



ISLAND TIME Robin's egg blue chairs embellished with floral backs add a subtle pop to the otherwise neutral kitchen. The color scheme, curated by Leah Bailey Interiors, feels serene and coastal, offering a welcoming transition for the homeowners as they move from California to Palmetto Bluff.

HOME SHOWCASE

Sweet escape

*A PANDEMIC-ERA HOME
DESIGNED TO GET AWAY
FROM IT ALL, TOGETHER*

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD

When the owners of this Palmetto Bluff property bought it in 2021, they were seeking an escape. From their home in California, they envisioned a vacation retreat for the present and eventually a full-time family hub in retirement. In the early days of the COVID-19 lockdowns, a place to retreat felt essential. But instead of returning to wide-open concepts and all-purpose rooms, their vision leaned toward separation and privacy.

"A recurring theme during COVID was to give everybody their own space to be separate without having to leave the house," says Evan Goodwin, principal architect on the project.

The homeowners embraced this mindset, presenting an extensive wish list to the team at [Pearce Scott Architects](#): a gym, a recreation

room and an outdoor pool. On a Palmetto Bluff lot, fitting it all in was no small feat.

"Part of the problem-solving was making sure we could fit everything," Goodwin says.

The solution took shape as a winding sequence of rooms to explore, each with a clear purpose and its own privacy door. Despite its segmented layout, the home never feels closed off.



Personal space

Even in the home's gathering areas, there is room to breathe. Goodwin credits the abundance of natural light, noting that even the winding stairwell connecting the main house and carriage house never feels enclosed.

"It's flooded with light from a series of high windows," he says.

On the second floor, hallways open up with pairs of colonial grid windows, while, below, the dining room and kitchen overlook the backyard. Throughout the home, a palette of crisp white and soft blues enhances the brightness. The glass porch, however, stands apart. Opening directly to the great room through sliding doors, it frames views of the preserved wetland. On sunny days it fills with light, and during storms it glows from within, warmed by a brick fireplace. Like the home's other shared spaces, it balances openness with comfort, inviting people to gather without feeling crowded.

VENDOR LIST

Architect: Pearce Scott Architects
Interior Designer: Leah Bailey Interiors
Exterior Designer: Witmer-Jones-Keefer
Builder: CS Thomas Construction
Pool Designer: Year Round Pool Company



Alone, together

Though born out of an isolated time, the home's purpose is ultimately about connection. Under one roof, family members can enjoy a quiet dinner while a lively game night unfolds elsewhere, unnoticed. Everyone has space for solitude, but even more square footage is devoted to togetherness.

It is a retreat that avoids cabin fever and embraces possibility, answering a simple question: What if a vacation could belong entirely to you? This home makes a compelling case. *LL*



Going up?

THIS THREE-STORY STAIR TURNS CIRCULATION INTO AN EXPERIENCE

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD



There are moments when architecture feels like sorcery, when the viewer, awestruck, can't help but wonder how a building took shape. This winding staircase, designed by **Pearce Scott Architects**, is one of those.

Connecting three stories and two homes in one vertical space posed quite the challenge for the team on this Palmetto Bluff project. "They were really tricky to figure out, like a Swiss watch," says principal architect Evan Goodwin. The solution was a twisting, three-story elevation that is as functional as it is sculptural. Each level reveals a door or passageway, like expanding into the adjoining carriage house on the second floor or dipping out to the service yard at ground level. Like the work of M.C. Escher, some may find the maze-like configuration dizzying. Goodwin finds it playful. "On this oversized stair, I could see you pulling up a chair or a bean bag and hanging out to read," he says, referencing a generously sized landing between the first and second floors.

While its labyrinthine layout could feel confining, tall windows and abundant light transform the stairwell into a place to pause rather than simply pass through. It's its own spectacle to behold, a puzzle expertly solved — no magic required.

