



BEACH HOUSE *fit for* MERMAIDS

A feminine touch in a
Rhode Island retreat

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Award-winning designer Jocelyn Chiappone of Digs Design says it's a rare treat to have free rein when it comes to designing a house with an entirely feminine aesthetic. But her client Cathy, a Boston resident, wanted her new summer home in Middletown, Rhode Island, to be an oasis for herself, her three grown daughters and her grandchildren, which meant the designer could indulge her client's own preferences.

"I would describe my personal style as spa-like, light and airy but with a pop of color and fun," says Cathy. With this in mind, Chiappone guided Cathy to choices that suited her own taste versus those more in keeping with stereotypical "beach house" décor.

"I loved incorporating elements like the ModShop glass table with lucite legs in the dining room. It makes for a wonderful juxtaposition in a beach house," says Chiappone. "Set within the context of the whole design, it really works."

To give Cathy her desired pop of color in this space, Chiappone re-upholstered Bungalow 5 loop chairs in coral and grounded the room with an aqua and blue flat weave Stark carpet. "Cathy wanted the table to accommodate large groups, but we did not want the room to feel dominated by a heavy piece. Although the table seats 12, it doesn't read as enormous," says Chiappone.

In the living room, the geometric, glass Bernhardt coffee table with a polished nickel base has a similar effect. "It is a relatively large piece that adds shine and bling without weighing down the space," says Chiappone.

On the end tables, the hand-blown glass lamps have custom shades made from the same fabric as the window treatments in the dining room. A pair of mid-century modern swivel chairs face off against two stylized, exposed wood traditional ones—establishing a somewhat eclectic vibe.

Also on the first floor, a long hallway leads to a large master suite that Cathy jokingly refers to as her "condo within the house." A celadon, hand-

knotted carpet from JD Staron sets the tone for this haven where Cathy is able to escape the frenzy of frequent houseguests.

"We used large-scale, silver leaf faux bois mirrors over the nightstands to add needed height and reflect the backyard," says Chiappone. "Smaller-scale, plaster lamps add an elegant silhouette and provide balance. We used the same fabric on the bench at the foot of the bed as we did on the custom headboard, which creates the illusion that it is all one piece."

Upstairs, Cathy's three daughters have their own en suite bedrooms, each of which Chiappone gave a distinct personality. "We kept them modern, crisp and summery," she says.

Outside the bedrooms, in the upstairs landing, the designer was able to find pieces that echo the nearby large round window—such as the circle elements in the white, lacquered Somerset Bay table and the repeating ball shapes in the ceramic and gold leaf Couture lamps. Above the table, a painting by a local artist ties the whole vignette together.

"This is actually my favorite space in the entire house," says Chiappone.

Now in her second summer season in her new home, Cathy envisions a day when she will transition here full time.

"I think together, we created a space where Cathy, her family and her many guests can be happy for years to come," says Chiappone. "This was an exciting, refreshing project for us." **H**



A large ModShop dining table paired with Bungalow 5 loop chairs provides ample seating for frequent summertime gatherings.



Tall faux bois mirrors over open nightstands create the illusion of added height and space in the master bedroom.



The calming, blue palette in the living room sets the stage for the rest of the interiors.



ABOVE: Jocelyn Chiappone of Digs Design gave each of the three guest suites its own crisp, summery personality.
LEFT TOP: A nearby round window in the upstairs hall was the inspiration for the repeating ball shapes in the lamps.
LEFT BOTTOM: The sitting area in the master suite, which Cathy refers to as her “condo within her house,” provides a retreat from the frenzy of summer.