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blue crush

A NEW ENGLAND COUPLE'S TEQUESTA RESIDENCE CAPTURES THE SIGHTS AND HUES OF THE RIVER AND SKY, DISTILLING THE ESSENCE OF FLORIDA LIVING.

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INTERIOR DESIGN Jackie Armour, JMA Interior Decoration, Inc.

HOME BUILDER Joseph Pease, Peaco Builders

BEDROOMS 4 | BATHROOMS 4 | SQUARE FEET 6,500



By the time the ink dried on the contract for Al and Sheila Quirk's new Tequesta home on the banks of the Loxahatchee River, they had a house—and a designer. Introduced through friends, Jackie Armour “came by the morning of the closing, and we knew immediately she was pretty special,” says Sheila. “We went right back to her office to get started.”

The house they had just purchased was brand-new, the work of architect Scott Disher of Architectural Studio and builder Joseph Pease. It came complete with great bones, allowing Armour the perfect canvas to capture the relaxed, elegant essence of Florida. Unlike the Quirks' more traditional residences in Connecticut and on Cape Cod, here “they were open to doing something completely new and different,” Armour recalls, “as long as we used a lot of blue.”



A rug from The Natural Carpet Company grounds the living room. A Lee Industries sofa and armchairs—from Pineapples, Palms, Etc.—join Hickory White benches in Kravet stripes around an Oomph coffee table. A Visual Comfort chandelier hangs above. *Opposite:* In the foyer, artworks from Wendover Art Group float above Century Furniture chests from Designers Buying Group.



Against a Phillip Jeffries wallcovering, a mirror from Pineapples, Palms, Etc. anchors the dining room, while seafoam-hued glass lamps reference the water outside. Underneath the setting is a cabinet from Asian Accents of Palm Beach. Hickory White side chairs in a Romo textile surround a Somerset Bay Home dining table; Duralee fabric dresses the Lee Industries head chair.

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And so, through the house, blue serves as a unifying thematic element, providing subtle grace notes in some spaces, while boldly revving up the home's surroundings in others. In the living room, for example, much of the blue comes from the river beyond, so, says Armour, "the first order of business was to remove several columns in the living and dining rooms to open up the space and call attention to the view." The builder returned to the project with a familiar hand to execute the modifications. "Coming back to it was awesome because I got to put in the finishing touches," says Pease, who also swapped out carpet for dark-stained wood floors and added a few new architectural elements.

The rich tone of the wood flooring provided the ideal contrast for attention to be placed on the living room fireplace—a tour de force featuring an overmantel that Pease had studded with seashells during the home's construction. "I mimicked the effect of the water washing over the shore," he says. This paved the way for Armour to infuse the room with coastal inspirations that further supported the focal point. "Instead of going with a stronger palette here, we used texture and softer colors to allow the fireplace to stand out," Armour says of the room's sandy hues. "The area rug is a beautiful, nubby wool-and-sisal combination, and the wool-and-linen fabric on the sofa has an almost tweed-like feel. As a reference to the riverside location, one of the accent pillows has actual pieces of driftwood sewn on as appliques."



Pierre Frey fabric garbs the Lee Industries tufted ottoman at the center of the family room. The accent pillows on the Lee Industries sofa sport solids and patterns by China Seas. River views can be enjoyed through windows and sliding glass doors from PGT Industries, accented with Duralee drapery fabric and Samuel & Sons trim. The rug is from Flor Source.



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In the nearby dining room, Armour looked for an element that would be equally as compelling as the living room's fireplace. "The wall is huge, so we needed a big, strong statement piece," she explains. "The mirror we went with is lightly gilded and has a great feel to it. I also added texture on the wall to warm up the space a little bit. The Quirks had initially wanted a strong coral color, but I convinced them that this lets the architecture and view shine."

Elsewhere, blue design elements take center stage. In the family room and on the adjacent lanai, crisp navies and strong sky-inspired shades dominate in a mix of bold patterns and stripes for the furnishings.

In the kitchen, Lee Industries stools surround the Carrara marble island top, refinished by Mario Ferazzoli & Son. Samuel & Sons tape outlines the Roman shades in Duralee fabric. Wellborn Cabinet's cabinetry from DeStefano Designs and Restoration Hardware pendants already existed in the home.



