Isle of Palms Home Design

Even without a single mounted fish on the wall or basket full of shells, the airiness and the neutral color scheme are unmistakably beachy. The sectional sofa is by Verellen, the coffee table is by CFC, and the rug is from Moattar.



Isle of **PEACE**

A Charlotte-area couple builds
a second home in which
they can't help but relax.



This is paradise. A perfectly symmetrical house and grounds – right down to the poolside palm trees forming parentheses around the property – hint at the order and serenity within this luxurious Isle of Palms getaway.





You won't find a single basket of shells or miniature palm tree at this oceanfront Isle of Palms, S.C. vacation home. Yet, the minute you walk in, you know you're at the very *beachiest* of beach houses. And it was designed that way.

When a Charlotte-area couple decided to build a seaside escape, they went with their tried-and-true. They hired their long-time designer, David Smith of Custom Interiors, to bring their vision to life. Smith and the couple practically communicate telepathically. "We've worked together on many projects," Smith says. "They trust me." The trust runs so deep, in fact, that the pair told their architect, Herlong & Associates, to allow Smith leeway to make changes to the blueprints. "I've never had that happen," Smith says. "The architect gave us a beautiful exterior and a basic interior layout based on the needs of the client. It was up to me to design the interiors."

"If the walls needed to be moved to accommodate the furnishings or open a space up or allow for better views, I had that freedom," he continues. "I was able to design all the interior elements from the walls, handrails, lighting, tile, cabinetry, countertops, decorative beams, and furnishings – all with amazing support from the builder and architect. My clients let me roll with it."

Smith and his clients made the decision to have few walls on the main level. Beyond the extra-large foyer is what Smith describes as "one grand room". "It stretches the full width of the house," he says. "It contains the dining room, family room, kitchen, and even the butler's pantry. Big, sliding doors give an uninterrupted view of the beach." Also on the main level are two guest suites with private baths as well as a powder room.

Lots of natural wood and light, creamy taupes, pale blues, soft browns, and grays – and a complete lack of visual clutter – provide a sedate backdrop for a vacation home meant to induce utter relaxation. Plenty of white space gives the furnishings and art room to breathe. And it reminds homeowners and guests that an oceanfront house is a place to let out a big exhale.

As elegant as it is, the couple originally planned on something grander. At first, this house was conceived as the guesthouse. They planned to build it first and then use their land on the adjacent lot to build the main house. But Smith explains that the homeowners fell in love with its comfort, so they no longer needed the second build. "Even though it's a sizable house, there's an intimacy to it. It's relaxing. They decided *this* was exactly what they wanted."

It's easy to see why. Their architect designed what Smith calls a "Lowcountry farmhouse with a vintage Southern spin."

"It fits in with its seaside environment, but it doesn't scream 'beach house.'"

It's built in the Southern farmhouse vernacular – but with every upgrade imaginable. Yes, the front porch is there. But it's oversized for outdoor living. A ground-level veranda has a luxurious living area and a dining table that seats eight.

The interior, heavy on neutrals and pecky cypress, is designed to soothe – not excite. "One of my client's only directives was that she wanted to see soft colors," Smith says. "And that's the palette I'm most comfortable working in. There's nothing too bold or loud in this house. There's nothing wrong with either of those, but this house was designed to be calm and quiet."

Oh, to be a kid again – specifically one staying at this house. Some might argue that the kids' suite is the best room in the house. All the natural wood makes it feel like a tree house. Four built-in bunk beds are custom-made for sleepovers.





Pecky cypress beams and doors are reminiscent of driftwood, perfect for a coastal retreat. Countertops are Arabescato marble, a beautiful combination of soft whites and dusty grays. The island is done in brushed granite. Wicker chairs are by Janus et Cie, and statement lighting is by The Urban Electric Co.



Pecky cypress barn doors hide as well reveal a tidy butler's pantry, which also doubles as an office. Paint on shiplap walls is Benjamin Moore White Dove.



Proving it is possible to have a zen-like space for a very quotidian chore, the laundry room, which is part of the butler's pantry, has a durable tile floor from Walker Zanger. Walnut countertops are by William C. Pritchard Co.



