

# Charleston LIVING

November / December 2023

## STIR SOME *Cheer*

Holiday Cocktail Recipes  
From Local Bars and  
Restaurants

## Usher in the Season with Style

Table Settings Worthy of the  
Holiday + Winter Fashion

## Common Grounds

Local Coffee Roasters



Holiday  
Markets

Holiday  
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Winter Bird  
Watching



# The 'Marsh House'

*Showstopping  
natural beauty reflected  
in Kiawah Island home*

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Photos by KATIE CHARLOTTE PHOTOGRAPHY

**AS A KID, RYANN SWAN HACKETT SPENT** summers at her grandmother's home on Edisto Beach, so the Lowcountry seacoast and its unique marshes mean a lot to her.

Swan now lives in the Northeast and is the owner and principal designer of her own firm, Ryann Swan Design in Connecticut. When she got a call about designing a home on Kiawah for her cousin, Swan was delighted for the opportunity. The big plus: the two were pals on Edisto Beach during those past summers, exploring the island on their bikes and getting ice cream at the gas station. So now Swan would be helping her beach buddy bring the Lowcountry beauty and magic into the new home on Kiawah, located between the Kiawah River and the ocean.

PHOTO JIM SOMERSET



Window treatments with a printed grand frond pattern from Heather Chadduck Textiles pull in the surrounding nature. A custom curved sofa wrapped in a floral pattern on the back and geometric Anna French textile on the front add a touch of playfulness.

“I had just launched my firm about a year and a half prior, and she had just purchased the home,” she said. “We spent our summers in Edisto growing up on the Carolina coastline, so it’s quite a special thing to be able to do this project in Kiawah because we had such a tie to the Lowcountry.”

Throughout the planning process, they kept referring to the house as “The Marsh House.”

“It overlooks a gigantic marsh, so it’s got the crickets and it’s quite peaceful there. In our design philosophy, we really wanted to bring that through. We were really cognizant of thinking of the colors of the surrounding nature and tying those through the interior.”

But Ryann said before the design details were finalized, the

structure of the home was considered for its purpose of being a vacation home for the couple, their family, and their friends to enjoy.

“Each of the rooms were thoughtfully designed with who is going to be sleeping in that room. We have the primary bedroom, which is on the first floor, and so we designed that with a space for the couple. You have a lounge where they could relax and have a beautiful view of the marsh from their room. The chairs we put in there they could arrange to sit in their room and have some privacy if they did have a house full of people—maybe to escape for a cup of coffee,” said Swan.

On the second floor, Swan reimagined two bedrooms each with king-sized beds for couples who would come to stay. Also on the sec-



A Fischer Weisman chandelier adds a touch of formality to the living room. Custom covered Nickey Kehoe dining chairs in a green leather play on an updated traditional note. On the wall, a commissioned piece of art from a Maine artist is made of driftwood wrapped in rope.

ond floor is a redesigned kid's bedroom.

"In their son's room, we popped in two full-size bunk beds for a total of four bunks in the room, which is great. I think if they'll have two couples stay and all the kids kind of pile in that room, it works out really well."

Swan's firm also turned an office upstairs into a bonus room and converted a closet into an extra full bathroom.

"We converted it into more of a game room. It's got four game chairs, and then as an overflow guest space, we put in a pull-out sofa. I think it's great if there's an overflow of kids, they can pop in there."

## Matching Nature's Natural Palette

Then came what anyone would say is the creative part: choosing the colors, the furniture and the art which would complement and bring in the outdoor beauty, as well as match the owners' taste and style.

"In the master suite, we they wanted something serene, so I used softer blues—something that you could relax in, and we found great McLaurin & Piercy fabric for the window treatments that added this nature component."

Swan also set out to use as many local vendors and artisans as she could in the design of the Kiawah home. There are several mixed-medium collages of Lowcountry marine life by Everett White of



A custom fabric-wrapped four poster bed lends a note of grandeur to the primary suite. Lighting by Arteriors nods to the surrounding nature.



Coordinating white vessels that hold kitchen items are sourced from a variety of local vendors.

Charleston and other art by Kiah Ann Bellows from Greenville, who specializes in evocative impressionistic seascapes. In one guest room there is an abstract done by Way Way Allen of Mt. Pleasant. Hanging over the bed in the second guest room are framed photos of many of the musicians who at one time called South Carolina their home.

Swan went to Powell's Upholstery on John's Island for some of the custom furniture and upholstery details as well as Southern Shades in Moncks Corner for drapery and window treatments.

"It's fun to be able to think through that and try to pay attention to how we can incorporate those details and support the local businesses and the arts community too at the same time," said Swan.

But the major star of this show were the views of the ever-changing marsh and wildlife, framed by the many windows, experienced on the screened in porch and in the outdoor pool area.

"I wanted to talk to the natural environment of the Lowcountry, so you've got these vistas with marshes and ocean peeking through, and the dry grasses and the ferns and all of those colors and textures. I didn't want it to feel overly patterned and bright inside; I wanted to have those serene vistas where you get you to look at the landscape, especially with this space being a vacation home. I think you want to relax and unwind."

Ryann Swan Designs also does commercial spaces in the hospi-

The game room is enveloped in a custom mixed Benjamin Moore color. Swivel chairs from Ballard Designs offers plenty of seating.



tality industry. At one time Swan worked in the financial world. Then she decided to take her life in a different direction and enrolled at Parsons School of Design.

Her firm's projects are 20 percent commercial, and 80 percent residential. Bringing homes to life is her passion.

"You create whatever the vision is, but when you're doing homes, the parameters make it more interesting. You've got a husband's taste to take into account, you've got a wife's taste to take into account, and then you've got to have the family functions, and so there's all of these different factors that create these boundaries for home design. It's nice problem solving. It is definitely challenging, but the reward is so magical when you create a home for a family they get to walk in and you see them have Christmases there and you know you selected the sofa that they're going to open their presents on. And the kids are going to grow up remembering all of these moments," Swan said.

Designing the Kiawah marsh house held an extra plus for Swan. Since the owner was her cousin, she not only got to see her vision come to life at a big party the homeowners hosted, but the cousins also shared their special memories about being kids on Edisto at their grandmother's house.

"As the day transitioned into night, we would love sitting out on the porch of her house watching the shrimp boats return with that day's haul," Swan said. ■



Outdoor seating to enjoy the view of the marsh.

