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Interior designer Melanie Turner initially bought the Oly glass-globe chandelier without a specific project in mind; it soon found its perfect home in the entry hall of the Rosemary Beach retreat she and husband Stan Benecki fashioned for an Atlanta family.



SERENE RETREAT

*MELANIE TURNER AND STAN BENECKI FASHION A LIGHT
AND BRIGHT ROSEMARY BEACH BEAUTY*



WRITTEN BY
Lydia Somerville

STYLED BY
Thea Beasley

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
Mali Azima

Venetian plaster walls gleam in the combination living/dining room and kitchen. A Nourison rug comprised of hide stripes echoes the colors of the marble countertop and cabinet surround.

A bright, minimalist dining room with a white marble table, white chairs, and coral wall art. The room features a large window with white curtains, a white pleather sofa, and a collection of coral wall art. The table is set with a wooden bowl of green limes and two white ceramic vases. A pair of chandeliers is visible in the background.

A pair of concrete-topped tables by Bradley are pushed together to seat 16 people comfortably in the dining area. Lee Industries chairs are covered in white pleather. A collection of coral appears to drift into a current across the wall, *opposite* A pair of chandeliers by Oly take center stage in the expansive kitchen island.



WALKING INTO THIS RECENTLY COMPLETED Rosemary Beach house designed by Melanie Turner is a bit like stepping into an intoxicating dream cushioned with bright sunshine. The all-white scheme dazzles, blurring distinctions between walls, floors, surfaces and textiles.

As your eyes adjust to take in the details, you notice touches such as the luster of the Venetian plaster walls, the veining of stone and marble and the textures of coral and agate. The three-story house, designed by Lew Oliver and built by Turner's husband, Stan Benecki, is one of many houses the duo has designed, built and furnished together.

Benecki calls on top-notch architects for the plans and employs craftspeople he hires in for each project—masons, plasterers and roofers whose collective expertise shows in

the precise fitting of each molding and eave. "We build each house as if it was for us," says Turner. "And we include everything we love, because we build houses we'd want to live in."

When the new owners arrive for the first time, they find the house complete right down to artwork and accessories. The baths are stocked with towels and toothbrushes, the beds crisply made. It's a turnkey operation that has resulted in a series of luxury properties bearing witness to the couple's exacting standards and impeccable taste.

This most recent example, bought by Atlantans Bert Sanders and Laura Koch, comfortably accommodates 16 for hosting their blended family, but is intimate enough for just the two of them. For an all-white scheme, it's also incredibly easy to maintain. "I covered much of the furniture in white



A sisal rug, sheer drapery panels and a tufted linen headboard add warmth to the clean, white master bedroom. *opposite*: A grouping of framed crystals from Soicher Marin hang above a driftwood side table and a pair of slipcovered chairs.



pleather,” says Turner of the dining area and living room, which extend across the back of the house. In the adjacent kitchen area, all of the inner workings are concealed behind flush cabinetry with inset hardware. The effect is calming, with even the island clad entirely in marble, its waterfall edge extending to the floor. Speakers are built into the plaster walls so that music seems to emanate from an invisible source.

Benecki points out that, as people spend more time in their second homes, they’re more in need of the requisite amenities of a primary residence. “So we put in large closets and laundry rooms,” he says, “as well as an area for kids to hang out away from the adults.” The top floor serves just such a need, with six bunks lining the walls and an open ex-

panse of floor for playing with toys and games. Turner opted to swath the walls in a bird-print Schumacher wallpaper, which introduces a youthful dose of color and softens the angles of the room’s dormers.

The indoor living area connects seamlessly with the pool deck, thanks to wide French doors and broad steps leading outdoors. On a recent afternoon, Sanders and Koch carried on a conversation, she standing at the kitchen island and he responding from a chaise by the water. The couple joked that the high-tech control system was cool indeed, but that they had no idea how to use it. No doubt they’ll figure it out. And if they don’t, Benecki is right down the street, starting on his next dream house. *See Resources, Back of Book.*





above Turner and pup Scooter soak in this Rosemary Beach beauty's abundant sunshine. *left* To soften the bunk room's angles, Turner covered the walls in a whimsical bird-print wallpaper by Schumacher.

"WE BUILD EACH HOUSE AS IF IT WAS FOR US," SAYS INTERIOR DESIGNER MELANIE TURNER. "AND WE INCLUDE EVERYTHING WE LOVE, BECAUSE WE BUILD HOUSES WE WOULD WANT TO LIVE IN."



clockwise, from top A trio of brackets holding coral specimens hangs over a bed made with crisp white linens. Mirrored chests flanking the bed contribute to the light and bright feel. In the master bath, Turner clad the walls

in strips of granite in a chevron pattern, mimicking the look of wood. A stainless steel tub makes an elegant statement. Geodes add extra sparkle and echo the texture of coral elsewhere in the house.



Tailored cabinet hardware adds distinctive geometry to the chevron-patterned walls and floor of the master bath.

