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SOUTHERN ACCENT

A SOUTH CAROLINA HOME SHINES WHEN ITS BEACH-HOUSE ARCHITECTURE IS SET OFF BY JUICY COLOURS AND A DIVERSE COLLECTION OF ART.

Text by ELLEN HIMELFARB | Photography by JULIA LYNN

NAPAP AT LEAST, designer Angie Hranowsky was a curious choice for this Charleston, S.C., homeowner. The owner had painted her family’s newly built plantation-style home almost all white and wanted it to stay that way. She’d just purchased a white sectional sofa from R&B Italia for the living room. She is, for all intents and purposes, a monochrome devotee. Hranowsky, on the other hand, is a big fan of colour, purple especially. “I love purple like most people use grey,” she says. “It almost becomes a neutral for me.”

But when they met at a showroom Hranowsky decorated for Coastal Living in Charleston in 2009, owner and designer just bonded. “She and her husband had just started building their house with Mark Bragg, and she said I’d made her rethink everything.”

Hranowsky says, “She wanted to use lots of grey, black and white, and creamy floors.” Hranowsky entered the picture just in time to reverse course, suggesting lighter pietradura white oak floors and casual open shelving in the kitchen. The owner took that advice to heart, and then a year later, when construction finished, “She called and said, ‘We’ve moved in, and it’s empty. You’ve got to come over and decorate it for me!’” says Hranowsky.

The owner resolved to hand over the reins entirely. “She said, ‘Push me a bit — just don’t go too far outside my comfort zone.’” The pair agreed on the jumping-off point for the 5,600-square-foot home: a sunset-hued Buddha made entirely with bottle caps. That piece took them into a juicy palette of corals and yellows — set against a neutral backdrop — and within the limits of the owner’s comfort zone — but outside the realm of more traditional homes here in the Intracoastal Waterway. On this sultry stretch of marsh facing historic Sullivan’s Island, you’re more apt to see nautical blues and crisp whites. “But we wanted warm, inviting colours,” says Hranowsky. They introduced more colour with jeweled rugs and furnishings purchased individually, along with the artwork commissioned — all over town. Despite the overall amorphousness achieved by pairing auction-house conquests with rich, textual accessories and original art, this is above all a family home, with two children, 10 and 13, and a steady stream of visiting relatives. The sole floorboard can handle scuffs from boisterous feet. “The fabric’s work hard, hiding spills and marks from vet no-biting suits. Friends can kick back, Southern style. And the homeowner? Says Hranowsky, “She’s almost barefoot when I go over.”

LEFT: The living room sets the tone in palette and style: curated, yet seemingly over decades. Using the Buddha artwork, created in bottle caps by Molly & Scott, as inspiration, designers Angie Hranowsky brought in brass, chrome and rattan pieces straddling 20th-century eras. A peeling French door makes the space airy, while their dark stain grounds the lack. Paneled ceilings establish a beach-house vibe, and diverse artwork adds a push-pull energy. Sofa big enough to seat four. Pierre Frey.
**In the Kitchen**

**MODERN BEACH HOUSE**

*What’s New*

It has the clapboards, the paneling and the classic symmetry you’d find in a plantation-style home, but this kitchen by JimVicari doesn’t fit the mould for the definitive Southern living look. For one thing, the clapboard was discreetly diverted to the ceiling, and the paneling used on the cabinet doors is refreshingly sleek and subtle. The full-height pickled oak backsplashes were selected for the room. If this is an “exposed beam” situation, it’s a striking accent wall—and an apt complement to the fireplace focal point at the opposite end of the long, open-concept main floor.

*Why It Works*

Two sculptural ribbon chandeliers further elevate the modern beach house look beyond the practical, as keeping with the rest of the house. And yet, for all its polish, the kitchen is incredibly functional. Everything is topped with hard-wearing marble. “I love how open it is,” says Hranowsky. “It’s really inviting for people to gather around.” The owner sought out the comfortable barstools (not an easy find in the minimalist world) for their high backs and the brass nail detailing that adds a touch of personality to the seating area. State-of-the-art appliances (concealed by panelling) bring it all up to date.

*Angie Hranowsky*

**SIGNATURE STYLE** In a city noted for its 19th-century mansions, Hranowsky’s signature style combines period Georgian and Federal buildings, single-story ranch homes and modern-day homes. She’s known for her work with traditional, contemporary and modern home environments. Her spaces are also warm, inviting and timeless—exactly what a family is looking for.

**BACKSTORY** Hranowsky worked as a graphic designer before making the leap to interior design and has since been celebrated by Traditional Home magazine as one of “40 Designers To Watch” and included in Southern Living magazine’s 2012 “Top Five Tastemakers.” She has a busy list of commercial and residential clients (including a few clients) who work on spaces in diverse at South Carolina beach houses and Manhattan apartments. She’s recently launched a line of wallpaper with Studio Four NYC. Her spaces have been featured in a range of publications, from The Wall Street Journal to House Beautiful.