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open invitation

A DESIGNER FASHIONS A COLORFUL COASTAL RETREAT WITH A CONTEMPORARY BUT CASUAL VIBE READY TO HOST LARGE GATHERINGS AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE.

WRITTEN BY **KIMBERLY OLSON** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KIM SARGENT**

Seeking a warm respite from their primary residence in Short Hills, New Jersey, one couple just couldn't pass up a condominium they found in Delray Beach. A few blocks from the ocean and steps from bustling Atlantic Avenue and its bounty of restaurants, boutiques and galleries, its location was ideal, but its interiors were in sad shape—with weary cabinets and flooring, and finishes that were decades old. So, the couple had the home gutted and enlisted designer Cindy West Ray to help transform it into a contemporary beach retreat. "They're a really hip couple," Ray says. "They wanted to open it up and make it functional for entertaining. And they're family-oriented, so they designated rooms for their two children, who are grown but visit often. The wife has a great eye and wonderful taste, but she wasn't sure what to do with the space."

The biggest challenge was making the best use of the condo's long, narrow living room, which needed to perform various functions. "The owners wanted to have an eat-in area, a media space and room for a bar; they love to sit and have a cocktail when they entertain," says Ray,

INTERIOR DESIGN Cindy West Ray, Cindy Ray Interiors, Incorporated
HOME BUILDER Mitch Gold, Derco Construction Inc.
BEDROOMS 3 | BATHROOMS 3 | SQUARE FEET 2,500



The once-dated kitchen was gutted and refashioned to maximize space and serve the homeowners' needs, with modern amenities such as a wall oven and built-in coffee maker from House of Appliances. A sink and faucet from Ferguson Enterprises look crisp paired with the Vetrazzo countertop. Michelle Y Williams' mixed-media piece brings color to the neutral space.

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who received assistance from Mark E. Flora. She used back-to-back sofas to divide the main part of the space in two, creating a TV area on one side and an intimate cocktail conversation area on the other.

To further the multipurpose concept, "We tore down the wall between the kitchen and dining room, so it all became one space," says Mitch Gold, who helmed the build with Mike DeRosa and John Coyle. "We also enlarged the opening between the kitchen and the living room, to give the kitchen a more airy feel." That gap became a pass-through to a sleek bar that runs along the wall of the conversation pit. Next, windows were replaced with French or sliding doors. Now, during parties, the couple can open the glass French door onto the terrace to create a free-flowing indoor-outdoor space.





The dining room's custom banquette, sporting a tufted back in Holly Hunt suede, is centered between two blue-lacquered cabinets and Dunes and Duchess candelabras. The table is hugged by rib-back chairs from Sklar Furnishings that conjure an ocean liner, all beneath limited-edition prints by Dermond Peterson. Vintage nautical pendants provide illumination.



A sofa in Donghia's silk mohair offers a comfortable lounging spot for cocktails and conversation in the bar area. The slipper chair brings in the homeowner's favored blue, while the painted tables add an element of playfulness. A Merida woven jute rug connects this space to the adjacent media area. Furnishings were sourced through designer Cindy West Ray's firm.



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The master bath, like the living room, also needed a renovation. “The wall between the master bathroom and closet was removed, and we used that whole space for the new bathroom,” Gold says. “Then Cindy designed a gorgeous wall-to-wall built-in that houses their clothes.”

Next, Ray got to work on the palette, keeping it generally subdued but adding lively bursts of color. “When we first met, the homeowner had a Lanvin purse with her that was a little more teal than simply blue—patent leather, a big tote,” Ray recalls. “She said, ‘I want to use this color with gray.’ So that was the inspiration for the base colors—neutrals, grays and whites, with that beautiful blue shade as an accent along with pops of orange and other bright hues.”

While the furnishings have clean, modern shapes, Ray incorporated rich textures throughout the home. “There’s leather, mohair, suede—textiles that make everything warmer,” she says. “The coffee tables in the bar area consist of reclaimed wood blocks that have had layers and layers of paint applied to them over the years. There’s a little bit of rustic and a little bit of glam, and that’s the client’s preference. When she dresses, she’s hip and current, but she also appreciates the



The guest bathroom features custom cabinetry with plenty of storage designed by Ray. The countertop is from Pompeii Quartz in Naples. The sink and faucets are from Ferguson Enterprises, as is the oval mirror, which is flanked on both sides by Boyd Lighting's polished nickel sconces with white parchment shades from Jerry Pair.

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eclecticism of, say, jewelry from India and pearls mixed in with her wardrobe. I think her personality really comes through in this design."

The condo was finished off with plenty of custom millwork, including tongue-and-groove ceilings. "The wife loved that detail as a nod to a beach house," Ray says. To emphasize the seaside feeling, Ray used nautically inspired lighting, evident in the fixtures over the dining room table. "At night, and when you turn on those lights and dim them down, the condo has such a nice soft glow to it," Gold says. "It has a contemporary look, but it also has a wonderful blend of homeyness and warmth." **L**





Silver-gilded Weitzner Limited wallpaper from Donghia glistens above the custom bed, with its tufted headboard covered in Ultrasuede, in one of the guest bedrooms. The bed is dressed with a vintage suzani blanket and velvet pillows, both from Ray's shop on Antique Row in West Palm Beach along with the floor lamp. The bench and blue velvet chair were also sourced through Ray.