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Southwest Florida Edition

FRESH, JOYFUL, & SERENE

A COASTAL COTTAGE REVITALIZED FOR
CONTEMPORARY LIVING IN OLD NAPLES



Front Elevation: Architect Matthew Kragh of MHK Architecture composes this coastal cottage with Old Naples tradition, layering board-and-batten and horizontal lap siding beneath prominent gables, corbels, and generous overhangs. Aquaverde by Sherwin-Williams highlights these historic details, while a champagne-hued standing-seam metal roof introduces a contemporary note. Burnished bronze sconces and pendants create a welcoming porch glow, accentuating the vertical cladding and architectural rhythm. Large windows reinforce the home's coastal openness, while beige pavers and almond-toned garage doors ground the exterior palette with warmth and cohesion.

Entry: The ebullient Aquaverde carries to the interior face of the front door, where it meets white oak flooring in Galway from Real Wood Floors. The composition reads as fresh and joyful — a feeling derived from the bright, airy atmosphere, whimsical elements, and coastal hues. Above, an open lantern from Visual Comfort invites the ease of a coastal breeze, while the widened 1-1/2-inch nickel gap wall detailing reinterprets classic cottage language, with each board catching the light with a subtle sheen.





Architect Matthew Kragh of MHK Architecture describes the site as being in the heart of the Naples Historic District, where a devastated property makes way for a new residence attuned to contemporary living and honors its historic setting. Interior Designers Lyndsey Davis Nicklas and Julie Howlett of L Design Studio shape the home's atmosphere and experience. Their vision centers on three guiding words — *fresh, joyful, and serene* — informing color, detail, and overall feeling. ▶

Living Room: Carrying the ceiling beams across the main gathering spaces creates a sense of shelter and continuity, warming the open floor plan while subtly defining each zone. Striking aqua accents anchor the space at each end, serving as visual bookends. The herringbone kitchen backsplash tile from Design Works echoes the exterior's aqua for a cohesive touch. Low, tailored furnishings preserve clear sightlines and reinforce the breezy, unencumbered nature of this coastal cottage, allowing architecture, light, and impression to remain the focus.

Powder Room: Nicklas and Howlett layer fresh, joyful serenity starting with the vanity wall mosaic, selected for its fluid water-like movement and delicate blush-cream tones. Clear glass pendants feel airy and uplifting, while brass accents introduce subtle metallic warmth. A seamless wood shelf, stained to match the flooring, enhances the home's airy openness, while contemporary accents — like the Dulce de Leche mitered quartz countertop from Quantum Quartz — sharpen the composition with a crisp modern edge.





Kitchen: Furniture-style cabinetry detailing nods to tradition, offset by airy glass-front uppers. At the heart of the room, the Cambria island in Montgomery commands attention. The kitchen features Pompeii quartz countertops, sourced from UMI Stone, providing a modern concrete-look surface. This blend creates space for statement pieces like the farmhouse sink and full-height glass herringbone backsplash. “The crown moulding draws the eye upward while giving the kitchen a classic undertone, allowing us to experiment more with tile and color,” shares Nicklas.

Mike Assaad, owner of Waterside Builders, acquires this rare property after Hurricane Ian. “What made the site so appealing was the two existing structures we could keep in the design. They’re grandfathered in and would not be permissible in a completely new design,” Assaad explains. The team renovates both, allowing the new main residence and detached structures to function harmoniously as part of a single, considered plan.

From an architectural standpoint, “Our focus was creating a Coastal Cottage of today — one that could withstand future storms, give peace of mind, and still fit the character of the street,” shares Kragh. “It’s built to current standards, but grounded in the architecture that belongs here.” Beneath that historically rooted exterior, the home is organized around an open floor plan with modern flow and generous room sizes that support contemporary living.

Inspired by the nearby coast, Nicklas and Howlett begin shaping the home’s palette through their guiding words. “With how playful and airy the beach can be, I started envisioning aqua, blush, and sea glass green — imagine a sunset,” shares Howlett. A vibrant aqua hue accents the exterior details, honoring Kragh’s historic architecture while lending the home a distinctive identity. Inside the entry, exaggerated nickel gap detailing is paired with a playful Chippendale railing to introduce an unexpected sense of joy. “The goal is to evoke a feeling,” Howlett states. ▶



Primary Bedroom: Opaline by Sherwin-Williams on the walls, casing, and ceiling beams sets a tranquil tone, casting a soft green glow. Modern art and an upholstered headboard anchor the airy colorway, while a bedspread from Eastern Accents introduces blush and green tones drawn from an abstracted sunset palette. Warm wood cladding in the ceiling tray, paired with painted beams, adds visual interest and warmth, echoed subtly in the Mariana Home chairs from Wilson Lighting. Also part of the space — but not pictured — are custom closets by The Closet Company, where thoughtful organization meets the home’s signature blend of form and function.

