



endless summer

Interior designer Toby West re-creates the nostalgic feel of a classic coastal film, Summer of '42.

Remember when you were 15 and thought summer would last forever? When warm days stretched lazily into nighttime and responsibilities amounted to no more than showing up on time for dinner? Remember your first true summer love, and wishing it would never, ever end?

Such are the poignant memories evoked by the classic coming-of-age movie *Summer of '42*—the 1971 film that inspired interior designer Toby West to re-create that nostalgic feeling in this Seaside, Florida, home.

Designed by architect Tom Christ for developers Charlie and Patty Renfroe, the house has the enviable position of being directly on the



BY CATHY STILL JOHNSON
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
DEBORAH WHITLAW
STYLING BY LANE GREGORY

HOMES

Toby outfitted the dining and living areas in his signature taupe-and-cream palette. Here, antiques and new pieces mingle as if they have known each other for years. Toby designed the iron chandelier and dining table. Below, left: With its open wall and stools, the kitchen's counter bar brings to mind a summer concession stand. Beaded board and glass-door cabinetry add to the old beach house charm. Below, right: The home's staircase displays two of the eight antique ships' wheels that spawned the *Summer of '42* design theme.

water. "The whole theme got started when I found a collection of antique ships' wheels in Key West," Toby recalls. "I remembered the wonderful old beach cottage in the movie, so I called Charlie and asked if I could buy them. It all spun off from there."

Toby and Tom worked to make this brand-new home evoke the same timeworn appeal as the one in the movie. "We used exposed beams and joists, and boards that didn't quite meet," Toby says. "We wanted it to be a little rough so it would feel like the body of an old ship."

What Toby describes as "rough" is purely a romantic concept. Built as soundly as a yacht and outfitted with as much care as the finest captain's quarters, the home lacks nothing in detail. The coastal theme permeates every room in clever ways. "It's more upscale elegant than the typical beach theme at Seaside," says Toby.

The most distinctive mark of Toby's design is his color palette. Most homes in this Panhandle community boast lollipop pastels. Encountering this one, with its chocolate-milk-shake brown accented with cream, is almost like finding a long-lost sepia-toned photo tucked in an album of colored glossies. "I wanted to stray away from



The upstairs guest bedroom welcomes with soft colors, nautical touches, and comforts such as a ceiling fan.

the bright blues and bubble-gum colors," he says.

Inside, texture brings dimension to the neutral tones. For the main living area, Toby took the tabby fireplace's bumpy, adobe-like mixture of sand, lime, ash, and oyster shells a step further by adding anchors molded out of the same material. "It was easy," he says. "We just attached them to the fireplace."

Other **shells** show up as trim on window treatments and encrusted decoration on chests of drawers, lampshades, and mirrors. Scatterings of the seaside jewels appear both individually and collectively as stand-ins for floral arrangements.

Just as prominent as the seashell motif is the generous use of taupe-and-white gingham. Although this simple check is often considered ultracasual, the added crewel detail and exaggerated repetition gives the country standard a modern sophistication.

"Toby is so thoughtful with everything he does," says Charlie, "He plans out each room and presents you with story boards and fabric swatches. Once he gets going you can't stop his

urake it yours

Toby West, who runs an interior design business and dressed this house, has a knack for mixing antiques and new pieces in comfortable refinement. Here, we offer a few sources for creating your own nostalgic beach getaway.

- lit the living area, a large ship model graces the tabby fireplace. Picl Craftsmen's newest addition to its Historic Ship Model Collection is The Yawl (\$150), a 36-foot classic sailing yacht. At 17 inches tall by 13 inches long, this handmade, maple model is perfect for small spaces. Call 978/462-7012 or visit pieUmftsmeti.com.
- Tise **Damn** Chaise (\$949, plus cushion, \$279) from Smith & Hawken, made of sturdy teak, offers a pull-out side 'ray and an adjustable backrest and knee section. Call 800/9X1-9888 or visit smithrndhatuken.com.
- lite Surveyor's Hour Lamp (1595) by Shades of Light boasts adjustable mahogany legs. Call 800/262-6612 or visit ihadesojlight.com.