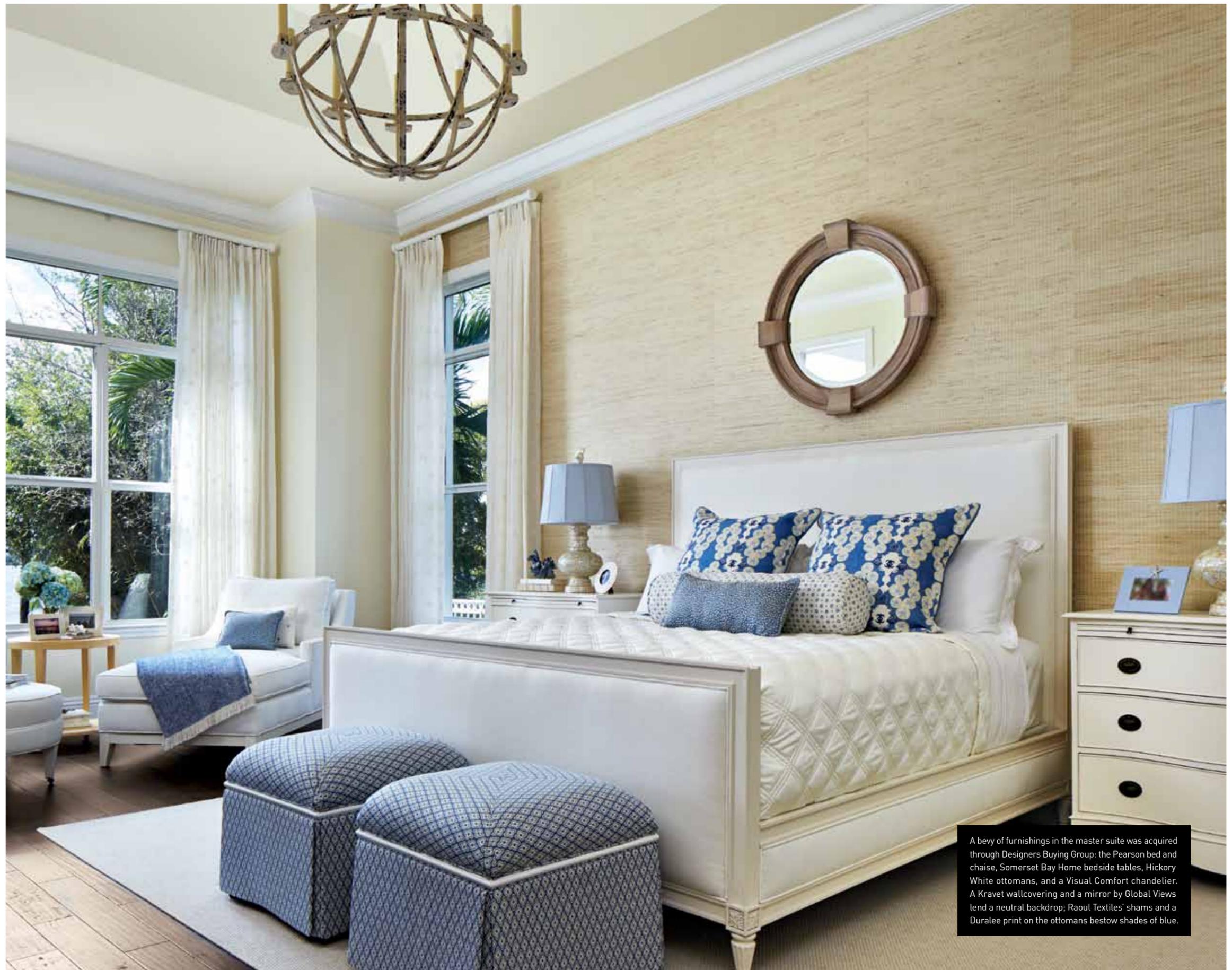
Above: The architecture takes its cues from the British West Indies. A pool and spa by A & G Concrete Pools enjoy unrivaled views. Right: Subtle aquatic notes abound, even down to the brightly colored tropical fish on Penelope Penzo's tableware, which decorates a Gloster dining table on the lanai.



Drapery fabric by Link Outdoor, from Jeffrey Michaels, lends a resort feel to the lanai. A Lee Industries armchair and Gloster side chairs surround the dining table, while more casual seating comes from the sofa and swivel chairs, also by Lee Industries.



The master bedroom's media cabinet, crafted by G R Lytle Woodworks, displays Phillip Jeffries wallpaper and coastal accessories. Intricate detail shows in a lattice urn from Marie Antoinette's, while shell bookends from Palm Beach Regency flank books from E. Lawrence in Atlanta.

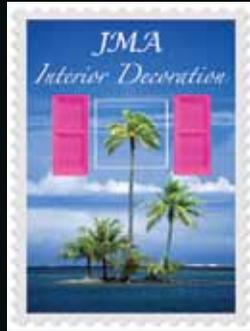


A bevy of furnishings in the master suite was acquired through Designers Buying Group: the Pearson bed and chaise, Somerset Bay Home bedside tables, Hickory White ottomans, and a Visual Comfort chandelier. A Kravet wallcovering and a mirror by Global Views lend a neutral backdrop; Raoul Textiles' shams and a Duralee print on the ottomans bestow shades of blue.

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Blue also appears on the walls with a gentle tint in the family room and kitchen. In the latter, the color plays off the fabric on the counter stools. Outside, the ample terraces get their own blue infusion, with a mélange of furnishings in hues that suggest the water's mutable tones. They're positioned to capture views of the lush grounds, designed by landscape architect Michael Sapusek of Intuitive Design Group.

When Armour and the owners began the project, Sheila wished for the house "to convey a sense of family and fun, to make it a place we were drawn to," she says. So far it has succeeded, because they routinely gather there during winter breaks. "When you walk in, you get a calm, serene feeling," says Armour. "There's not a lot visually that overwhelms you; it's lively yet soothing." Just as living on the banks of a river should be. **L**



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