



A Dream Renovation

KIM SPEARS CREATIVELY REDESIGNS
HER FAMILY'S HOUSE WITH THRIFTY TACTICS TO
CREATE A BEAUTIFUL "SHABBY CHIC" HOME.

By SUZANNE WENTLEY
Photography by LINDSEY POTTER & RON ROSENZWEIG



The easy part was falling in love with each other and their children.

The hard part was bringing the families together under one roof in a way that honored the fresh beginning and effortless, peaceful lives Kim Spears and Andy Reich planned to enjoy together.

"Originally, we were just going to sell the house," Spears says, standing in the foyer of their 3,800-square-foot Sewall's Point home and guesthouse in High Point.

And no one would blame them: The interior was dated with the dark colors of the 1990s, and it felt small. The floors were made of orange-red oak. The dark cherry dining room

**INSTALLED BY APEX
PAVERS & POOLS
DESIGNED BY TONY
GRIMALDI, TONY
GRIMALDI LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE**

Before

THE CHALLENGE: The client wanted the driveway to have a "Palm Beach" look to complement the house.

THE TRANSFORMATION: Apex installed turf by Synthetic Turf International, and installed 24-inch by 24-inch travertine pavers, mud-set over a concrete slab. Apex says the most difficult portion of the job was the layout, assuring that all of the spacing was correct, to allow for the turf to be installed.

After

POOL/LANDSCAPE



THE TRANSFORMATION: The designers transformed the pool and deck area that was underused into a beautiful, private courtyard garden that offers a fire pit to gather around on cool nights with the soothing sound of a mountain stream. The new garden space provides multiple uses for the owners to enjoy privately and with their children and grandchildren. It also provides a great space for larger family events, entertaining friends and hosting large parties and fundraisers. □

**DESIGN BY JANE KREBS, RLA AND PAUL
GOULAS, RLA, LUCIDO AND ASSOCIATES**

THE CHALLENGE: The owners did not use the pool and they wanted more area for outdoor use and entertaining for the waterfront property. The pool deck was an extension of the interior family and entertainment area of the home. The owners decided to remove the pool and a large portion of the deck, and asked Lucido to create a multi-use courtyard garden. The owners wanted a natural water feature, a fire pit area and open lawn that could be covered







Wicker chairs found at a thrift store re-upholstered with custom-made cushions add an Asian flare to the living room.

and kitchen tables were flanked by stately dark china cabinets, which melted into the hunter green and brown leather chairs. Country-style fans served as light fixtures.

The master bedroom featured ivy-covered wallpaper and more heavy, dark woods. The kitchen cabinets were creamy gold, and the area rugs were maroon and tan. On the back patio, striped cushions covered a seating area that overlooked a ping-pong table.

But instead of moving, Spears and Reich, a partner in the law firm of Reich & Mancini, decided to use the skills Spears developed in her career staging houses for resale to gut and renovate the entire home.

Over the last year, Spears has overseen a complete renewal of their home – relying heavily on restored, vintage

pieces that create a sophisticated, timeless feel for a fraction of the price of most renovation projects.

The result is a beautiful design that's ideal for hosting parties for friends and relaxing as a family.

"I see the beauty in things that others might not see. It comes naturally," says Spears, who owns The Kim Spears Group Real Estate and Interiors for Keller Williams. "Now I feel like I'm on vacation when I come home, like we're at a beach resort, living casual but chic."

What started as a necessity – bringing together their families (including Reich's 18-year-old daughter, Emily, and 16-year-old son, Kyle, and Spears' daughters: Emily, 18, and Lizzy, 14) – turned into a fun, year-long project that also brought the couple closer together.





Pieces of real coral, candles and orchids accent bargain finds.



That's because instead of ordering everything from a showroom, Spears searched area thrift stores and special online boutiques to find the perfect pieces at a surprisingly reduced rate. Every time the couple travels somewhere, they're sure to swing into a secondhand shop.

"He's with me on weekends, and we go thrift-shopping," Spears says. "He let me have my own directions and gave me free reign. And he loves it all."

What's not to love?

With Spears' fresh aesthetic, every room in their home has been transformed into an airy dream, with white-washed furniture in unique, natural shapes. Pieces of real coral, fragrant candles and orchids accent bargain finds. Those wicker chairs in the living room? Spears paid \$75 for each at the House of Hope thrift store, and added custom-made cushions that tie together her love of Asian flair and rustic beach vibes. The tray table that creates a seating area near the din-

Her favorite stores are the Habitat for Humanity ReStores in Stuart and Palm Beach, where she purchased her sofa, which probably retailed for \$10,000, for a mere \$65.

"They know me very well there," she says, laughing.

The idea for the renovation began when Spears started admiring looks in design magazines. When she searched online at Palm Beach Regency and Circa Who, she found the same pieces – but with a high price tag. That's when the hunt began.

With a nod to the Hollywood Regency style of the 1930s featuring bamboo, spun wicker and a hint of glitz, she began finding great deals locally and used the contacts she made professionally to restore the piece's beauty. The taxidermied sailfish in Kyle's room? Ebay. The outdoor Lucite table with large nautilus shells? The ReStore. That bar cart? Salvation Army.

Of course, mixed into the restored bargain finds are investment pieces and accents that tie together the design. Mirrors and chandeliers custom-decorated by artist Stephanie Ferguson, who designs with shells, coral and crystals, add to the unique feel. Davi Restorations in Palm City restored and repainted worn furniture pieces.

Restoration Hardware (the outlet is where to find the best deals, Spears adds) is the source for the kitchen knobs and curtain rods. Seagrass rugs (relatively inexpensive and easy to replace if Skipper, the dog they adopted from the Humane Society of the Treasure Coast, makes a mess) and new DuChateau flooring came from Able Carpet in Jensen Beach.

