

# Serenity on the Sound

*In Wilmington, North Carolina,  
designer Sally Williams helps  
longtime clients create a vacation  
residence comfortable and chic  
enough for everyday life.*

TEXT TIFFANY ADAMS  
INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHY DUSTIN PECK  
EXTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHY TIMOTHY REAVIS

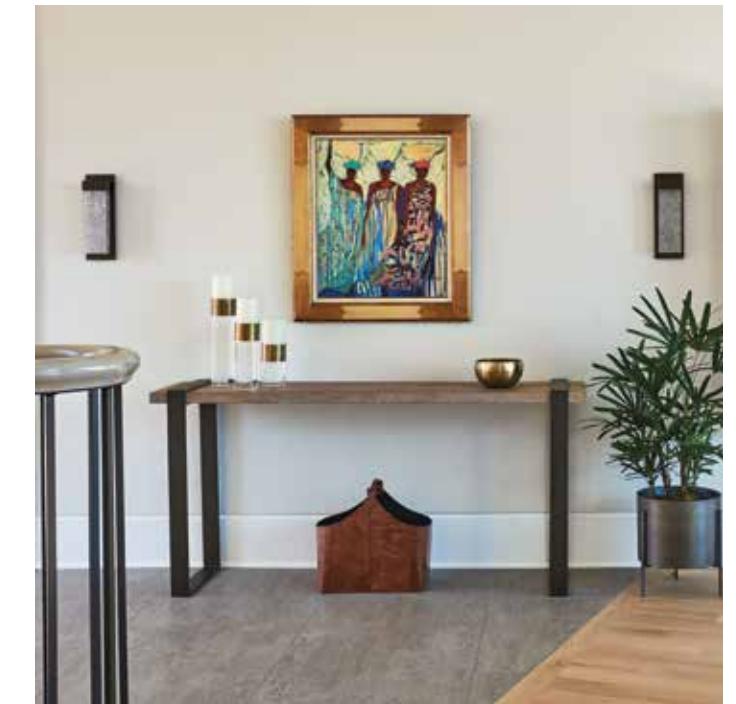




**A**cross-country trip with her husband led Sally Williams to rethink her accounting background for interior design. “I had always been artistic as a kid,” she says. “In California, I fell in love with a gallery that left me feeling calm and inspired.” After the couple returned home to Raleigh, North Carolina, Williams found herself wanting to recreate that sense of joy and opened her own gallery featuring local art as well as gift items. Here, her passion for interiors became evident. She started with color consults before pursuing more education in the field and ultimately closing the gallery to turn her attention to full-service design, like this home on the Wilmington sound.

When the owners decided to embark on a new build for use as a vacation home, they put in a call to Williams. Having previously designed their primary residence, the designer knew their tastes; however, she also knew the guidelines for a vacation home would be a bit looser. “Their Raleigh house is a little more clean, contemporary, and monochromatic, but when we came here, they were ready to add color,” she says.

The couple currently use the house, which is two hours from their main home, as a weekend retreat but ultimately plan for it to be their full-time residence—a point that was factored in on design decisions. Three bed-and-bath suites, including the primary one, are located on the second floor with all the living, cooking, and entertaining spaces on the ground floor. Additionally, while the



Previous pages: Subtle shades of blue and tan in the living room's furnishings complement the view of the Wilmington sound. Opposite: "Everything in the dining room is meant to be soft and round," Williams says, pointing to the sculptural Robert James table. A clear light fixture was selected so as not to block the view. This page, top: An outdoor living area features a pool and spa. Above: Throughout the home, designer Sally Williams incorporated treasured art and collectibles.



Clockwise from top: Centrally located, the kitchen has a spacious yet understated design with streamlined cabinetry and concealed storage. While the home is meant for relaxation, the couple requested a small office on the ground floor. A landing at the top of the stairs is a comfortable respite for houseguests to sip morning coffee or play games on rainy days.



In the primary bedroom, an accent wall with a palm leaf covering is a subtle nod to the home's coastal location. Plans originally called for all of the cabinetry in the owners' closet to be neutral, but blue was introduced to make a statement that is also reminiscent of the setting.





Above: The owners' bedroom has an expansive second-floor view. Opposite: One side of the owners' bedroom was designated as a galley-style sitting area with a built-in cabinet that houses a television as well as storage and display space. The clean, sophisticated feel continues into the bath, where a large soaking tub and heated towel rack are just two of the amenities in the spa-like space.

outdoors are the location's draw, the home has accommodations for days spent inside as well. For example, downstairs a dark, cozy media room invites lounging, while a spacious landing at the top of the stairs is ideal for an afternoon spent working on a puzzle.

Positioned on a two-and-a-half-acre lot in a gated community, the biggest factor playing into both the structure and the interiors was undoubtedly the view, with the team wanting to take full advantage of its earthy yet ever-changing palette. Regarding the architecture, the home was designed at an angle to allow for a panoramic view of the sound from multiple vantage points. Walking in the front door, one sees the dining space from the entry and straight through to the landscape of the sound, making it not just a part of the home's environment but a living element of the design. "The house is L-shaped but not at a perfect 90-degree angle, so there were some areas that had challenging angles in the interiors," Williams says, adding that a cohesive palette and the repetition of

materials were employed to bring continuity to the eye.

"My specialty is color and understanding the psychology of that," the designer says. "We always start our work with color, which sets the tone for a home." In this residence, the philosophy begins with the exterior, which was designed so as not to compete with its surroundings. "It's clean and classic, and this carries through when you walk inside," Williams says. "There's nothing that is too busy."

Indoors, a casual, contemporary aesthetic with very subtle touches of coastal influence emerged. Neutral colors on the walls, cabinetry, and upholstered goods set this tone and allowed for the brighter accents the owners desired to be brought in through custom rugs, artwork, and accessories—all of which help to personalize the home. Additionally, the tray ceilings in the kitchen and living and dining rooms are united by a shared blue hue that brings a subtle dose of color. "There's a calming elegance about this house. When you look at a room, I don't know that you would think it's coastal; it's just a beautiful, peaceful space," Williams says.

