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MEREDITH SPECIALS

This photo: The screen porch in Scott and Leslie Fennell's Kiawah Island, South Carolina, cottage is a prime spot to sit and take in the view across the marsh. Pillows in Peter Dunham fabrics add pops of pink to the neutral outdoor furnishings. *Opposite:* Pretty peonies on the brass-topped coffee table pick up pink and blush tones in the living room.





ISLAND IDYLL

With clean lines and a nature-inspired palette, this contemporary island cottage blends in effortlessly with its serene surroundings.

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The airy Kiawah Island cottage of Scott and Leslie Fennell is perfectly perched

over a verdant marsh with expansive views of the river that winds along South Carolina's coast. After discovering the pristine lot, the couple, whose main residence is in nearby Charleston, worked with Thomas & Denzinger Architects to design a contemporary home that would seamlessly blend into the classic Low Country setting. Large windows welcome views of the lush maritime forest and marshes, and an open floor plan and generous porches ease indoor-outdoor flow.

Inside, designer Allison Elebash took her cue from the home's surroundings, highlighting the creams, greens, blues, browns, and grays of the natural world with a complementary palette indoors. Hardwood floors and textured rugs combine with woven accent pieces, wrought iron, and pottery throughout. "Scott and Leslie are well traveled and wanted a fresh take on the traditional Southern beach house," Elebash says. "We began with foundational pieces and added accents with natural fibers, sculptural lines, and



Left: The sunny foyer greets guests with an abstract painting by Brian Coleman perched above a sleek console table. A basket of towels says welcome to the beach. *This photo:* Symmetry reigns in the elegantly casual living room. The marsh scene by Sarah Jeffers over the fireplace reflects the landscape outside, and matching open shelves display objets d'art and other curiosities. Designer Allison Elebash paired custom chenille sofas and seagrass barrel chairs for ample seating, making the most of the space and keeping a low profile.





Opposite: Elebash commissioned a face-inspired painting from artist Sally King Benedict as the focal point of the dining space. “Sally’s work draws the eye in as a colorful, playful statement piece,” Elebash says. “The face really set the tone for this room.”

Below: Dramatic windows give this cottage kitchen a splash of natural light and a view of the trees. Elebash used Calacatta Gold quartz, a chic brass Kelly Wearstler fixture, and sculptural brass barstools for a sophisticated vibe. “Whether day or night, our family and guests love to gather around this island,” Leslie says. *Right:* Leslie relaxes on the upper-level porch. The gray wicker sectional is covered in piped Sunbrella fabric, with Schumacher prints on the pillows. Custom curtains—also in Sunbrella—provide shade from the afternoon sun.



updated finishes—along with modern artwork. It’s relaxed, but with a sophisticated feel.”

Elebash conceived the main level as an open space for daily living that can be dressed up for entertaining. The inviting living room offers comfortable seating with custom chenille sofas and seagrass side chairs. A striking ebony-and-brass coffee table anchors the room, and a wispy marsh scene by Sarah Jeffers hangs over the fireplace.

In the adjacent dining area, Chippendale chairs with a pale apricot fabric surround a custom round table with a fluted base for a casual, lighthearted feel. Just steps away, the kitchen’s dramatic windows flood the space with sunlight. Custom cabinetry is painted a serene watery blue (Oval Room Blue by Farrow & Ball), which is complemented by the cool Calacatta Gold quartz on the countertops and waterfall island. Elebash chose the striking Kelly Wearstler light

fixture above the island to add visual interest to the high ceilings and as a bold contrast to the traditional beachy elements of the cottage. Brass fixtures and hardware echo the theme.

The bedrooms continue the quiet, nature-inspired palette. In the main-level master bedroom, grass-cloth walls in a soft gray-blue bring just-right texture. On the upper level, additional bedrooms and baths for the children are light and bright with block-print fabrics and whimsical art and accessories. The upper-level porch between the rooms is—as expected—a prime gathering spot for the young and young at heart.

“We are so pleased with the look, feel, and flow of this special little house,” Leslie says. “It lives beautifully, and we find it very hard to leave. Weekends have been turning into long weekends on a regular basis.” □

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Opposite: In daughter Madeleine's bedroom, a bold accent wall features Galbraith & Paul's Casita wallpaper in a vibrant green. The headboard was custom designed, and white lacquer lamps are a nod to the turtles that nest on the nearby beach. "Each room in the house has a subtle reference to the island," Leslie says. "After all, we are here because of Kiawah's natural beauty." *Clockwise from top left:* Elebash selected this alabaster light fixture for its sculptural feel. "It reminded me of shells and coral bleached by the sun," she says, "like a special treasure you might find washed up along the seashore." Cheery artwork, an upholstered ottoman, and a quirky rattan chair found at World Market brighten a corner of Madeleine's bedroom. The blue-and-white guest bedroom features custom headboards in a graphic block print, crowned by woven rush mats. An airy sea glass light fixture glows above. The master bath is a study in serenity with a large walk-in shower and freestanding soaking tub; hardwood floors offer a warm contrast to the tile walls. Elebash chose the island-inspired Cole & Son Palm Leaves wallpaper for the petite powder room, adding a little glamour with a gilt mirror and brass fixtures. The peaceful master bedroom features grass-cloth walls, a custom headboard in a Galbraith & Paul print, and an upholstered bench; lacquer bedside tables and other white accessories are deliberately understated to keep the focus on the view.

