In the new WaterColor residential community on Florida's Panhandle, we decided to build mirror-image houses and decorate them differently—one as a couple's weekend retreat and the other as a family vacation cottage. Although exterior colors and architectural features are the same, each interior is distinctive and full of inspiration. Whether your style is city-sophistication or down-to-earth, these two houses with identical floor plans, built side by side, provide new building and decorating ideas you can transfer to your own home.

In the tower rooms (above), French doors open to decks, doubling the livable space. Four walls of windows allow panoramic views of WaterColor's rooftops and its amenities. In one direction, residents can watch boaters at Marina Park on the banks of Western Lake. There, owners and guests canoe, kayak, and sail. The view south reveals waves rolling on sugar white beaches.
A design team from Historical Concepts developed this three-story plan for side-by-side sites in the new residential community of WaterColor in Florida. The design draws on early 20th-century Southern-style architecture and takes cues from structures in nearby towns, such as DeFuniak Springs and Appalachicola. Fine details evoke nostalgic feelings of simple, easy living and make this house a true charmer for any beachside location.

THE HOUSE PLAN:
Working drawings may be ordered by calling 800/755-1122. Costs: single set $545; five sets $645; eight sets $735; reproducible sets $1,100. Postage, handling, and applicable taxes will apply.

A REMINDER: Site conditions vary by location, so we recommend consulting a local architect and/or engineer before starting construction. Plans do not include fully engineered framing plans, heating and plumbing plans, or material quantity lists. All plans are copyrighted.

Coastal Living
After climbing the staircase to the second floor, family and friends can gather under the nearly 12-foot ceiling and mingle in the vast space comprising the kitchen, dining, and living areas. Porches wrap two sides of this great room, extending the living and entertaining space. One porch is enclosed by screens, and the other is open to the beach air.

**FAMILY VACATION COTTAGE**
For the family cottage living area, our design consultant, Linda Woodrum, chose a palette of summer-sky blue, sunflower yellow, and watermelon red. Here, the cheerful colors take form in gingham pillows that dress the sofa and love seat. A striped fabric with the same vibrant hues stretches boldly across a round end table, and ocean-inspired artwork further enhances the bright theme. To soften the matchstick blinds, Linda framed them with sheer muslin trimmed in red ribbon, creating a rippling candy-cane effect.

**COUPLE'S RETREAT**
In this house, Arvida construction manager David Thomas mixed finishes on the wood plank walls that were installed horizontally. "Some of it we painted, and some of it we let the stain come through," he says. "We wanted to create a warm, homey, cottage feeling."

Neutral tones take on texture in the Couple's Retreat. A chenille sofa and tufted-back armchair reside next to a curvaceous crushed bamboo-and-rattan chair. The side table's wooden lamp features a square design. Another square—the woven abaca cocktail table—comes with four removable serving trays made of reclaimed teak.

*Historical Concepts chose the largest standard windows available and placed working transoms on top. This harkens back to old times," says president and founder Jim Stockland. "Sofa ceiling were designed to get hot air out, and the transoms bring cool breeze in."* *Dining table and chairs and living room sofa, chair, and love seat: Brayhill Furniture Industries, Inc.*

*Black-and-white photography by Sheree Williams adds gallery sophistication to the left-side space. A sleek fish tank from Albert's offers even more visual appeal. Linda used orange accessories—including goldfish—to excite the soothing, neutral interiors.*
SETTING THE TONE

As you can see, the great room floor plan is the same in each house, yet the interiors reflect two distinct styles. The difference is in the details, fabrics, and accessories. Use these tips to pull together your own home:

- For a more sophisticated room, choose wood furniture in dark finishes. Light wood and white sets a more casual tone.
- Bright color exudes vibrancy and suggests family. A monochromatic palette or a room dressed in neutrals and black is more contemporary—especially when punctuated with one bold color, such as orange.
- Your choice of fabrics, patterns, weight, weave, and materials defines your personal style. A mix of checks, stripes, and florals on one piece of furniture or assembled in one room sets a more laid-back tone than richly textured chenille and smooth brushed cottons.
- Ceramic and galvanized accessories, such as the vase at left, appear more casual than sleek wood or glass, such as the wooden tray and fish tank shown top, left.

