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Interiors

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RESIDENCES WITH
HISTORICAL ROOTS



PARADISE FOUND

The crisp white Mediterranean aesthetic of Alys Beach, storied antiques, and 30A's idyllic charm inspire a new coastal tradition for a mother-daughter design duo.

By Jesse Bratter

From left: Susan Bohlert Smith and Bohlert "Bo" Massey in their design shop in Inlet Beach; a dining room Bohlert Massey designed in Alys Beach.



Along the Florida panhandle, a scenic highway called Route 30A leads sojourners into the enchanting urbanist towns of Alys Beach and Rosemary Beach. At the beginning of this journey, starting in Inlet Beach, there's a collection of boutiques and restaurants waiting to be discovered. One of those shops is Bohlert Massey (bohlertmassey.com), a destination for art and interiors. Inside, the mother-daughter duo Susan Bohlert Smith and Bohlert "Bo" Massey have curated a mix of antiques sourced from around the country and abroad, new furniture, textiles, art, and tropical foliage looking for their next chapter. They're sharing with us their coastal philosophy, sourcing secrets and interiors approach, plus a few of their favorite spots in this singular slice of Florida.

EXPLORE

dispatch

THEIR SHOP

Q: What is one of your most memorable scores?

SBS: Bo and I found an enormous 19th-century painting of sailboats that was done in the most beautiful, painterly style by an artist in Avignon at an art and antiques fair a few years ago. It was signed and dated, but we did not have time to research it before making the significant financial decision. There were other buyers interested and we took a leap of faith. We were thrilled to find out later that the artist was not only listed, but they also shared the same studio address as Picasso in Paris. Sometimes trusting your gut is good. I still think about that painting and like many things we purchase to sell, I was sad to see it go.

Q: Walk us through your more eclectic, updated take on a coastal aesthetic.

SBS: Bo and I have lived here on the Gulf Coast for 26 years now and have organically distilled down our coastal look to something that is elegant but comfortable and stays in harmony with the natural beauty of the area while creating unpredictable juxtapositions between casual, modern and traditional design elements to give a house liveliness and personality.

THEIR INTERIORS

Case in point: the considered interior renovation of a Gary Justiss home in Sea Venture Alley, Alys Beach. “We mixed the owners’ French antiques with classically modern silhouettes and luxury fabrics in a palette of aqua and teal,” says Smith, who notes the Gulf of Mexico and white stucco exterior as color inspiration. “And we used

a lot of glass to keep things feeling light. We complemented the existing, more traditional French antiques with French modernist-feeling pieces and fabrics from Parisian designer Sabina Fay Braxton to keep things cohesive. We then layered in natural materials and large pieces of natural sea life to temper the formality. The light wooden walls, hand-painted linen sheers and items from nature keep the home feeling coastal.” The original tongue-and-groove walls received a fresh coat of warm white paint. And other additions include limestone floors, limestone stair treads, and Italian marble countertops in the kitchen with an integrated marble sink. Whether the owners track in the sand after a day at the beach or host a formal dinner party, comfort is paramount. ■

THEIR LOCAL FAVES

Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, Santa Rosa Beach; The Citizen, Alys Beach; Bastide Home & Garden, Santa Rosa Beach; The Red Bar, Grayton Beach; Becasa at 30Avenue, Inlet Beach; Black Bear Bread Co., Grayton Beach



From top: The balcony of a home in Alys Beach designed by Bohlert Massey; bronze and lucite hardware freshened the kitchen along with new slab fronts for the cabinetry; owners Brian and Tina Corr asked the designers to ready their house for entertaining.