

COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES

An Amelia Island beachfront condo channels coastal in unexpected ways

words by **Emily Bailey** // photos by **Jessie Preza**



“I grew up coming to Amelia every summer, as a child. My grandparents had a house on Fletcher Street. Each of their children’s families took turns vacationing at the house and cousins often went together. Once I was married with children, I took my children to visit with my grandparents. They [my grandparents] have since passed away, and I still keep shells in a pocket of a

jacket I’d wear on winter beach walks with them,” says homeowner Sally Paulk. “Being in Amelia now is wonderful, certainly because of its coastal beauty and charm, but it’s also so much more. For me, it is connecting to my roots and providing the same richness of life for my children.”

Paulk is a permanent resident of Valdosta, Georgia, but knew once her grandparents passed she needed a vacation home of her

own on the Florida island that had become so entwined in her family’s roots. She came across an oceanfront condo inside Amelia Island Plantation and knew it would be a perfect fit for weekend getaways. However, beyond its ideal location, the unit left much to be desired. That’s where Tiffany Hinton of Lola Interiors came in, taking a 1980s condo and transforming it into a colorful, coastal getaway.

FOYER

“The painting was layered behind a dresser and some other things in a booth at Eight Flags Antiques in downtown Fernandina. I saw the top of the woman’s head and was curious, so I edged my way through the booth and scooted the dresser to the side to get a better look. I loved it. The deep, bold colors, the subjects—their clothes, the freedom in their dancing with heads thrown back and big smiles, enjoying each other—and the feeling I had just looking at it. I wanted every one who came to our home to feel as joyful and untethered as the dancers on the floor,” says Paulk. “I actually did not buy the painting that day, but did send a picture to Tiffany and said ‘I love this! Let’s put it in the dining room!’ Turned out we didn’t have the height in the dining room, so I settled for using it as inspiration. The next time I walked through Eight Flags Antiques, the painting was still there and I bought it immediately. The owner told me its history and asked me where I was going to put it. I told her I didn’t know but I love it and will find a space somewhere. Can you believe the entry wall is exactly the correct measurement? I think when we listen to what we love and truly desire, everything else falls into place.”

“This is the only wall in the entire house on which the painting would fit,” says Hinton. “We thought it kind of risky, but we love it.” Such a grand painting lends itself to a grand entryway, so to better suit the space the ceilings were raised for additional height and to accommodate the canvas.

Hinton says there are two types of people: those for whom art is very important and those who consider it as an afterthought. The former should choose their art first and have the design complement those looks—the art providing color, texture, and feeling—while the latter can fill in blank spaces on the wall once the rest of the design has come together. For the Paulks, art was one of the most important elements of the home.



LIVING ROOM

“Sally wanted a very comfortable living room... I mean she has five children,” Hinton laughs. “We went back and fourth on the sectional color for quite a while, but we love how the black turned out. All of the fabrics are very durable for life at the beach with the kids. We wanted it to be carefree.”

The room was tied together with natural elements, such as grasscloth behind the TV, driftwood lining the shelves, and an oversized woven rug (that won’t tarnish from a little sand if some happens to make its way into the house).

The painting above the couch is a custom piece by Paulk’s father, Buddy LaHood. Look closely at the abstract and find each of the children’s five names hidden within the work. “My dad’s art is at once visually and emotionally moving. I love to go into his studio and see what’s new on the easel or wall. His paintings are very fluid and visceral,” says Paulk. “Most of his paintings reveal what he is feeling, which means they are ever changing and growing. I feel like I know part of my father through his creation. He will do commissioned work, but my favorites are usually the ones he creates late at night when he just picks up a brush and goes.”



Never underestimate the impact a pop of color from a throw pillow can bring.

MASTER BEDROOM

The master bedroom was given a deep, warm feeling with black grasscloth behind the bed and dark paint in the same color throughout. The bed frame is upholstered in velvet and topped with bedding that provides a light contrast to the black.

Like the rest of the home, the master bedroom has art and antiques sprinkled throughout. Hinton notes that, while looking for pieces for this project, she often had unexpected finds, such as the tapestry at the end of the bed. "I found it at a local market. It's an African cloth that I think is made to be a rug runner. I thought it would be perfect for the foot of the bed," she says.



MASTER BATH

The earthy vibe of the home continues into the master bathroom, which is covered with patterned grasscloth wallpaper and finished with floor-to-ceiling tile in a shower that extends the length of the room and includes an oversized tub. A closet is situated on the opposite side of the bathroom, providing easy access while getting ready—or grabbing a pajama set after a long day corralling kids on the beach.

