



# COMFORT ZONE

BEACHY ACCENTS AND PERSONAL TOUCHES  
MAKE A FAMILY FEEL RIGHT AT HOME ON  
BALD HEAD ISLAND, NORTH CAROLINA

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The driftwood seahorse in the entry is from homeowner Tiffany McWhorter's Bald Head Island shop, Room Service. The bench is from Dovetail Furniture.

Tiffany purchased the dining area's wooden table from a neighbor and painted it white. The chairs are from Dovetail Furniture, and the two lamps behind the sofa are from Lampworks.



THE STYLE OF THE HOME WAS DIRECTED BY ONE SEA-INSPIRED PIECE IN PARTICULAR: A GLASS-AND-SEASHELL CHANDELIER

The kitchen's pendants are by Louise Gaskill. The bar chairs are from Dovetail Furniture, and the rug is by Dash & Albert.



She called it **The Blue Pearl.**

The lonely cottage that rose from the beach grass on the banks of Bald Head Island was painted a delicate shade of sea foam blue, and it had been a must-see on Tiffany McWhorter's jogging route for years. "I was in love," she says. "It was sitting there sad and vacant, but I knew it had so much potential. It was one of those things I always thought I'd only dream about owning."

Fortunately, some dreams do come true. After the four-bedroom house sat untouched on the market for years, the list price came down—and Tiffany and her husband, Fred, a home remodeler, were first in line to buy it. "We knew that it needed to be totally renovated on the inside," says Tiffany, who runs a home decor shop on the island. "But that's what attracted us to it. We could start from scratch and turn it into an incredible home for our family."

The couple tackled the project together, starting with the home's dark Ponderosa pine-clad shell. "It looked like an old hunting lodge inside," says Fred. Adds Tiffany, "I don't think anything had been updated since the '80s, but the structure wasn't necessarily in bad shape." So, rather than stripping the walls and ceilings completely, they opted to cover them with glossy white paint, ridding the home of its cave-like feel

and instantly brightening the rooms. To make the interiors more beach-friendly, Fred replaced wall-to-wall carpeting with oak floors washed in a weathered gray.

The layout—a wide-open living space flanked on both sides by wings featuring two bedrooms and baths each—was just right for the couple and their teenage daughters, Carson and Wallis, except for one minor setback: a small, galley-style kitchen. "Our world centers around cooking," says Tiffany. "If we're not outside, we're usually in the kitchen, so we needed enough room to work." To increase square footage without taking away from the living and dining rooms, the McWhorters took down an exterior wall and borrowed space from a screened-in porch. The kitchen was completely gutted of its dark-pine cabinetry, replaced with modern materials like a granite-topped island, stainless steel countertops and appliances, and a mosaic backsplash. "We chose a shimmery white tile because it reminded me of the pearly shells we pick up at the beach," says Tiffany.

Jars filled with those pearly shells are one of many beachy items that Tiffany used to decorate the interiors—in fact, the style of the home was directed by one sea-inspired piece in particular: a glass-and-seashell chandelier she had specially made by North Carolina artist Louise Gaskill for the dining





The wicker coffee table is from Room Service. Below: The guest bedroom headboard is from Sac Art in Wilmington.

**TOUR IT, BEFORE AND AFTER!**  
 Download the free Digimarc Discover app and scan this photo with your smartphone to watch a video tour of this house and hear interviews with the McWhorters, or visit [coastalliving.com/makeovervideo](http://coastalliving.com/makeovervideo)



room. “I asked the artist to use vintage blue glass to bring in the colors of the ocean,” she says. “Then I planned the subtle blue and green accents throughout the rest of the home around that piece.” Shades of sea foam, teal, and blue punctuate the living areas—from a pair of glass table lamps to a collection of vibrant tableware in the dining room display cabinet—and flow into the bedrooms, where the master’s blue-and-green patterned duvet and accent pillows add a lively touch. “I kept the decor simple but comfortable,” says Tiffany. “I didn’t want any one element to take away from the views. What’s important is what’s out those windows.”

That’s where you’ll catch the family exploring the island by bike together, or admiring the sunset while hunting for shells. “We’ll often see dolphins or huge ships sailing by from the shore,” says Fred. “The view just goes on forever.” The beach is what brought the McWhorters to Bald Head Island many years ago, and it’s where Tiffany snagged what would become her most prized possessions in the home today: framed black-and-white family photos she took when her daughters were young. “The girls have grown up here,” she says. “Having those personal photos reminds me of all the great memories we’ve had on the island.” And The Blue Pearl is sure to provide for many more. **For more information, see Sources, page 119.**

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The master bedroom nightstand is from Revival Antiques in Raleigh; the bench is a family heirloom.