

Southern home



Before &
AFTER

ENDLESS DESIGN POSSIBILITIES

SULLIVAN'S ISLAND SANCTUARY

A HISTORIC COASTAL COTTAGE
WON THE HEARTS OF THE OWNERS,
WHO HIRED DESIGNER MEGAN MOLTEN
AND BEAU CLOWNEY ARCHITECTS TO
TRANSFORM IT INTO A COLORFUL AND
JOYFUL FAMILY HOME.

TEXT SHERRY MOELLER | PHOTOGRAPHY MARGARET WRIGHT

As the main historic space in the sea cottage, the living room is the epicenter of the home, embracing its past and showcasing its potential.



For eight years, while living in Charleston, South Carolina, Meredith Ebenhoeh dreamed of living on Sullivan's Island. "In 2019, when a house became available in our price point, I was ecstatic," she says. Although the run-down house was being sold as a teardown, Ebenhoeh saw its renovation potential and convinced her husband, Brad, to take the leap. "Its proximity to town, school, and the ocean along with the unique privacy of the lot were very appealing," Ebenhoeh adds. They updated some to make it livable, but once their third child, Magnolia, joined twins Smith and Crosbi, they knew it was time for a major overhaul to add more square footage to accommodate their growing family.

While the house had been pieced together over the last 100-plus years, it was also a historical landmark that needed to be preserved. Megan Molten of Megan Molten Design + Shop and Beau Clowney and Kate Campbell of Beau Clowney Architects were brought in to envision and execute the home's transformation. "Although the structure is protected as a Sullivan's Island Landmark Property, many non-historic additions had been made to the original structure, and it had been significantly altered over the years," says Campbell.



Opposite, above: While the architects maintained the facade of the original structure, they also added a guest house off the front porch, restored the railings with a more historically appropriate x-rail design, and added a second floor over the non-historic spaces. Opposite, below: In the living room, window seats were added on each side of the fireplace. This page: The side chairs feature faux leather seating for easy cleanup, while the end chairs are upholstered in durable fabric that coordinates with the wallpaper.



The owner wanted anything but a white kitchen, so the designer went with coastal blue cabinetry, plus a pendant and window shades that tie into the black scullery. Existing appliances were repurposed in the space. "Megan even talked me into marble in the kitchen, and I love it even more worn in," says homeowner Meredith Ebenhoeh. "She convinced me that not everything has to be perfect." Right: "With painted striped walls, bright fun fabrics, and two tables for gaming and gathering, the game room has become a space where our family spends a lot of time," adds Ebenhoeh.

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The architectural team worked with the town to devise the best approach to preserve the living room, which was the main historic portion of the house, while making alterations and additions to the non-historic areas. "We love how they were able to honor the history of the house by creating elevations that still make it feel like a two-room sea cottage when you enter from the front driveway," Ebenhoeh says. "We love to entertain and always have extra kids running around, so we wanted a house and design that was family friendly and that matched our vibrant coastal life and included a guesthouse for our frequent visitors."

"The architects designed the whole house around the living room," which is to the right of the entry door, says Molten. Without a proper foyer, Molten added a stacked stone console to delineate the living room from the new game room on the left. The game room serves as a family hangout with its blue-and-white striped walls and ceiling. Cased openings added by the architects allowed Molten to incorporate varying colors and wallpaper from space to space.



“By constructing larger openings to the original historic portion of the house, we were also able to create a view corridor through the center of the house, allowing light to traverse from front to back, which it had not previously done due to the non-historic additions,” says Clowney, who also added four mahogany doors along the back. “Those doors, coupled with Megan’s thoughtful selection of ceiling wallpaper that brings the outside in, are some of my favorite features of the house,” the owner adds.

The dining room, which is at the end of the foyer leading into the kitchen, features wallpaper along the built-in cabinetry that picks up the colors in the blue kitchen and adjoining black scullery. “We wanted to make sure the spaces worked well together,” says Molten. For instance, when it was discovered that the kitchen flooring needed to be replaced, Molten decided to go with a checkered pattern on the floor. “The cased openings helped with the transition with the flooring, too,” she says.



Opposite, clockwise from left: Happy little moments happen during the design process, says Molten, such as the installation of the wall-to-wall floating marble sink in the powder room. In the laundry room, “wallpaper on the ceiling is impactful,” says the designer, who adds that the dedicated laundry room is her favorite space. The sea life bunk room makes the most of a small space with built-in storage drawers and attic access as well as clever design features, including light-shielding curtains along the beds. This page: “I love the sitting room off the kitchen, as it’s a place we often gather with a glass of wine with friends once our busy house has calmed down,” says the owner.

Island-influenced wallpaper and playful lighting create a pink-accented bedroom for the youngest daughter. Opposite, above: “Repurposing pieces that owners already have is a goal of ours,” says Molten, who reused the existing furniture in a new way on the year-round screened porch, offering seating and dining spaces. “We added new accessories to make it cohesive,” she adds. Opposite, below: The covered pool patio was updated with an outdoor kitchen and entertainment center. It also features storage for bikes and a golf cart to get around the island.



The former dining room next to the kitchen is now the sitting room, which is finished in performance fabrics and fun wallpaper. “I’m so grateful that Megan and her team pushed me out of my comfort zone to consider fabrics, wall coverings, and stone that embodied the vibrancy of our family,” adds Ebenhoeh.

“We created a new laundry and pantry area adjacent to the new stairs to the second floor, giving critical functional space that did not exist in the house previously,” says Campbell. These spaces, as well as the children’s bedrooms, are cheerful and bright. “I adore the kids’ rooms,” says Ebenhoeh. “Megan did a wonderful job of capturing their personalities in their spaces.”

“Brad and Meredith were committed to restoring the original structure and spaces as much as possible, while accommodating additional space for their growing family,” says Clowney. “They are true stewards of this structure and property.”

“This house brings me so much joy, and every room is a feast for your eyes,” Ebenhoeh says. “This home is everything I could have dreamed of and more, bringing happiness to all who spend time here.”

