

The following article represents a project that was designed while working with Norman Davenport Askins, Architects.

Southern Accents

The magazine of fine Southern interiors and gardens

September-October 2004

fall in love with **Decorating**



**Stylish
Rooms**

Beautiful Antiques

Finishing Touches

Display Unit November 2

\$5.99US \$7.50CAN

10>

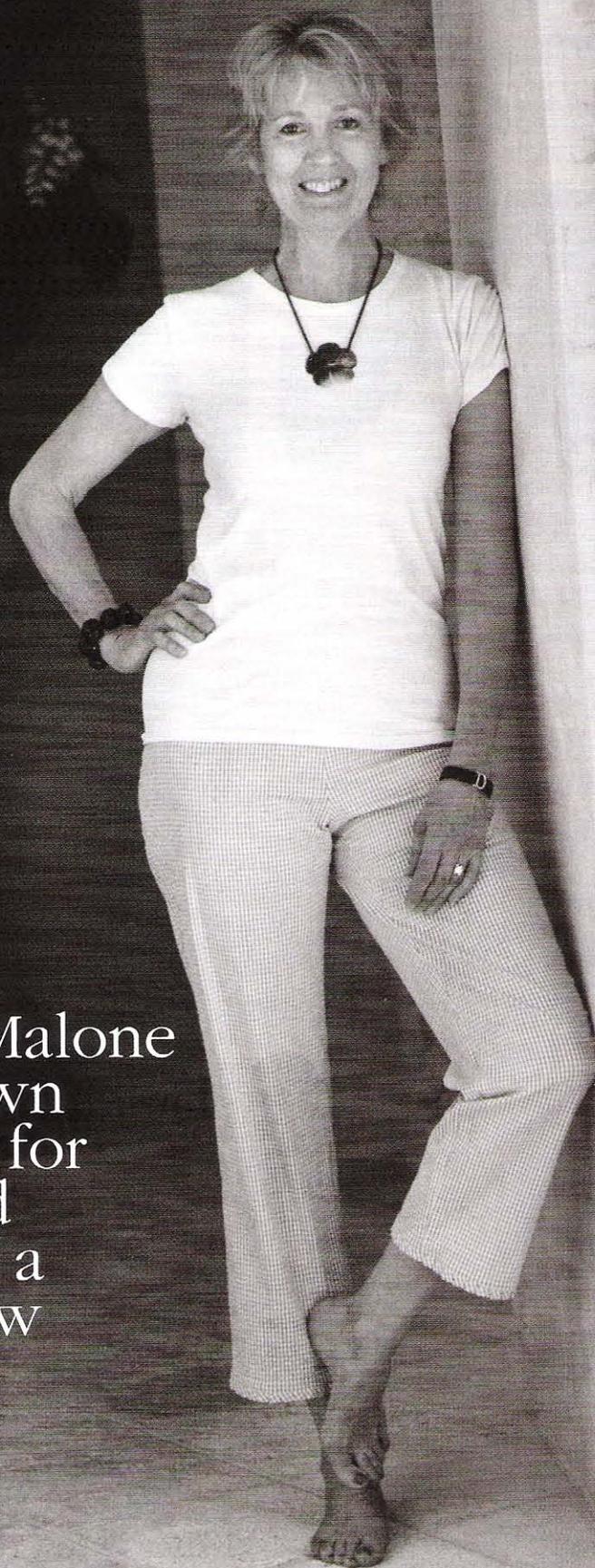


www.southernaccents.com
AOL Keyword: Southern Accents

Palm Beach P

Designer
Carolyn Malone
tones down
the shine for
old-world
appeal in a
brand-new
house

BY MIMI READ
PHOTOGRAPHED BY WILLIAM WALDRON
PRODUCED BY MOLLY POWER PASTOR



astiche



Mexican stone tables and new plaster crests furnish the rear loggia, which overlooks a lake behind the house. Moroccan-inspired stained-teak furniture is covered in pale blue-green canvas by Perennials. LEFT: Designer Carolyn Malone stands outside in the house's entry loggia.



A 13-foot ceiling gives the living room a capacious feel, but separate furniture groupings keep the atmosphere intimate. The reproduction ottoman is upholstered in an antique Aubusson fragment. Above the French carved-limestone fireplace is a 19th-century Venetian landscape painting. OPPOSITE PAGE: A pair of Flemish chairs upholstered in dusty-blue velvet flank a painted and carved French buffet. Malone assembled the mirror from an old French overdoor found at Tom Hayes & Associates in Atlanta.



Six years ago, designer Carolyn Malone of Atlanta took a European vacation, and she remembers the colors she saw the way others recall superb restaurant meals. Her traveling companion, one of her oldest friends, was also the woman who later commissioned this Palm Beach house and asked Malone to decorate it.

On their trip, the two traveled to Florence, where they toured the countryside in chilly March weather. Crowning the hilltops around the

city were many marvelous old villas, most of which were sparsely furnished in a way that was luxurious yet offhand and quiet.

