



RIVERSIDE RETREAT

TIMELESS ARCHITECTURE MEETS REFRESHING DESIGN IN AN
EASTERN SHORE HOME. TEXT AND STYLING BY CHARLOTTE SAFAVI PHOTOGRAPHY ROBERT RADIFERA



When a pair of DC-based empty nesters discovered The Rest, a pre-Civil War-era tidewater property in Easton, Maryland, their search for a weekend retreat was over. It was hard for them to pinpoint their favorite feature, whether the waterfront acreage on the Miles River, the allée of sycamores, the historic outbuildings, or the colonial-style house built in the '60s to replace the original home destroyed by fire in the 1800s. They were charmed by the property—and they wanted all of it.

Shortly after purchasing The Rest in 2009, the homeowners wandered into Bountiful Interiors, Jamie Merida's home store and design studio in downtown Easton. The couple identified with his style and recruited the designer to join in the renovation. In turn, Merida quickly fell captive to the home's charm. He says, "One of the things I love about the main house is its updated take on Jeffersonian architecture." Merida explains that this reinterpretation preserves the beauty but also provides modern amenities. He adds, "A house like The Rest has an elegant formality about it, with its enfildes and Palladian arched windows, but it also possesses a casual, open vibe—those high ceilings, interconnected rooms, and French doors that spill out onto a typical Southern porch."

Merida used color to form the basis of the home's interior design. A symphony of blues—from Wedgwood-blue walls to sea-glass-aqua accents—plays in the palette, starting louder and bolder downstairs in the public spaces and becoming quieter and softer upstairs in the

Opposite: The dining room's originating designer Fiona Weeks of Dwelling and Design selected the turquoise and chartreuse dining chairs, among other elements. Clockwise from top left: An antique counter, which doubles as an island and breakfast bar, adds character to the kitchen. The kitchen redesign was done in conjunction with Jennifer Gilmer CKD. A vintage Louis Vuitton poster and a custom-made console from England define the foyer. A chinoiserie-inspired Roman shade in vivid blues pops against the kitchen's creamy whites.





private ones. "Blue is also a great foil to the wonderful crisp-white architectural details," says Merida, who included his lead designer, Amanda Friend, to help with the project. "It seems like a fresh choice; however, the color is very period. We brought in pops of chartreuse to update the look and make it more contemporary."

For furnishings, the homeowners wanted bright, crisp, and livable. "We decorated in our signature Tidewater style, which borrows from coastal and traditional, but has a look all its own," says Merida. "It's a more relaxed, less-dressy version of historic Southern furniture and furnishings, with big patterns and a saturated palette." Throughout the house, modern takes on classic patterns prevail. Overscaled paisley-motif curtains frame the living room's windows; a woven geometric rug, with an interlocking circle-and-stripe design, defines the foyer; and chinoiserie-inspired headboard and sham textiles add interest to the bedrooms. Overall, the space is polished yet comfortable. Says Merida, "It can accommodate two people, or a hundred, with Southern hospitality and grace."

"WE CREATED A SPACE FOR ENTERTAINING AND RELAXING, WITH POPS OF PATTERN AND COLOR TO FLOW WITH THE REST OF THE HOUSE."

—JAMIE MERIDA





Opposite & above: An 8-foot-long rustic pine table on the screened porch provides plenty of room for riverside meals with family and friends. The porch ceiling is painted pale blue, in true Southern style, and a large fireplace makes the space a year-round option. Below: Navigable waters on the Miles River were a big selling feature for the homeowners, as was the lackadaisical option to sit riverfront and enjoy the view. The bricked patio sits just outside the porch.





The master suite was created in the formerly unused attic. Beneath the eaves is a custom-designed shagreen headboard. The mirrored bedside chests are fresh-faced in finish while traditional in form. Exposed chrome plumbing and a built-in window seat make the bathroom airy and elegant, and behind the double vanity is a shower with his-and-her accesses on either side. Below left: The guest room has an upholstered beige headboard, with nail-head trim, while navy accents enliven its neutral palette.

