



fresh
CLEAN
looks

Interior design by
BROCKSCHMIDT & COLEMAN
Interview by
LISA CREGAN
Photographs by SIMON UPTON



CLEAR YOUR HEAD WITH

Order

Everything in its proper place. Including color. That's the secret of a Florida house with an easy, breezy feel as relaxing as an island vacation

LEFT: By keeping the colors restricted to pale blues and coral, with "bits of white for crispness," Bill Brockschmidt and Courtney Coleman created tranquility in the living and dining rooms of this Florida house. The symmetry of the rooms also reflects the designers' credo: Balance creates harmony. ABOVE: The walls of the living room are painted a greenish blue from Farrow & Ball, Teresa's Green #236.

LISA CREGAN: If I lived in this Florida house, I'd just walk around sighing little sighs of contentment. The palette is so soothing. That pale, watery blue, the soft greens, all that dreamy white....

COURTNEY COLEMAN: We didn't vary the colors much, to keep things calm. And none of the rooms are cluttered. They're very organized—and that's comforting.

BILL BROCKSCHMIDT: If you ask me, a room only feels good, really good, when everything is in its proper place, from the colors to the furniture. When things are well placed, nothing feels jarring. I call it 'tidy informality.'

I love 'tidy informality.' It sums up the way we all want to live now! Please tell me more.

BB: Creating harmony by balance is what we do. The front door opens to the living room, and when you walk in your eye is drawn immediately to that large ebonized sofa table and the overscale lantern, then to the pair of white urns—and then the room dissolves and spreads out in an orderly, symmetrical fashion.

CC: We kept all the solid upholstered pieces to the perimeters of the living room, so the big sofa in that batik-y fabric is the focal point.

Very dramatic, that sofa.

CC: Dramatic, yes, but not overly dominant, because it doesn't break with the palette in the living room and the adjacent dining room. We also kept upholstery details and curtains—white linen on rods—very simple. Simplicity was really important to the owners. They wanted the house to be gracious and elegant without being fussy.

Who are the owners?

CC: Robert and Janice Aron. They have two daughters, Aimée, who's 19, and Annabelle, age four. They're very outdoorsy. Robert is a passionate sailor and Aimée is a highly ranked equestrienne. The house is in Wellington, where the largest horse show in the world is held.

You manage to create such tranquility in the house, and yet it seems so layered. Not cluttered, but certainly not sparse.

BB: People sometimes take 'comfort' way too far and end up creating rooms that are bland and uncomfortable! If this house were filled with big upholstered 'put your feet up' pieces, the place would be hotel-like. We used things like the Indian chairs by the sofa table in the living room less as places to sit and more to add patina, a little intrigue. And there are lots of burnished antiques.

What's that lovely textured fabric in the panels on the dining room walls?

CC: It's not fabric—it's woven grass mats from Pearl River that we framed with moldings. They're actually yoga mats! It's a favorite decorator technique of ours—the texture is gorgeous.

And it's in keeping with the sisal rugs. Another example of how you create harmony by balance.

BB: Even more important, if the room had been painted entirely coral, it would have been overbearing. The matting and the blue moldings tone things down, so the coral becomes just an accent color. It makes the room intimate without being harsh.

Those gauzy white curtains give the veranda a certain intimacy, too—so romantic, and so Out of Africa.

CC: Well, Janice happens to be South African. She's the one who suggested the white sheer fabric, which is like mosquito netting. We ended up using hundreds of yards! And once again—there's a harmony, a consistency with the white linen curtains inside.

BB: The veranda is more of an enclosure this way; it transports you. The curtains change the mood, depending on whether they're tied back or not—or closed completely. They have a breezy feeling, and they make the outdoor space seem cooler. In warm weather, the veranda is the family room.

Okay, I can't hold back. I'm dying of envy over the master bedroom—French doors opening onto a garden courtyard! And I love the color combination.

CC: We pulled the coral from the dining and living rooms and painted the walls sage green to reference the garden. It's a restful green, and it works well with the trained vines in the lattice pattern that you can see through the doors. There's jasmine, gardenia. Very lush, very fragrant, very white.

And then there's the ultimate in 'very white'—Aimée's bedroom.

BB: Aimée's room is probably the most serene of all. She gave us a little sketch of a bed with mosquito netting and she attached a note that said 'all white.' We thought that was great, because it fit perfectly with the house's look.

And how would you describe that look?

BB: You could call it an Anglo-Caribbean-Florida-traditional house.

CC: And at our first meeting Janice said, 'I want this house to be pretty.'

BB: 'Pretty' isn't a very popular word today though, is it? Everyone wants what's 'hot.' But pretty, in this case, is right.

PRODUCED BY DAVID M. MURPHY STYLIST GREGORY BISSONNETTE

The deep, comfortable living room sofa is covered in a Jasper print, Remy in blue/brown. Throw pillows pick up the coral of the dining room wall. A Gothic lantern from Circa Lighting hangs over a custom sofa table that divides the room into two seating areas. Near the dining room, a pair of upholstered banquettes are "perfect for conversation at cocktail parties," says Brockschmidt. The white resin urns, from Mecox Gardens, add a vertical dimension to the room.





Grass yoga mats framed in panel moldings keep the dining room from feeling overly formal. Benjamin Moore's Super White on the ceiling adds height and lightness. OPPOSITE FROM TOP: A nautical theme drove the kitchen design. Brass pendants from Circa Lighting hang above a beaded board island with a waxed teak top. The floral headboard and walls in C2 Paint's New Leaf are perfect complements to the master bedroom's courtyard garden. Bench cushion fabric is Cha Cha Terracotta by Glant.





The teenage daughter's dreamy white-on-white bedroom is the essence of serenity. Walls, ceiling, and trim are all in Benjamin Moore's Seashell. Mosquito netting drapes the painted bamboo bed. Lamps from Linens n' Things. **OPPOSITE:** On the veranda, a bold blue and white palette stands up to the grooving Florida sun. "How that dark mirror mirror," says Coleman, "the way it contrasts with the light white curtains. And at night it reflects the candlelight so beautifully." Smith & Hawken sofa. Madeline Weinrib carpet.



Another view of the daughter's bedroom. All the furniture was painted white; the ultra-scale bergères were upholstered in white cotton. A beveled mirror and vintage blue-glass lamp add glamour. The Beauvais carpet is "a smoother weave than sisal, a good barefoot carpet," says Coleman. OPPOSITE: Gauzy curtains give the pool area a breezy tropical feel. FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES.

