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Summer ISSUE

75+  
Fresh Ideas  
for *Coastal  
Charm*

*Sunny Lakeside Inspiration*  
IN NORTH CAROLINA





# Beach House Reimagined

This cozy beach cottage was designed with one thing in mind: fun, casual living.

Not far from the wood-planked boardwalk of Bethany Beach, Delaware, you might stumble upon Bikinis & Birdwells, the charming vacation home of a young, active family who truly loves having fun—this much is obvious from the cottage’s casual and welcoming aesthetic.

Fittingly, the interior of the house was inspired by the family’s busy lifestyle and surfing, a sport the children are passionate about. The nautical stripes and contemporary style blend to create the perfect “hip”

atmosphere, as designer Marnie Oursler of Marnie Custom Homes describes it.

The original home at this location was a duplex-style property, but after the family lived there for a few years, they wanted something new. The current house was designed with many of the same intentions of the original, but with an updated approach. Marnie reimagined the laid-back, casual nature of the home but gave it a beach-house style a contemporary face-lift with a new concept floor plan and a slate-and-blue

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The stilted home's main indoor gathering space is the great room. To provide the durability needed for the active family walking in and out right off the beach, premium vinyl flooring was chosen over more traditional hardwoods, which the previous home had. Marnie repurposed those hardwoods into the open shelving and dining table of the current home, giving a warm touch to the space. Sleek subway tile and white countertops are a breeze to clean when the family entertains, which is often. Thanks to the homeowners' fun nature, Marnie wasn't afraid to bring in bold pops of color, like she did with the aqua-hued tables in the living room.

*"I poured my heart and soul into this house, and to see all the hard work pay off and the family enjoying the home is so rewarding."*

—MARNIE OURSLER



(Top left) For a family who loves surfing, a name for their cottage that reflected their passion was a requirement. Bikinis & Birdwells was inspired by the popular board shorts brand. (Left) Though Marnie opted not to use hardwood floors in the new home, she loved the hardwoods of the original duplex-style house. So, she incorporated them in a few different areas, including the fireplace mantel.



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The bedrooms feature the same practical beauty as the rest of the home. For the children, Marnie designed a bunk room, with additional trundle beds beneath. “Getting creative with the space is always a challenge,” Marnie says. “We had to figure out how the house would function comfortably both when it was full and

when it was just the family there.” Stairs leading up to the top bunks provide extra storage for the kids, as does the double-vanity bathroom. The mudroom was also a necessity for the busy family. With a bench to set towels on and hooks for hats, the shiplap-sided space gets plenty of use.

In addition to vinyl flooring and easy-to-clean surfaces, many of the fabrics used throughout the home are actually outdoor fabrics, ideal for withstanding wet bathing suits and sandy toes.







Departing from the bolder style of the rest of the home, the master suite provides a breath of fresh air for the busy parents. Marnie incorporated nautical touches through the use of natural materials like seagrass and rattan and pops of blue hues.

The master suite is an elegant retreat for the parents. White wood-planked vaulted ceilings are highlighted by a large orb lighting fixture hanging directly above the bed. The serene space includes vistas viewed out of French doors that open to a private patio, the perfect spot for morning coffee while listening to the waves. Marnie brought sophisticated touches with rustic hints to the master bathroom, with an industrial-style wood plank lighting fixture and gold hardware. The bold tiled floor adds the signature pop of fun in the space.

Though the inside of the home provides a gorgeous retreat, Marnie designed the cottage knowing that the outdoor areas would be the stars of the show. Below the home, Marnie brought new life to an awkward and often underutilized space by creating a bar and games the whole family can enjoy, as well as storage. Now, it's where you'll most likely find the family during the summer, relaxing and having fun in their little beach cottage. 🏠

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