

# COASTAL LIVING

**COASTAL  
STYLE  
YOUR WAY**

Real beach homes  
with 100s of  
inspiring ideas

**SECRET  
BEACH TOWNS  
YOU'LL LOVE**

**Our (easy!)  
Thanksgiving  
around  
the grill, p. 90**

INFINITY POOLS,  
HAMMOCKS,  
AND VILLAS WITH A  
VIEW ON ST. LUCIA,  
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# 18 DREAM ESCAPES

**THE SEXIEST SEASIDE RESORTS AND  
QUIET ISLAND GETAWAYS**

NOVEMBER 2010





DARK WOOD  
CEILINGS AND SIMPLE  
IRON FIXTURES  
LEND CARIBBEAN  
CHARM

The outdoor-fabric  
slipcovers on the dining  
chairs are removed  
during colder months to  
let the dark wood shine.

# STYLISH

*at the beach!*





The courtyard staircase leads to the main living area.



Deborah and James Stewart



## ABOUT THE HOUSE

**STYLE** A Dutch Colonial-shaped, white plaster exterior and largely British Colonial interior that combine for Old World ambience

**SPACE** 3,300 square feet with four bedrooms, four full and two half baths, plus smartly intimate outdoor spaces

**SETTING** Alys Beach, a development of low-impact homes on Florida's Gulf Coast

**VIEW** From the roof deck, pedestrian and bike traffic (especially during sunsets!) with the sweeping Gulf of Mexico beyond

Colonial interior within their home. Deborah and James Stewart lived for five years in West Africa and returned to the U.S. from Africa, where I traveled extensively with Deborah and James. "I fell in love with the area and the lifestyle," says James. The Alys Beach community, with





## LIVING ROOM

**second level +  
subtle geometry +  
beachy stripes**

Wide windows and complete privacy don't usually go hand-in-hand for homes on streets lined with houses. Because the Stewarts wanted both, Michael placed the living room on the second floor to provide ample natural light without putting the residents on display for passersby. "The house is built on a narrow lot, so the large window makes a grand gesture to spatially expand the living room," he says.

## BREEZEWAY

**louvered shutters +  
smart shading + large doors**

At the beach it's all about outdoor living, so Michael designed an alfresco walkway that leads to an extra-casual second-floor veranda. The space serves as an all-season family hangout with shutters that funnel cool drafts from the ocean to the breezeway and downstairs courtyard, keeping all three areas pleasant throughout the day. Running adjacent to the walkway on the house's interior is an upstairs hallway. Michael connected the two spaces with large doors rather than windows to give the upstairs increased ventilation and free-streaming natural light.



## KITCHEN

**charcoal tones + cool mint backsplash + Spanish-style tile**

The kitchen extends from the living/dining rooms and takes advantage of light from the large, wide-open window. The dark colors are intentional—charcoal Spanish-Mexican encaustic tile adds subtly exotic flavor that's a welcome break from brilliant outdoor rays. The tile inspired the room's gray palette and introduced a hint of mint, picked up in the porcelain backsplash, that alludes to the green Gulf waters outside. Michael and Marcus counteracted the space's small dimensions by also opting for shiny stainless steel appliances and a light-colored vent hood that keep the room from feeling cramped.

### MEET THE DESIGNERS

## Marcus Mohon & Michael Imber

Both native Texans with an appreciation for classical design and decor, Marcus and Michael formed Mohon-Imber Interiors in 2002 with the shared vision that interiors should work with architecture, not against it. Since then, the two have designed





chic when not in use. SHOP THE  
LOOK: Fire Balls, blazingglass.com  
■ **IN SPRING AND FALL** Louvered  
shutters allow for privacy and  
protection from the elements but  
still allow outside breezes to flow.





## KID'S BEDROOM

**fine iron +  
calming blue-green +  
sweet nautical notes**

In this ready-for-a-slumber party room, a hint of dark metal—a serious (but not too heavy!) detail—grounds everything, from lamps to twin trundle beds, countering the curves of the house's interior doorways and white plaster exterior. The opposite wall has an identical bed, meaning the room can comfortably sleep four kids. For a touch of coastal character, Marcus painted the walls in Benjamin Moore's Woodlawn Blue (HC-147), and then scattered simple nautical accessories throughout the space—from the graphic sailboat painting (found at a Pottery Barn outlet) to a freestanding toy buoy and wide-striped blue throw pillows.



## MASTER SUITE

**vaulted plank ceiling +  
sage-colored paint +  
British Colonial furnishings**

The simple wood vaulted ceiling in the master bedroom is painted a soft sage color to create a soothing space for seaside slumber. Marcus kept the British Colonial theme strong, adding an ornately carved four-poster bed with cane head- and footboards that reflect traditional English design mixed with exotic





"This house gives you clues to a faraway lifestyle that you've always dreamed of living. It's an exotic feeling that's very subtle" —ARCHITECT MICHAEL IMBER

The Stewarts' enviable sunset-viewing spot looks over a broad expanse of sand and sea grasses to the Gulf of Mexico horizon.