In the Couple's Retreat, Linda chose a flat-woven rug made of heat-set polypropylene. It resembles sisal but is more durable and stain resistant. • Rugs: Sphinx Rugs.

FAMILY DINING

Whether you prefer hosting guests in casual beachside style or coastal chic, this floor plan can dress for either occasion. In both houses, the counter-top between the kitchen and dining table makes a perfect bar or buffet. And, because of the open space, the chef can listen for an oven timer without missing out on cocktail hour. "Whosever's cooking doesn't want to be isolated. You want great conversation," says Jim Strickland. "To me, fixing dinner is part of the entertainment."

Linda suggests mixing-and-matching finishes and fabrics for a look suggesting pieces collected over time. In the Family Vacation Cottage dining area, wavy ladder-back chairs next to the sturdy white table beckon children to enjoy an afternoon treat.

A turn-style table extends from the kitchen to form the dining area. Dining chairs stacked in honey tones provide contrast to the white table. A rug-inspiring sofa separates the dining space from the living area. To help unify the spaces, Linda chose similar chunky forms for the dining and coffee tables. Suspended galvanized aluminum lanterns shed light over both the dining and living areas.
COUPLE'S DINING

In this house, designer Brad Speight set the elegant pedestal table for evening entertaining. In addition to decorating with ceramic plates and rattan chargers, Brad carved out gourds to hold dips and cheeses. He designed arrangements with mostly local foliage to enhance the earthy tones in the distinctive tableware.

Off-white dining chairs have backs resembling garden lattice. For this occasion, they are pulled away from the table so it can be used buffet style. The seat cushions' warm brown tones contrast with the casual red-and-white picnic checks in the Family Vacation Cottage. Another contrast between our two cottages is the floor finish. In the Couple's Retreat, the light, naturally finished floors accentuate the dark wood of the dining table. In the Family Vacation Cottage, a cherry finish sets off the whites. Both floors have a protective coating, making them easy to care for and tough against sandy feet.

In our Couple's Retreat, a wrought iron chandelier illuminates dinner conversation. Linda tied the lights and darks of the wood table and chairs together with cream-and-brown checked seat cushions.

Light fixtures: Georgia Lighting. Hardwood floors in both houses. Bruce Hardwood Floors.

KITCHEN

Both versions of the passthrough kitchen display all of the essentials and many luxuries desired by beach-cottage chefs. Here, modern appliances contrast in style: The Couple's Retreat kitchen features sleek stainless, while the Family Vacation Cottage offers bright white. The refrigerators save floorspace by offering side-by-side doors. Microwaves are neatly tucked above the ranges to conserve counterpace. Quiet dishwashers don't disrupt after-dinner conversation—or early bedtimes.


Glass-fronted cabinets in both houses make the kitchens seem much larger. Stacked cabinetry offers extra storage for nonessentials. Its recessed paneling and durable brushed satin-chrome knobs add a custom look.

The Family Vacation Cottage features cabinets in a smooth maple finish. Their frame-and-panel doors exhibit Shaker-style design. An interior system for storing and organizing can be arranged to suit the homeowner's personal taste.
The master bedrooms both open to a wrap-around screened porch outfitted in chaise longues and comfortable armchairs.

COURT'S RETREAT
In this house, a modern, queen-size four-poster bed dominates. On opposite sides of the room, matching porthole-style mirrors reflect above identical concave, wood-and-leather chests. Two oversize chairs and an ottoman invite conversation.

FAMILY VACATION COTTAGE
While the Couple's Retreat is cool and spare, this home's master bedroom exudes familiar warmth. The tester bed, framed in sheer panels, could rival the comfort of a child's bedsheet-draped-over-a-table tent. A new quilt at the foot of the bed appears to be an heirloom next to the antique blanket chest.

The bath off the master bedroom is outfitted like a personal spa. Amenities include an oval whirlpool tub featuring sleek chrome faucets, a separate shower stall with handheld adjustable massage spray, and dual sinks with mirrored oak cabinets.

The room is not only spacious but also easy to care for—important in a beach house that could be a rental or a family home. Shower doors resist bacteria; tarnish-free faucets and showerheads are designed for quick cleanup; and lustrous plumbing components will stand up to harsh cleaners and salt air.