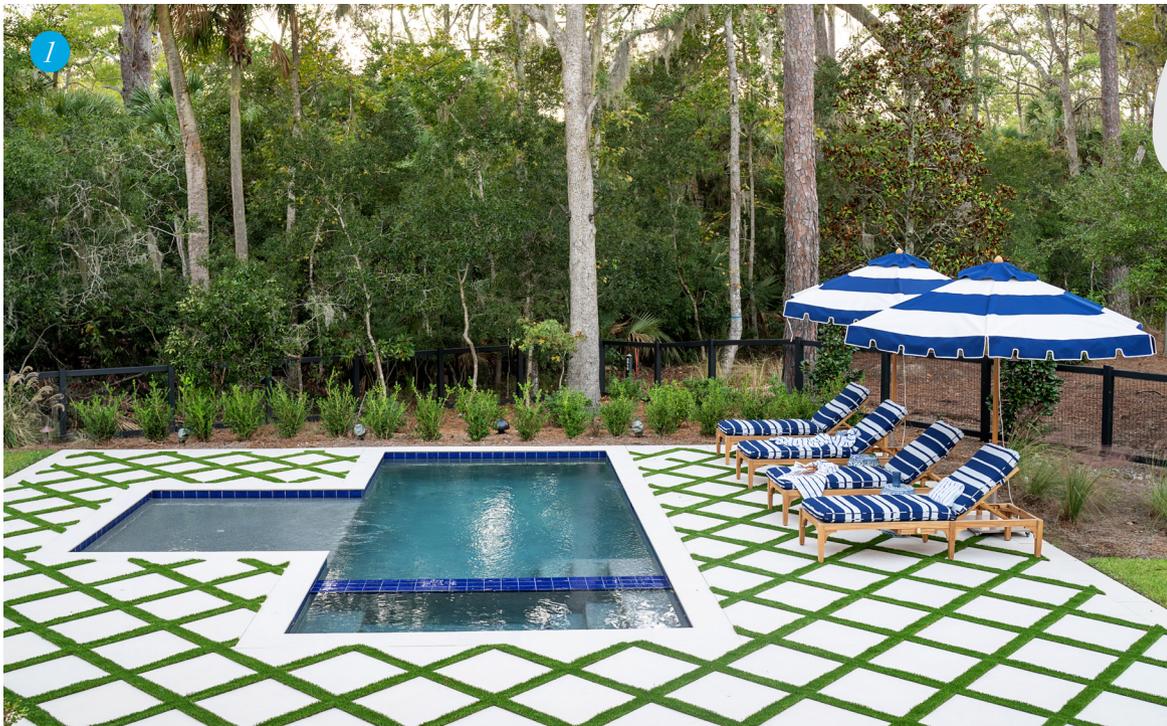


SIDEWINDER Moving up, down and side to side within one stairwell could easily feel claustrophobic. To counter that, Evan Goodwin and the Pearce Scott Architects team flooded the space with light. Tall windows illuminate the entire stairwell, creating an open, airy experience that changes the feel of the space entirely.

Keeping cool

A flooding challenge did not stop this dreamy Palmetto Bluff pool design

STORY BY ALEA WILKINS + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD



Designing a pool in a flood zone presents challenges, but for the team behind this Palmetto Bluff retreat, that was only the beginning. With restrictions on excavation depth, the goal became maximizing visual impact while keeping costs in check.

"We wanted it to feel like a 'wow' moment rather than just a pool in the yard," says Evan Goodwin, principal architect at **Pearce Scott Architects**.

The solution, designed by Year Round Pool Company, uses a striking arrangement of pavers to deliver style without excess.



1. MAKING A SPLASH Crisp white pavers arranged in a diamond pattern add unexpected drama to the backyard. Paired with striped lounge chairs, the design makes a statement while respecting the landscape. The idea came from the homeowners, drawing inspiration from their California roots for a look that feels at home on either coast.

2. FIRED UP Beside the pool, a cozy fire pit extends outdoor living into cooler months. The simple brick structure and surrounding lawn chairs allow the setting to shine, with views of live oaks and Spanish moss draped along the preserved wetlands.

3. PORCH PERFECTION The glass porch is a standout feature of the home. A dining area anchors one end, ideal for quiet breakfasts spent watching wildlife. At the other, plush seating and a fireplace create a welcoming space for evening gatherings. It offers sweeping Lowcountry views while preserving indoor comfort, striking the perfect balance between inside and out.