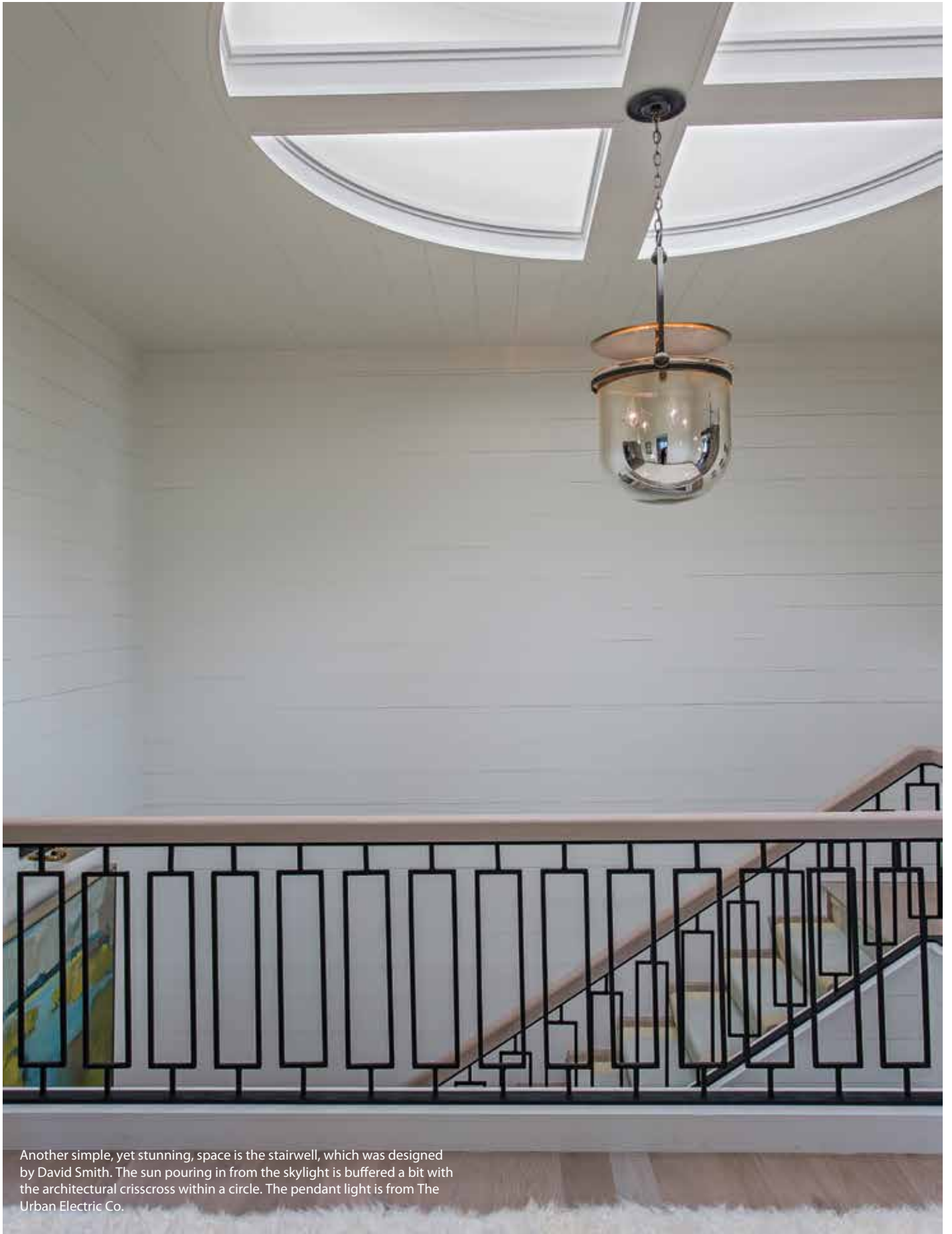
Proving elegance doesn't have to be formal, this airy foyer looks straight out onto the sand and surf. Rug is by Moattar and light fixture by The Urban Electric Co.

Cream and greige is all the color you need when you have a view of white sand and the blue-green of the ocean. The headboard is by Hickory Chair and linens are by Legacy Home. A seating arrangement in front of the window makes a great place in one of two master bedrooms to hunker down with a good book.



