This South Carolina vacation home blends in with its beautiful setting. Coastal Cottage

Spring Island, South Carolina, abounds with Lowcountry sights and sounds. The ebb and flow of tidewaters nourish the rich marshes that surround the area. On land, clumps of Spanish moss adorn ancient live oaks like fine-spun silk. Among the palmetto bushes and saw palms, tiny crabs scampers about.

One With the Land
In this verdant setting, Judy and Merritt Marcus chose to build their retreat. Residing in Louisville most of the year, the Marcus’es needed a place where family and friends could congregate. “Because this would be our second home, we didn’t want a formal house. Instead, Judy and I strove for a more casual place,” Merritt says.

Because they wanted to take full advantage of the site’s scenic views, the couple turned to Historical Concepts, a multidisciplinary architectural firm. In response to the Marcuses’ requests, the team created a home sensitive to both the family’s needs and the history of the area. Taking cues from traditional Lowcountry cottages, the designers raised up the single-story structure on stuccoed piers, separated by lattice. Broad eave overhangs with exposed rafters help shade and shelter the home. Even the crimped metal roof adds an established sense of bygone charm.

Outdoor Living
While the house comprises about 2,400 square feet, it lives much larger, thanks to its natural setting. There is also a screened porch tucked between the dining room and master bedroom, like a fine-spun silk. This is my favorite space in the house,” Jim Strickland, president of Historical Concepts, says. Working in Harmony

This residence is a testament to the homeowners and the designers. Jim summarizes this best: “It was very satisfying that every participant contributed to a home that exceeded what any of us could have done alone.”

WHY IT WON
Here’s what our judges had to say about this award-winning design:

““This wonderfully vernacular house goes hand in hand with the character of the site.” Eric Watson, AIA

“The design fits comfortably into its natural setting with an added-on appeal.” Philip Morris, former Southern Living Editor-at-Large

Maximizing natural light played a key role in this residence’s design. The master bedroom and living room access the adjacent porches by French doors. Topped with transoms, these doors allow sunlight to enter the interior spaces. Also, a pair of triangular-shaped dormers, located on the front and rear, help illuminate the vaulted living room.

In Quest of Sunlight

Ample porch space, along with unobstructed views into the living room. This is truly a house that can be enjoyed while sitting in any number of locations. Each view has its own special feeling and physical attributes.”

Judy and Merritt Marcus chose to build their retreat. This South Carolina vacation home blends in with its beautiful setting.

Photographs: John O’Hagan

Architecture: Historical Concepts, Inc. Designer: Miriam Jordan Landscape architect: Donald Hooten

Builder: Cambridge Builders

Interior designer: Miriam Jordan

2002 Southern Home Awards

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