



Kips Bay show house offers bold, tropical design ideas

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In the "casita" guest quarters over the garage at the Kips Bay Decorator Show House Palm Beach, the colors in the breakfast room and kitchen were inverted by Catherine M. Austin Interior Designs of Charlotte, North Carolina. The "true green" ceiling in the dining space is mirrored in the cabinetry in the kitchenette, while the yellow ceiling in the kitchenette is picked up in the fabrics used in the breakfast room. NICOLAS SARGENT/NICOLAS SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY

A bright spot

Kips Bay show house in West Palm offers bold, tropical design ideas

Christine Davis Special to Palm Beach Post | USA TODAY NETWORK

How might you define "tropical style"? Let 24 design pros count the ways. • As they re-envisioned the rooms in this year's Kips Bay Decorator Show House Palm Beach, the decorators applied colors and motifs of the tropics in ways that ranged from the brightly saturated to the neutral, from the bold and the brilliant to the soothing and the soft — you name it, and it was there. • And there's hardly a white ceiling — or room for that matter — in the historic home that stands in the Old Northwood neighborhood of West Palm Beach. [See KIPS BAY, Page 3D](#)

Kips Bay

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The fifth-annual fundraiser is a satellite of the venerable Kips Bay Decorator Show House in New York and is open for tours—in person and virtually—through April 3. It benefits Boys & Girls Clubs of Palm Beach County and the Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club in The Bronx in New York City.

Here's our tour of the project, which doesn't necessarily follow the floor plan but instead groups together a few decorating themes we discovered as we chatted with the designers while walking the house, the guest quarters and the grounds.

Strong statements: Super-saturated color

Enter the foyer and stair hall and you might feel submerged in the ocean deep, thanks to what Joan Craig calls her "Octopus's Garden."

The sumptuous blue-green walls serve as a backdrop for sea-life motifs painted in white plaster—and then inset and overlaid with shells and objects from the ocean. The effect brings to mind the charming silhouettes of a sailor's valentine.

Look to one side of the foyer and you'll see Palm Beach resident Jim Dove's jewel-toned "Monkey Bar," which was featured previously in the Palm Beach Daily News, and Robert Brown's intimate sitting room. The latter is enveloped in bold mural panels in chocolate, rust and gold with a ceiling painted a dark blue. "I wanted the ceiling to disappear," Brown explained.

Look to the other side of the foyer, and the drawing room by Peter Pernoyer Architects is nothing short of juicy. The walls are covered in a lush, saturated green cloth, overlaid with hand-painted lemon trees. "The inspiration was Florida's citrus groves," said Alice Engel, director of interior design for the architecture firm.

Designer Noz Nozawa, Noz Designs of San Francisco, interpreted a Palm Beach look using pastels and deeper hues in her "No Bad Mondays" sitting room, which opens to the primary bedroom upstairs. Nozawa immersed the room in "blac-bender-pink, paired unexpectedly with tomato red," she said.

In the "casita"—the guest quarters above the garage—Catherine Austin's "Jewel of the Jungle" room and palm-fond green kitchen echo a "Costa Rica moment," the designer said. The walls in

the main area are lined in CW Stockwell and Voutsa's Martinique Celebration wallpaper, featuring an iconic banana-leaf design with a brilliantly recolored palette inspired by Henri Matisse: "vibrant red, cobalt blue, sunshine yellow and every color in the rainbow," Austin said.

Back in the main area, color was a mainstay in the bathrooms and the primary's suite's closet. In the primary bathroom designed by Nikki Levy, deep-green vertical fluted ceramic tile set the tone. In seven phases, the "Closet Reimagined" by designer Barbara Lewis serves the primary bedroom. The decor was inspired by the lush color and palm trees of Palm Beach.

And you'll find more blue in Andrea Schumacher's "Flutter" powder room, which pays homage to Palm Beach's vibrant skies.

Gentle approach: Soft and breezy getaways

A covered terrace designed by Amanda Reynal employs a color palette of pink, green and yellow. Reynal, who has a home in West Palm Beach and family ties to Palm Beach, set off her terrace with a scalloped awning, demure tassels and coquillage.

In soothing green and white, Paloma Contreras' "Green Gardens" sunroom is clad in trellage and accented by a dertal valance that recalls tenting.