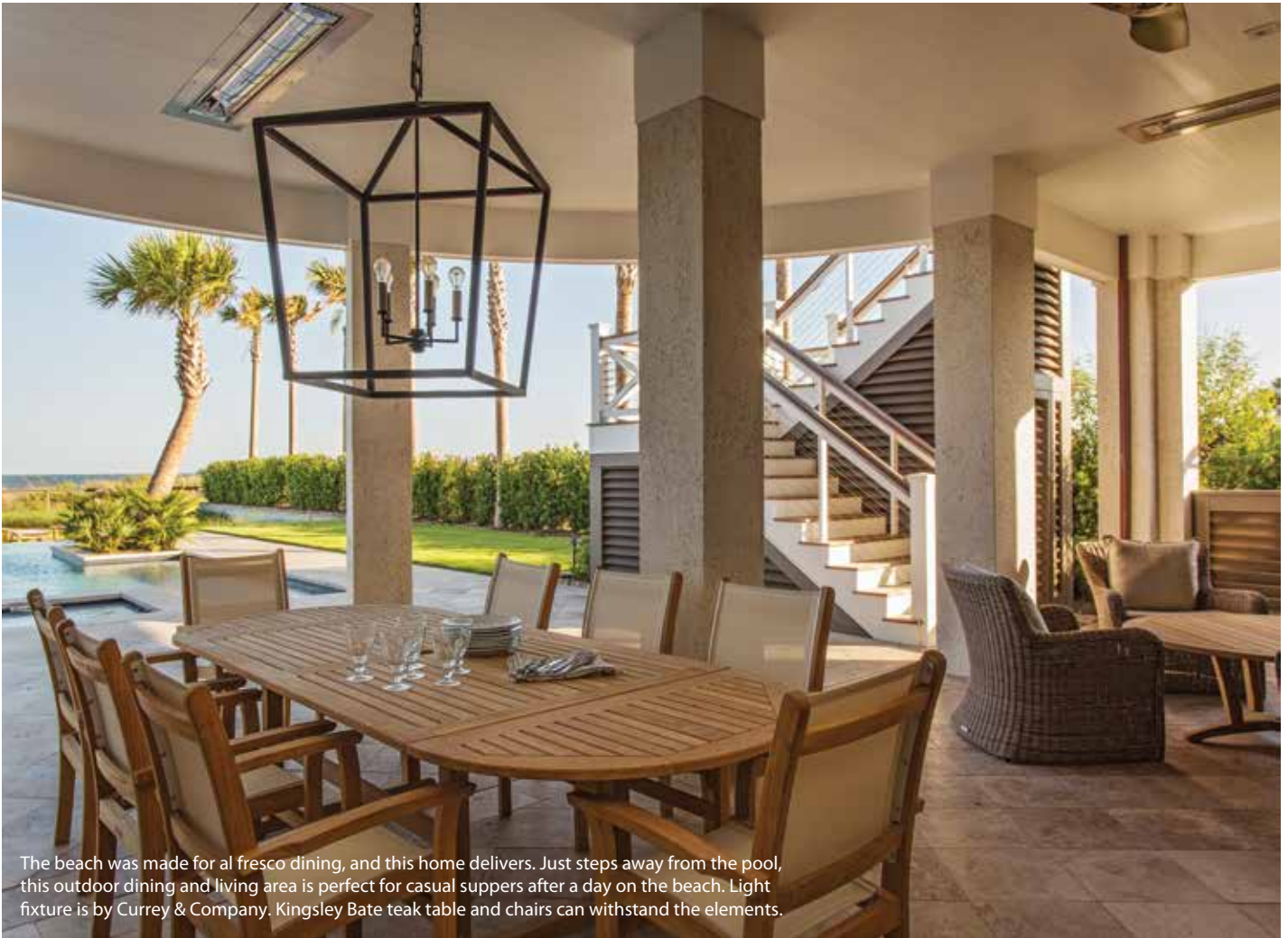
The main balcony provides sweeping views of the beach and endless ocean, making this the ultimate spot for relaxation and taking in the sounds of the sea.





Another simple, yet stunning, space is the stairwell, which was designed by David Smith. The sun pouring in from the skylight is buffered a bit with the architectural crisscross within a circle. The pendant light is from The Urban Electric Co.

Lots of natural wood and light, creamy taupes, pale blues, soft browns, and grays – and a complete lack of visual clutter – provide a sedate backdrop for a vacation home meant to induce utter relaxation.



The beach was made for al fresco dining, and this home delivers. Just steps away from the pool, this outdoor dining and living area is perfect for casual suppers after a day on the beach. Light fixture is by Currey & Company. Kingsley Bate teak table and chairs can withstand the elements.

The owners have three adult sons and can't help but dream of the grandkids they hope to welcome to the beach one day. Those future grandchildren were very much taken into consideration in the home's design.

The home's second story has one guest suite and a showstopping bunk suite with four built-in beds and a boys' bathroom and a girls' bathroom. On the upper level there are two master suites with balconies overlooking the pool, landscaped backyard, and ocean beyond. An elevator provides easy transport from one level to the next.

Smith managed to pull off the nifty trick of making a house both grand and down-to-earth. As sophisticated as it is, the house is also

what he calls "very casual and lived-in."

"This is not a hands-off atmosphere," he declares. Wicker chairs at the oversized kitchen island, shiplap walls painted a creamy white, and a minimalist aesthetic all combine to make the home feel like a place you want to be barefoot.

A beach house doesn't need to have a beachy theme to remind owners and guests they're at the shore. In the case of this classic oceanfront home, the wall of windows overlooking the sand and sea do the job quite nicely. The sound of ocean waves crashing against the shore and seagulls chirping overhead is its own kind of symphony. ♦