



COMFORT ZONE

In a preview of her new book Dream Spaces, celebrated interior designer Victoria Hagan offers an exclusive look at her designs for a gorgeous Hamptons beach house.

by JEAN NAYAR photography by WILLIAM WALDRON

PALETTE PERFECT

The soft, sandy tones and diverse textures serve as counterpoints to the outdoor colors and elements of the oceanfront home, on which Hagan collaborated with architect Timothy Bryant and the landscape architecture firm Doyle Herman Design Associates. Says Hagan, "There's almost no blue inside the house," whose design employs a palette of creamy whites, cool grays, and soft beige and brown tones. "All the blues are outside in the sky, the pool, and the ocean beyond, with the amazing vista off the beach."



Quietly yet emphatically recalibrating our attitudes toward design since she began her career 25 years ago, Victoria Hagan has become one of the most influential and celebrated interior designers in the country. Although she makes a point of steering clear of any one design vernacular, she has nimbly honed her own unmistakable sense of style—one that embraces a distinctly American sensibility and emanates from a modern way of living. She has also shown that she's at ease in most any context by crafting restrained, tailored, and spectacularly beautiful interiors in homes that range from a historic townhouse in Manhattan to an oceanfront family compound in Florida to a modern home on a mountain in Aspen, Colorado, to the official residence of the vice president of the United States in Washington, DC—among so many others.

Her gift, Hagan says in the introduction to her newest book,



BEACHSIDE

"Everyone loves being by the pool and the kitchen, and of course the house is special in that it's on the beach. It doesn't get better than that," Hagan says. "So I tapped into low-key qualities about the Hamptons—family, nature, ocean breezes, the mystery and power of the ocean, the quality of light during different times of day, even the different moods on stormy versus sunny days." With these ideas in mind, the designer recast the entire residence but focused mainly on the kitchen, the home's heart. She expanded it to include a massive island and refreshed it with sensible materials, like Pietra Cardosa stone countertops; a Corian-topped table; and cerused, wire-brushed oak floors that extend throughout the house.

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PLAYING WITH SCALES

Given the home's relationship to its dramatic natural setting, the designer established a peaceful accord between indoors and out through juxtapositions of scale. "The kitchen is very big and opens to views of the water and breezes and nature outside, but the study nearby is smaller and cozier," Hagan says. "Big spaces are balanced with intimate areas to honor different feelings and experiences."



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COMFORT AND JOY

"There are five places to dine here," says Hagan, who sees this as a "happy, fun, active house." Thus the accent in all these settings is on comfort, including the Hagan-designed chairs in the dining room. "The secret to a good dinner is comfortable chairs," she says, noting the soft club chairs in the living spaces

and the soft linens and chenilles in the bedrooms, which also yield a "yin and yang" quality in the house against the harder surfaces throughout. But a gorgeous home refresh always needs one more element.

"Projects aren't finished until people are laughing and entertaining and living in the home," Hagan says. And the good vibes emanating from within this home clearly suggest a job well done.





Dream Spaces (to be published by Rizzoli this October), “is the ability to coax opportunity out of the process.” Her aim, she explains, is always to make her clients’ dreams a reality. In doing so, she relies on her surefire instincts to bring a multiplicity of elements—context, materials, lifestyle, attitudes—into a flawless whole. “I look at homes as they are and imagine what they might be,” says the award-winning designer, who is also known for VH Collections—her handcrafted American-made furniture, fabric, and rug lines—which debuted in 2002 and are available at designer showrooms across the country. “I do this both in my career as well as for what I call ‘my sport.’ I love to find the beauty in things, no matter how far down you need to dig.” As such, distilled through Hagan’s rarefied lens, each new space—while invariably grounded in classicism—is unique and often exuberant, with traditional elements mingling artfully with modern ones in unexpected yet reassuring ways.

Like all of the extraordinary interiors in the dreamy getaway homes in her new book, the rooms she crafted for this soulful beachside abode are crisp and clean, with a timeless American spirit. They also effortlessly blend luxury with a relaxed sense of comfort—which are additional inevitable by-products of Hagan’s rigorous and thoughtful approach to design. “People think design is about decorating,” she says. “But for me, it’s about all these other ideas, like the feel, the mood, the setting, and how the clients want to live.” And in this inviting home perched high on an oceanfront bluff, where it seems you can see from Southampton to Montauk, the emphasis is on comfort, family, and the beach. victoriahagan.com ■



IN THE MIX

A mix of contemporary, midcentury, and traditional furnishings, including pieces Hagan designed herself, keep the rooms relaxed and timeless. “I always tap into classic sensibilities but react to a modern lifestyle,” she says. “Design is about moving forward.” Here, refreshed vintage favorites, tables made of reclaimed wood, rope and wood benches, wool and jute rugs, and “wet-bathing-suit-proof” brushed cotton upholstery all contribute durable warmth.