Plus, if the kids insist on a bubble bath, parents can rest assured that a scald-guard valve will protect them from too-hot water.

Perhaps the most intriguing bedroom is on the second level of the plan. Upon entering, guests look up to its 20-foot vaulted ceiling. In the Family Vacation Cottage, windows trimmed in white appear to float like clouds against the wispily blue walls. Twin beds are dressed in spirited red-and-white stripes and quilts. The rag rug is woven with colors that seem to have spilled out of a box of crayons. In the Couple's Retreat, the second-floor bedroom awaits guests. The queen-size bed—woven from rattan and crushed bamboo and capped with cast-metal pineapple finials—lends the room a touch of the islands. A three-drawer bowfront chest, hand-painted with tropical flora, works nicely as an oversize bedside table.

Windows wrap the second-floor guest bath on both houses. Details such as beaded board, framed mirrors, pocket doors, and shelving give the room an old-fashioned feel. White tile floors and classical accessories—such as the ceramic towel bar, rings, and hooks—finish the crisp, clean look.

Dual marble sinks fit comfortably into off-white wooden cabinetry. "Nothing could be better than looking out a window and brushing your teeth," says Jim Strickland of Historical Concepts. The house is designed to provide views from the second floor and maintain privacy on the first.

In both houses, the closets and bathrooms share large spaces.

Artistic details on the hardware add sophisticated touches to the Couple's Retreat. The laundry room, off the entry hall on the first floor of both houses, is a convenient catchall for wet swimsuits and towels.

• Washer and dryer: Maytag.

The coastal artwork above the sofa in this Couple's Retreat bedroom is by Kerry Hallam of Nantucket.

• Furniture: Lavenue

Art: Chalk & Vermilion Fine Arts.
FAMILY VACATION COTTAGE

Linda decorated the first-floor bedroom for a princess. Sunnys yellows, a blue-and-white double wedding ring quilt, and snuggly pats make this room a little girl’s dream. A butter-yellow leather chair and ottoman occupy one corner. Linda says leather works well at the beach because of its durability. And, with it now available in lighter colors, leather is even more beach-house fashionable.

COUPLE’S RETREAT

Walls in the Couple’s Retreat guest bedroom—like the living room and master bedroom—are finished with a stain to allow the woodgrain to show through, adding a textural quality to a neutral palette. Native palmettos fan from a basket for interest. In both houses, the rooms have private baths with showers and dual sinks. Doorways lead from the bathroom to a side porch and shower outside. This additional entrance suits the come-and-go lifestyle of weekend guests.

Here, the downstairs guest room offers serenity. The brushed metal bed, finished to look like bamboo, nods to Asian design. The bamboo motif carries through to the bedside lamps with flecks of leaves in the paper shades and bamboo-relief bases. A writing desk makes for an impromptu work area on one side of the bed.

TOWER ROOM

The most distinguishing feature of the 42-foot-tall house is the observation tower. It stretches over native pines for views of the lake, ocean, and expansive green of Cereale Park. Historical Concepts architect Marty Mullin designed the tower to be used as an indoor/outdoor room. French doors lead to a deck, and windows open wide all around. In the Family Vacation Cottage, Nantucket-blue cabinetry with a built-in sink, bar, and bench makes for easy entertaining. Outside, chaise longues designed for style, comfort, and weather resistance stand poised for a relaxing afternoon.

Wide-frame mirrors and cabinetry fulfill vanity needs in the second-floor powder room in both houses. • Wall mirror: Zenith.
The Couple's Retreat and Family Vacation Cottage, built around a horseshoe curve in the Rose Garden Mews neighborhood, connect via gravel paths surrounded by native plants. In light of Arvida's mission to

Text continues on page 110.

In keeping with the environmentally friendly community, both homes welcome neighbors to stop for a chat on a low-maintenance outdoor decking system. Made from a composite of wood fiber and recycled plastic, this splinter-free system will not rot or stain. • Decking: Carefree Xteriors Decking Systems.