Designer Tish Mills is known for her Zen-like spaces, she said. And for her "Home Office Hideaway," she chose as the backdrop Riples, a textural wallpaper by Philip Jeffries. The swirling pattern in gray resembles the rise and fall of the ocean as it pulls away from the shoreline, she said.

For contrast: A white-and-gray kitchen

Unusual for this house is the predominantly white—and sleek—kitchen with accents of gray and brass. Designed by Baltes & Kropp Fine Cabinetry, the kitchen includes color, cabinets and other choices that pleased the husband-and-wife homeowners, Stephen Quinair and Isabella Polanco. And something else unusual is fun and useful: Shallow cabinets are lighted from within, which would make sneaking a midnight snack a snap.

Look up! Ceiling treatments are stars

In her "Wonderland Dining Room," Beth Diana Smith alludes to—who else?

If you go

What: The Kips Bay Decorator Show House Palm Beach

Where: A 1923 house known as "The Mansion" at 3031 Spruce Ave. in West Palm Beach. Health protocols are strictly observed, according to the organizers.

Hours: 10 a.m.—4 p.m. daily for in-person tours through April 3

Tickets: Advance general admission tickets \$40; virtual-tour tickets \$20

Info: KipsBayDecoratorShowhouse.org

—Alice in Wonderland. Whimsical wallpaper panels within the room's brightly pigmented coffered ceiling feature fun and fantastic flora and fauna. The overall color scheme is a mélange of pink, red, blue and green. "It's a bit of a mix. I didn't do a very traditional color palette, and in a whimsical room, you wouldn't," Smith said.

Ashley Gilbreath chose a neutral palette for her primary bedroom, which she described as a "tented retreat." It features walls draped in brown-and-white stripes set off with a tented ceiling. Testing the ceiling and walls is "soft and cozy," Gilbreath said, "but there was a legitimate reason for it. We had architectural elements we had to hide."

With subtle exotic elements, Sarah Barthokomov's boudoir is tented, too. She chose gray and white for the color scheme and explains that she was inspired by the Brighton Pavilion in England.

Tiffany Brooks' "Bloom Lounge" is drenched in chaireuse—a fun green—paired with sky blue and white. She also painted the ceiling. "I can't leave a ceiling untouched," she said. "It has to be in keeping with the room and keeping (this one) white would have been a mistake."

In his "Sala Exotica"—or "exotic room"—designer Philip Gortwein tapped his ceiling in what appear to be interlocking 3-D architectural blocks, an ode to Brutalist design. The deep-mauve ceiling kicked off his color palette of tobacco and creams, with pops of jewel-like purples and greens.

Marilyn Damsor and Mel Jones Jr.'s second-floor "Toddler's Haven" emphasizes the dramatic and the natural, Jones said. "We want you to look straight out the windows and then come back in. This room feels like a tree house, and the ceiling is painted to imply the sky, he said, "but with a different drama." Don't look for sky blue here, he cautioned. "That's been done a million times."

In the casita, Chris Milton stripes over the top in his living room with hand-



Andrea Schumacher Interiors of Denver's "Flutter" powder room features a wallpaper from the design firm's own line as well as an installation of wall-mounted faux butterflies by Paul Villinski. The vanity is a custom design. The firm also has a studio in Santa Barbara, California. NICOLAS SARGENT/NICOLAS SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY

painted draped walls. The ceiling he created is coffered and lacquered in brilliant blue. "Vibrance is key," Goddard said. In the rest of the room, the color palette contains "heavily saturated jewel tones, heavy on the purples, blues and citrons."

With lush, wine-red walls and a ceiling papered in a geometric design of dark burgundy and purple accented by black and white, Kelly Finley's luxurious suite in the casita is wrapped in color.

A fresh take: The great outdoors

Robert Bell's garden design incorporates lush outdoor rooms that progress around the house, moving from the reception area to more quiet contemplative spaces—and then to more modern-style areas that include a pebbled courtyard with a background pattern. With a vacation home on Singer Island in Riviera Beach, Bell well understands the climate and soil demands of South Florida's landscapes.

Designer Julie Moler framed the pool area in pink and white, from the stripes on the entertaining pavilion to the vintage floral pattern on the sun umbrellas.

And designer Alecia Johnson's outdoor room—with a fireplace—has a color scheme of black, white and pink. "It's chic and doesn't compete with the greenery," Johnson said.