

# ESCAPE *to* EDEN

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Designer **SUMMER THORNTON** recasts a former spec house in Naples, Florida, as a deeply personal—and eternally warm—family hub, setting it aglow in solar shades from salmon to sunset.

In the entry, schools of fish glide across pearlescent wallcoverings (de Gournay). The Anglo-Indian padauk table is an antique. Abaca rug, Patterson Flynn Martin



## Immersed in enchantment.

That's the feeling Summer Thornton had in mind for this sunny Naples, Florida, home, starting with a foyer wallpapered in full-on fish. "You walk in and are immediately submerged in this silver-leafed underwater scene," says the Chicago-based designer. In subtle Art Deco elegance, the sheen on the de Gournay pattern dazzles and shimmies as the sun shifts. "The light catches the colors differently, as if the koi are moving. It's magical and fun," she adds.

And yet the floor-to-ceiling scene was a bit of a hard sell, even for these fellow Chicago-based clients, who are "pretty adventurous, willing to do things others are not," says Thornton. The wife in particular is drawn to whimsy, color, and pattern, but she was initially hesitant.

Today, she sees it as one more measure of enchantment in a home that has, in recent months, morphed from vacation home to full-time residence. "When

you're from the frozen tundra, as we are," Thornton says, "you crave a tropical fantasy."

It was a spec house when they bought it, and they lived in it for a year or so (splitting time between Florida and Illinois) as Thornton created a design scheme that better reflected the couple's colorful, inviting energy. The home's spacious footprint generally worked, but to get it more in sync with how the owners planned to use it, Thornton overhauled the kitchen and owners' suite, transformed a room over the garage into a delightful lime-striped "cabana" retreat, and embellished finishes throughout.

For instance, the wife knew her extended Italian family would be gathering here each Easter and Thanksgiving—and making a lot of ravioli. "There are 10 of us around this big counter, a full assembly line with two pasta rollers, a meatball station, and my mother's recipes," says the wife. Anchoring the



A radiant Florida lanai: Canvas seat cushions (Perennials) in sunshine yellow dress wicker porch seating.

OPPOSITE: Interior designer Summer Thornton. Silver-leaf and embossed tin mirror, Casamidy



A tufted indigo sectional (fabric, Jasper) turns the study into a corner hideaway. Khotan rug, Mansour Modern



Linen panels (Raoul Textiles) drape an iron-and-walnut bed (S&L Designs). Sofa trim, Samuel & Sons

BELOW: Tented striped wallpaper (Farrow & Ball) transforms a space over the garage into cabana-style guest quarters.

OPPOSITE TOP: Gauzy block-printed drapery (Muriel Brandolini) filters sunlight into the great room. Sofas, Montauk Sofa

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: A grid of coral stone pavers creates a tidy path into a U-shaped entry courtyard and allée of palms.



busy kitchen is a centerpiece Lacanche range (where they also roast four big birds) and custom blue-tinted hood. Hand-painted botanical wallpaper blossoms along the perimeter, protected behind the range by a thin glass pane. “The backsplash is one of my favorite things,” says Thornton, who paired this burst of tropical pattern with pale sherbet raffia walls and white oak latticework built-ins. Leather bar stools add masculine heft. “A nice balance to the femininity of the wallpaper,” notes the designer.

That yin-yang of masculine and feminine is echoed throughout the home, as a palette of citrusy hues, kiwi, and apricot (colors reminiscent of Naples in its 1940s heyday) is anchored by darker British Colonial pieces and antique rugs, which the husband loves. “Their tastes are a dichotomy: darker, richer, and more formal for him; lighter and airier for her. Our goal was to achieve a balance,” says Thornton. “Mixing old and new, traditional and contemporary, gives weight to a newer home and allows us to go further with color and pattern.”

A white plaster chandelier in the dining room is “our spin on a classic Florida motif without being cliché,” says Thornton, and in the adjacent great room, seating is maximized with a pair of crisp white sofas covered in Perennials fabric and a conversation area



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Behind a Lacanche range, a glass pane protects hand-painted tropical wallpaper (de Gournay). Leather stool upholstery, Moore & Giles

BELOW: Pool loungers, Sutherland. Umbrellas, Sunbeam Jackie



## ENDLESS SUMMER

1 Alan Campbell's batik-inspired suncloth (for Quadrielle) on Sunbrella fabric makes for a tony outdoor parlor. 2 Thornton's muses: natural woven textures, ocean ephemera, and native flora and fauna (top left, Bayou Moss by Raoul Textiles; bottom center, Scrolling Fern Frond by Soane Britain). 3 A guest room's hammered metal bed is by Bunny Williams Home. 4 & 8 Graphic flooring tile in the primary bath marries limestone with gray and mahogany marble (Paris Ceramics). Burnished cast-iron tub, Waterworks. 5 A Salvador Dalí series of fruit paintings (Galerie Philia) hangs in the living room reading nook. 6 On the lanai, hand-painted Lobmeyr Persian glassware. 7 The kitchen's pièce de résistance: ceiling-height white oak cabinetry with lattice door panels



that extends onto the lanai. By removing a closet by the living room fireplace, she was able to carve out an additional reading nook, complete with Salvador Dalí fruit prints that are “wonderfully strange up close,” Thornton says. The alcove is another of the wife’s favorite spots. “I forced this big Italian family on my husband,” she laughs. “We needed a place large enough for our whole clan to gather, but Summer has a way of tucking small, cozy spaces inside big rooms, so we’re comfortable if there are dozens of people here or just the two of us.”

Should one need a more removed spot away from all that family togetherness, the owners’ bedroom is a lush oasis. Bright lemony splashes enliven the light-filled retreat, where Thornton selected a Gracie painted paper and intense Loro Piana yellow wool for the drapes. The primary bath is another harmonious blend of the weight the husband likes (handsome stone floors, walnut reeded cabinets) and airiness the wife prefers (white panel walls, Raoul Textiles “swamp toile” drapery around the nickel-plated Waterworks tub). “They joke about adding a doorbell because they lock themselves in this suite,” Thornton says.

“It’s extraordinary,” affirms the husband. “Every morning when I open my eyes, I can’t believe I get to live here.” ♦

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—DESIGNER SUMMER THORNTON