PLANTINGS

Arvida's pattern book lists plant choices for homeowners when designing their own gardens. They include:

- Saw palmetto—Serenoa repens
- Atlantic St. John's wort—Hypericum perforatum
- Sundial lupine—Lupinus perennis
- Glaucaous blueberry—Vaccinium darrowi
- Gulfcoast lupine—Lupinus westianus
- Beach morning glory—Ipomoea imperati
- Woody goldenrod—Chrysopsis pauciflora
- Sandhill milkweed—Asclepias incarnata
- Scrub rosemary—Corokia cotoneaster
- Cockspur prickly pear cactus—Opuntia pusilla

WaterColor on Florida's Gulf Coast, hosts a resident horticultural and naturalist. Anticipated in 2002 is a resident artist program. Western Lake, right, welcomes abundant wildlife.

- Outdoor furniture: Tidelands Workshop.
stay true to the Southern landscape, horticulturist Stephen Greer and landscape architect Jake Ingram were dedicated to planting indigenous species at the site. "There really hasn't been much research for plantings in this area," Stephen says. "We're learning as we go along. These plants have always been here, just underappreciated."

While people may not have taken notice of the region's native plants in the past, Jake and Stephen are bringing them to the forefront because of their low-maintenance and drought- and salt-tolerant qualities. "We wanted to use as little irrigation as possible," Jake says. "Once these plants are established, they should be fine on their own."

N owhere is it more important to pay attention to quality building materials than at the beach. Salt air, strong winds, heat, and humidity can damage coastal homes and turn maintenance into a too-frequent chore. Our architects, builder, and design team chose products to cure many typical home-care headaches.

1 SIDING: Exterior lap siding made from fiber-cement won't rot, warp, or crack, and it is both moisture and insect resistant. While this technological advancement in siding looks like wood, it doesn't destroy trees and surpasses wood in longevity. To protect the structure even more, construction manager David Thomas also chose a quality house wrap designed to keep temperature-controlled air in yet let moisture escape. • Siding: James Hardie Siding Products; House wrap: DuPont Tyvek.

2 HARDWARE: In both houses, the door hardware exhibits classic designs. Because indoor/outdoor traffic at a beach house requires durable hardware, the builders chose chrome doorknobs and locks for the Family Vacation Cottage that stand up to corrosive salt air and lots of hand-holding. For the Couple's Retreat, the oil-rubbed bronze

The second-floor porches face each other over a gravel pathway that runs between the houses and connects to the rest of the neighborhood. All of the houses to be built in Rose Garden Cove will be painted in different shades of the flower for which the neighborhood is named: red, rose, coral, and pink.
hardware is coated with a protective finish that resists pitting, erosion, and the harsh effects of the weather. • Door hardware, Family Vacation Cottage: Weaver Lock; Door hardware, Couple’s Retreat: Baldwin Hardware.

3 SHUTTERS

Historical Concepts designers took aesthetic inspiration for these shutters on both houses from a home in Charleston, South Carolina. They are not only attractive but also operable and storm-worthy. They can be closed for privacy or opened wide to signal a welcome to neighbors.

• Shutters: J&D Shutters.

4 WINDOWS

Historical Concepts architects chose the largest standard windows available, all of them with double-paned glass. This extra insulation inhibits heat gain and loss, saving on energy costs.

• Windows and doors: Pella.

5 PAINT

Long-lasting paints and stains dress both the interiors and exteriors. Palettes are below.

• Paint: Behr.

ARVIDA
From left: Stephen Greer, horticulturist; David Thomas, construction manager; Bill Sabelli, architect; and Jake Ingram, landscape architect. Coastal Living and Arvida also credit the late Chuck Grant for his invaluable contributions.

HISTORICAL CONCEPTS
From left: Dave Bryant (Habersham); Terry Pylant (both locations); Marty Mullin and Ben Showalter (WaterColor); Aaron Daily (Habersham); Jeremy Sommer (WaterColor); Jim Strickland, president; Todd Strickland. Coastal Living and Historical Concepts also credit the late Phillip B. Windsor as an integral part of the team.

Historical Concepts designers paid close attention to details, choosing elements of Southern vernacular architecture. These include:

• Pocket doors
• Double-hung windows
• Multiple wraparound porches
• Transom windows
• Exposed rafters
• High ceilings
• Wainscoting
• Exposed interior wooden walls