



Tropical Treat

A family falls in love with island life when they settle in a quaint Caribbean cottage by the sea

ST. KITTS,
CARIBBEAN

or many, the choice to pack up and move to an island paradise happens only after lifelong dreaming and years of searching. For Charleston, South Carolina, residents LeGrand and Allison Elebash, a developer and interior designer, respectively, that decision was almost instant. "We were offered an opportunity to build a resort on St. Kitts, which required us to move there for a few years," says Allison. A whirlwind house-hunting trip led the couple and their two children, Hudson and Chloe, to a circa-1980s West Indies-style cottage overlooking Frigate Bay. "It was a little outdated, but it had so much character," Allison says. Here's how the Elebashes combined Caribbean style with familiar comforts to form an island abode that makes them feel right at home.

1 CONSIDER WHERE YOU'LL SPEND YOUR TIME.

Allison made sure the porch could accommodate the family's daily activities, including seaside siestas in a quilted hammock. "When we're home, we spend most of our time out on the porch," says Allison. "So there's a spot to do everything."



The hammock is from Hatteras Hammocks.



The sofa is from Lee Industries, and the side tables are vintage.

2 DISPLAY WHAT YOU LOVE. A blank, soaring wall in the dining room (above) begged for scene-stealing decor, so Allison hung an old, oversize mirror alongside the couple's beloved selection of fine art. "We've always loved collecting art," she says. "And part of what makes a house feel more like home is having familiar things around you."

3 PLAY TO YOUR HOME'S STRENGTHS. Not wanting to detract from the house's vintage character, the Elebashes embraced its best qualities, such as its open floor plan, original parquet floors, and West Indies-style vaulted ceilings stained dark brown. "It was perfect—we wanted a home that felt like we were in the islands, but still had an elegance about it, because we entertain a lot," says Allison. ➤



The bar cart and chair are vintage. The coral sculpture is by Regina Andrews.



Fruit trees surround the Elebashes' hilltop home.

H

HOUSE TOUR



The coffee table is from Shine by S.H.O. The lamp is from Arteriors.

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4 THINK CREATIVELY.
While the vintage charm of the island retreat appealed to the Elebashes, it did have its shortcomings—particularly when it came to the size of the windows. “They were all very small,” says Allison. “So I ordered bamboo blinds that would extend beyond the top of the actual window. Hung higher, it gives the illusion of a taller, more expansive space.”

5 LAY A NEUTRAL FOUNDATION.
The family room (left)—with its slipcovered sofa, bold coffee table, and patterned pillows—exemplifies one of Allison’s simple design tricks: “I always like to start with neutral sofas, because you can do anything with them,” she says. “You can change out the pillows, side chairs, or tables in the room and the sofa still works.”



ISLAND HOMES LEND THEMSELVES TO
COLOR AND PRINTS. YOU HAVE PERMISSION
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The headboard is from West Elm; the coral lamps are from Morris Sokol in Charleston.



The drapery fabric is from Braemore.

6 BRING ON THE BRIGHT. "Island homes lend themselves to color and prints," says Allison. "You have permission to use brighter, bolder things." In the kids' rooms, the designer used vibrant, statement-making curtains (fun, feminine hot pink for Chloe, and sea-inspired turquoise for Hudson), and then accented them with modern artwork, furniture, and accessories. ➤



The bed's headboard, tables, and the lamps are from Circa Lighting.

WHAT MAKES A HOUSE FEEL MORE LIKE HOME IS HAVING FAMILIAR THINGS AROUND

7 REINVENT WITH TEXTILES. Rather than starting from scratch, Allison opted to recycle some furniture from their Charleston home. The only caveat? Their previous aesthetic didn't quite jibe with their new island vibe. "We covered a lot of our antiques and existing pieces with slipcovers so they would feel more island-like," she says. In the master bedroom, Allison gave the couple's existing headboard a makeover with soothing blue fabric. ➤ For more information, see Sources, page 101.

ALLISON ELEBASH INTERIOR DESIGN

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