

Take Two: ON THE WATERFRONT

THE SEQUEL TO A DREAM

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T

hey say timing is everything. Sara Balas Densen was with her client, looking at a more than 5,000-square-foot waterfront home in Juno Beach. Densen, a real estate agent with The Balas Group/ReMax, was trying to convince her client that this was one of the best homes on the market. In fact, Densen and her husband, a film producer, had spent months looking at the property online themselves, wishful thinking as the price continued to drop.

“And then my client, out of the blue, turns to me and says, ‘This house is really meant for your family,’” she recalls. At first, Densen brushed off the comment. But it replayed in her mind.

Densen and her husband had recently completed an overhaul of a “short sale” home purchased in 2013. The home had literally been gutted. Were they ready to start a new project?

“It was not an easy decision,” Densen says. “Literally, we had put our blood, sweat and tears into our first home. But this Juno Beach home really was perfect. I was torn, do we start all over?”

The first home’s design had been adroitly handled by Krista Watterworth Alterman of Krista + Home.

“In the end, we made an offer, called Krista and said, ‘Here we go again,’”



(above) The large cupola above the kitchen provides natural light for entertaining in the day, while the gorgeous oak detailing shines in the glow of night.

(left) Paint is Benjamin Moore Rainier Gray.

Densen says.

Watterworth Alterman was ready. “What was really nice about working with them a second time was their high level of trust in me,” she says. “They wanted a similar vibe to their previous home, but a bit more sophisticated.”

Along with the spectacular views, the house already came with solid architectural bones, including an open floor plan, a recently renovated kitchen, a 25-foot vaulted ceiling lined in oak wood and a light-filled cupola. This would not be a gut job.

The challenge, though, was channeling the Densens’ casual coastal sensibilities.

“We started by giving the home a modern and fresh look by adding shiplap throughout the home,” Watterman Alterman says. “And [we] built a soft neutral palette for the walls.”

FEATURE

The homeowners absolutely fell in love with the white, beaded chandelier from beloved Jupiter design store, Pineapples, Palms, Etc.



Objets d'art in neutral tones give the living room a lived-in yet coastal-chic vibe.

The living room's relaxed feel features a Swaim Brewster sofa flanked by Lazar Soho side chairs. The inherited built-in media center was re-accessorized with carefully curated curiosities, including a spinner vase and sea urchin ceramic platters from Global Views.

A lucite console table next to the front door is barely noticeable, but it provides the perfect spot to drop off the day's flotsam.

Opposite the living room is the open concept kitchen with white Shaker cabinets and a herringbone marble backsplash. The large center island, topped with a light gray, quartzite counter, was matched up with Duralee's Dover stools that Watterworth Alterman covered in gray, faux-leather fabric. She also built shelves between the kitchen and pantry for extra storage.

"The goal was to create a space that is

timeless and comfortable, but with luxurious touches throughout," Watterworth Alterman says. "Marble and natural stone are used in the entire home. Luxurious, high-quality fabrics are all present in the upholstered furniture, pillows and drapery. And of course, all lighting choices are upscale."

In fact, the dining room's white beaded chandelier is perhaps Densen's favorite objet d'art, purchased from Pineapple, Palms, Etc. Watterworth Alterman added a double pedestal dining table from Lexington with mix-and-match dining chairs upholstered in bone-fabric.

Since all the main rooms of the home look out toward the backyard, the floor-to-ceiling infinity pocket doors give the home openness and plenty of natural light. In fact, the last room is more like a lanai. On one side is a sitting area with a fireplace decorat-

ed in a herringbone pattern. The room features Serena and Lily side tables, Lee Industries' furniture in neutral colors and throw pillows in sea mist tones by Kravet. Similarly hued drapes with a swirl motif add femininity, yet keep the vibe beachy and approachable. Plenty of wood, brass and white ceramic accessories fill the shelves. On the other side of the open lanai room, Watterworth Alterman carved out a space for the kids. She dubbed it the "art room."

As the parent of two young children herself, Watterworth Alterman says she taps into what kids love when designing their spaces. "I also listen to my own inner child," she says.

A Pottery Barn work desk, Tribeca Home bookshelves and plenty of budding artists' work complete the look.

"It has become an essential part of our home that I never knew we needed," Densen says. "A place for the kids to paint, color, do homework and entertain their friends and where I can keep a watchful eye."

Designing a patio that spoke to an active lifestyle was also paramount.

"This family entertains a lot, and they wanted room for the children to play outside," Watterworth Alterman says. "Since this lot was so large, it was important for us to find ways to create intimate spaces."

A custom ipe wood table that seats 20 was ordered. Instead of chairs, two benches create a seamless look. The Densen family also built an outdoor kitchen and a cozy fire pit flanked by Adirondack chairs. Loungers, couches, hanging cocoons and even a tire swing tied to an old oak tree fill the yard. There is also plenty of grassy land left untouched for barefoot little ones.

The children's bedrooms, which also take advantage of the views, maintain a sense of wonderment.

"I try to design children's spaces that will last over time, something they can grow into," Watterworth Alterman says. To wit, the girl's room features black-and-white Schumacher botanical wallpaper, lightened up with blush colored fabrics and gold accents. Panels



The girl's bedroom will take her from elementary to teen years.

The sitting room, overlooking the backyard, is all about comfort and classic patterns, anchored by a herringbone fireplace.



The master bedroom is bright and airy thanks to large windows and a soft blues palette on the drapes, rug and textiles.

in a black-and-white polka dot pattern tie it all together.

"This is a room that can take a girl into her tween years," Watterworth Alterman says.

For the boy's room, favorite animal considerations were pondered. Watterworth Alterman found a whale repeat wallpaper for an accent wall. The rest of the room zips with a fresh, Nantucket spin of red accents,

navy-striped panels, wooden bunk beds and a sputnik, steel light fixture.

As for the master bedroom, a palette was chosen that reminded Densen of the old bedroom she left behind. "I wanted it to feel familiar," Densen says.

Upstairs, a large guest suite with its ensuite bathroom offers sweeping views. A Pine Cone Hill striped duvet and accents brought in

from the old home give it a grounded feel.

"Krista did such a fine job the first time," Densen says. "I just knew I could count on her to deliver a beautiful and comfortable design the second time around. Of course, she knocked it out of the park."

As for now, Sara Balas Densen is definitely keeping this house off the market.

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The upstairs guest suite feels homey, yet tailored. It boasts broad Intracoastal views.