"We walked inside and they had these faded frescoes in dusty, beautiful colors—butternut squashes, terracottas, soft sage greens," says Malone. "We didn't buy anything on that trip, but we were observant. I took a lot of pictures, and as we worked on this house, I would go back to the snapshots for inspiration."

Malone also took her cues from Norman Askins and Bill Litchfield,



Project architect Bill Litchfield designed the ceiling in the dining room, where pecky cypress boards are arranged in a star pattern. The curtains, made of pleated terra-cotta silk by Larsen, appear to change color throughout the day. OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: A 19th-century Zuber wallpaper screen depicting a rural Italian scene hangs above a reproduction carved-stone console table. OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM: In the entry loggia, plaster walls, cypress ceiling beams, and painted Venetian tole lanterns reinforce the Mediterranean atmosphere.





the Atlanta-based architects who designed the house down to its last roof tile. It echoes the classic Palm Beach homes of the '20s and '30s, which were exotic, atmospheric pastiches of old Mediterranean and Moorish elements.

For the downstairs, Malone created a decidedly European flavor. The designer wanted the house to seem long-settled, despite its newness.

Plaster walls are the same color in every room—an ocher hue that is more of a glow than a color, she says. In the dining room, a chandelier presides over a handsome reproduction Italian table posed on an old Oushak carpet. The 18th-century Italian dining chairs wear a fabric of terra-cotta and soft silvery gold. And leave it to Malone to pile the sumptuous textile into the washing

ABOVE: Refined white lattice-work adds texture and elaborate detail to the breakfast room. A French walnut chair, black-iron chandelier, and bronze palm-leaf sconces break up the monochromatic palette. **RIGHT:** Malone dressed an upstairs office in a cool palette with white ceilings and walls and muslin slipcovered chairs. Suspended from the ceiling is a chandelier from San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.



machine first to eliminate the shine.

The spare furniture arrangement in the living room brings to mind noble 17th-century European houses. Under the raft of rustic ceiling beams, a huge French carved-limestone fireplace anchors the airy space, where French and Italian chairs—some reproduction, some authentic—pose in groups of two or three. Terra-cotta overdoors from a Paris flea market, though not matching, have similar robust carvings of fruit and flowers. When the homeowners entertain, Malone says, “they open the French doors, and you can hear the sound of the fountain outside. It’s very romantic.” It’s notable, perhaps, that there’s no television in the room. “Hard to believe, but true,” Malone laughs.

Off the rear loggia toward the back of the house is the breakfast room, where the designer’s theme suddenly took respite and “a little Swedish tip-toed in the door,” she says. Litchfield gave the room a plaster ceiling that peaks in a tent shape. Its plaster walls are netted in white latticework—all inspired by one of Ogden Codman Jr.’s famous Newport, Rhode Island, ballrooms. “Everything in the room is basically either linen white or the softest sage green, either aged or old, and we used the same fabric everywhere,” says Malone. A powdery-white Gustavian cabinet hides a television. Only a black-iron chandelier and bronze palm-leaf





A grand French settee with its original gold fringe provides seating in the master bedroom, where the floors are cool limestone and the walls feature raised panels in plaster relief. Malone and her client found the headboard at a flea market in Atlanta. The bedside tables, a pair of Venetian silver leaf commodes, are from Regalo Antiques in Atlanta.



Malone designed the pair of crenellated bed canopies in the guest room to evoke Moroccan design. Almost everything in the room is white, with a few blue-green accents, exuding a fresh, peaceful feeling. LEFT: In a hallway leading to the master bedroom, an Italian Savonarola chair from an Atlanta flea market serves as sculpture. Inside an arched plaster niche is one of a pair of a classical terra-cotta busts from the early 19th century.

sconces stand in stark silhouette.

In the master bedroom, which is located on the ground floor, all is calm, cool, and a touch empty, counteracting Palm Beach's dazzling hot climate and riotous vegetation. The draperies and bed curtains are done in the same silk fabric, a silvery sage-and-coffee stripe trimmed in coffee-colored silk. Under the bed's luxuriant corona is the headboard, which was created from a fragment found at an Atlanta flea market—"probably some Pope's bed," Malone says. For the bedside tables, the designer used a pair of shimmering Venetian silver leaf commodes.

Moroccan flavor found its way

into the upstairs rooms, including a refreshing, stark-white guest bedroom and home office. Malone was happy to let her handful of influences flow a bit freely here and there, the way the architects did.

"I aimed for beauty and luxury, but without doing anything too grand," the designer says. "I like grandness in its authenticity—in the Italian villas in Florence, for instance—but when translating it to 21st-century America, I'm compelled to change grand to just plain beautiful. It's friendlier, more inviting. Grand doesn't befit our lifestyles today, but beauty is always relevant." ♦

For details, see *Sourcebook*, page 246.