Primary Bathroom: Reappearing on the walls and in the reeded-front cabinetry, Opaline subtly reflects the sea-foam hues woven throughout the tilework. Nicklas and Howlett deliberately revive the use of pencil liners here, reimagining them with a contemporary touch. In the shower, a traditional tile pattern pairs with vertical subway tile, exemplifying the duo’s confident blend of classic and contemporary. Polished nickel plumbing fixtures from Ferguson Home modernize the space, while wooden elements ground it in earthy serenity.

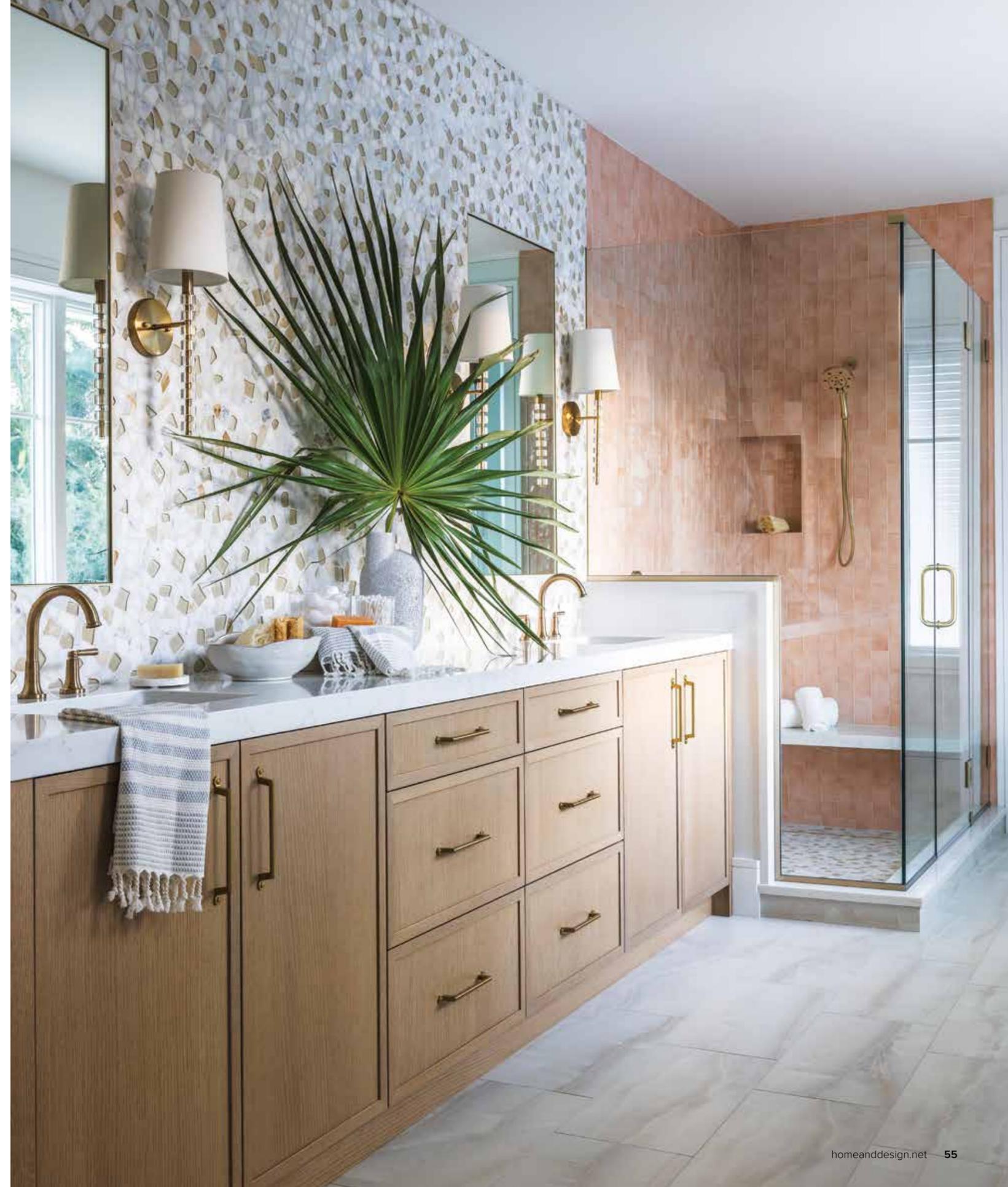


“With how playful and airy the beach can be, I started envisioning aqua, blush, and sea glass green — imagine a sunset,” shares Interior Designer Julie Howlett of L Design Studio.