The fabrics, including a lot of white Sunbrella stain-resistant, indoor-outdoor cushion covers, were mostly from Calico Corners in Stuart.

Their guesthouse was the latest phase of the renovation, which was completed just hours before they opened their home to more than 600 visitors as part of last year's Holiday Home Tour to benefit the Woman's Club of Stuart.

"I don't function well in chaos, and it was!" she says of the yearlong project.

Using the same fresh mix of classic pieces, Spears created an office in the guesthouse featuring a Lucite chandelier, desk and bookcase, a rare



flooring from the ReStore that saved approximately \$11.50 per square foot.

Overall, Spears estimates that she's paid about a tenth of what her renovation project should have cost the family, had it not been for her bargain-hunting and simple restoration work.

Of course, her collection of amazing pieces has overflowed into a storage space, which she is in the process of slowly selling to those who appreciate her clean design aesthetic. Selling some of her prized finds to clear out the garage, at the request of her husband, may have been the toughest part of the project.

For now, the family is enjoying the results of all of their hard work. But Spears is planning the final phase of renovation in the house: the master bathroom.

"It feels a little weird. I need my next project."



The open great room showcases the beautiful view of the Loxahatchee River.

DOWN BY THE RIVER

AN INTERIOR DESIGNER CREATES A BREEZY, RIVERFRONT HOME THAT EMBRACES MODERN TOUCHES FOR A COUPLE FROM CANADA.



The refurbished furniture in the master bedroom complements the natural tones used throughout the home. Both the master bedroom and the office feature views of the river.

and entertain. They love a clean look and hate running the air conditioning. They wanted to enjoy the beautiful views of the water and share that view with friends and family.

Holmes collaborated with architect Mitchell O'Neil and general contractor Moe Bernstel of Construction Connection to design and construct a home that met those needs in a stylish, unique way.

With a simple cluster of bamboo jutting from the loose landscaping shells lining the brick paver walkway, the home immediately conveys the same feeling of modern hospitality as a boutique waterfront hotel. The open great room design flows smoothly into a large screened-in patio toward the back of the home, offering picturesque views of the Loxahatchee River.

Hurricane-proof doors tuck seamlessly into pockets in the walls, while shade screens retract completely into the cedar-planked ceiling.

Guests are able to drink their coffee and work on their computers while sitting on split cane chairs with neutral-colored cushions. The exposed shell stone that creates the home's outside façade wraps into the patio, adding to the airy, natural feel.

"That was the transition to bring the outside in," Holmes says, as he steps out to the back patio that features a lap pool, fire pit and dock to store the couple's two Jet Skis.

A stainless-steel grill stands ready in the corner of the patio, but the expansive kitchen is where the real action is in the house. Off-white cabinets with sleek



The expansive kitchen includes a half-dish-washer, corner drawers and a cabinet in the center island.

T

he little-known secret about designing a home with modern, sleek lines and very little clutter? It has to be just right.

“There’s the old standard of ‘less is more,’ but the details to create that modern environment can be very tedious,” says H. Allen Holmes, a Hobe Sound-based interior designer and space planner who oversaw the creation of such a home on the banks of the Loxahatchee River last year.

“If you embellish things, you can hide things. But if the line needs to be crisp and plumb, it needs to be perfect,” he says.

With that understanding, Holmes embarked on the design of a home built for a retired couple from Canada who wanted a fresh space to enjoy the breeze from the water.

They found a property on the river that they liked, but the existing house was a single story, typical Florida home that didn’t meet their trim and natural aesthetic. So, they razed the home and called Holmes, who had previously worked with them on other design projects.

Starting from scratch, Holmes knew that the couple loves to cook



bria stone countertops.

Along with the large windows overlooking the water, fun features – including a half-dishwasher, corner drawers (instead of a lazy susan) and a special cabinet in the large island that served as a giant knife block – bring a sense of personality to the room.

“Everything has a place and a purpose,” he says. “Working in a budget, I say it stifles creativity, but really it stimulates creativity because you are challenged.”

Still, there are custom touches throughout the house. The great room, itself a perfect place to entertain with Inuit statues and artwork, is separated from the round formal dining table by a floating wall. The wall, which sits on short steel plates with space between it and the ceiling and floor, is actually a large glass china cabinet covered in interesting swirls of palm fiber.

“It was an idea I had when I saw the materials. I had to put it between glass, so it’s floating,” Holmes says. “It came out beautifully. The cabinet becomes an architectural piece.”

“This is the difference between design and decorating,” he adds. “It’s coming up with a concept and understanding the mechanics and making it work.”

Small, square LED lights in the ceiling help guests find their way from the Mexican shell stone tile ground floor, up stairs made of sable palm wood and steel rods, to two suites designed to resemble hotel rooms. Vanities, televisions and heated towel racks complement the robes and slippers set out for each guest.

Dark plantation shutters, designed with hidden hardware, keep out the light, while one of the rooms features a small patio to enjoy the view of the water.

“Everything is a neutral palette to accentuate the materials and views and not distract from them,” he says.

The owners may work out in the small exercise room upstairs, but most of the living happens downstairs, where their master bedroom and office both feature views of the river.

In the office, a baby grand piano and two oversized red leather desk chairs are as playful as the homeowners’ collection of ceramic clowns displayed in the built-in bookcase.

Most of the furniture came from the owners’ previous home, but many pieces were refurbished to complement the natural tones. In most rooms, the only bright colors are from roses delivered over the past month to celebrate the couple’s anniversary. It’s clear that the home design’s lack of clutter makes room for living as easy as the river’s breeze. ■



Top Large floor-to-ceiling windows overlook the river. Middle The bathroom is equipped with a vanity and a heated towel rack. Above A floating glass china cabinet separates the

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