From this vantage point, the living room reads as classic coastal cottage. “It was a consciously crafted visual,” Nicklas notes, pointing to soft neutrals, grounding jute texture, and warm wood tones. “You capture the calm first,” she continues, “and then the color reveals itself,” as bolder hues emerge to the left and right when one steps fully into the living room. What begins as a deliberate balance of color and proportion unfolds experientially, with color functioning less as a design device and more as a moment of surprise — a feeling discovered as the home opens and turns. ▶



Guest Suite & Bathroom: Howlett grounds the space with blush-toned tile in the shower, a choice that defines the guest suite’s aesthetic. In the bedroom, Sherwin-Williams’ Nearly Peach extends the palette with a soft, cohesive flow. Mosaic tile adorns the vanity wall, seamlessly joining the shower enclosure from Builders Glass of Bonita, showcasing exceptional craftsmanship. For a modern touch, brass-and-acrylic sconces and an inlaid mirror echo the metallic accents of the oak cabinetry.



Study: Color-drenching sets the tone in Tranquil Aqua by Sherwin-Williams. Abundant natural light supports the deeper palette, pairing painted millwork with rift-cut oak to create depth without visual clutter. Beyond the windows, a verdant landscape asserts an organic presence, acting as a living counterpoint to the controlled interior. A chandelier from Currey & Co. introduces sculptural warmth — organic in feel, not literal in form — reinforcing the room’s emphasis on shape, texture, and atmosphere.





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Casita Bath: “We brought more blue into the casita so it could have its own identity, while still feeling connected,” explains Howlett. Here, a blue pebble floor introduces tactile texture, climbing the wall to visually elongate the space. Nickel gap paneling across the white vanity lends a relaxed note, while brushed brass hardware and a coordinating mirror frame add warmth. Jute-wrapped sconces from Mitzi complete the composition with a subtle, layered coastal finish.



Throughout the home, the design remains cohesive, with details calibrated through ceiling rhythm, restrained coastal elements, and intentional color placement — an approach carried into the primary bathroom, where it evolves via layered tile work that reflects both temporal depth and spatial harmony. “There’s an elegance to this interior that recalls the early 1900s,” Kragh shares of the serene primary bathroom. “It feels authentic, yet fresh.” That freshness is cumulative, carried through the composition and into restrained styling details, including the eucalyptus Nicklas and Howlett incorporate.

Beyond the main residence, the outdoor living spaces, pool, and casita are connected by consistent materials, framed views, and recurring aqua accents. Together, the property honors its historical roots and coastal setting, embodying a fresh, joyful, and serene feeling. ■

Casita: “Breaking rules pays off,” shares Nicklas. “Going with oversized pendants, a hood, and even the table and chairs, actually makes a small space feel larger than it is.” The pendants’ bold scale pairs with the warmth of the wood floor to reinforce the coastal cottage, while playful details — from wave-inspired artwork to coral-patterned pillow fabric — bring character and movement to the space. When fully opened, the custom accordion doors seamlessly connect the room to the pool, extending the living area outdoors.





Rear Elevation: Assaad points to the pool as the organizing element that stitches the main residence and the renovated structures into a cohesive whole, allowing architecture and landscape to function as a single continuous experience. “There’s complete privacy back here, and the pool is extraordinarily spacious and creative in how it interacts with the various buildings,” Assaad shares. From the pool, the home’s detailing remains fully visible, while the raised spa and bubbler introduce color, movement, and a layered sensory experience.

Outdoor Living: The rear yard mirrors the home’s architectural massing, enhancing a sense of progression. Across the fireplace, a hex tile band shimmers like water beside sandy-textured white porcelain — Nicklas’ abstracted take on beach-umbrella stripes. Driftwood sculptures the distant privacy wall, while pillow-topped teak seating on the lanai encircles an organic root-based glass table, inviting conversation.

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