

# Graceful Getaway

CYNTHIA MASTERS ARTFULLY JUXTAPOSES MASCULINE AND FEMININE ELEMENTS IN A SOUTH CAROLINA RETREAT.

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Warm, inviting, and gracious. Those are the words designer Cynthia Masters uses to describe the owners of this vacation home situated on the shores of

Lake Keowee in the Blue Ridge Mountains. And, if homes are said to be a reflection of their owners, then it stands to reason these descriptors would apply to the residence as well. With architectural stone and wood details seen alongside thoughtfully curated finishes and furnishings, the tangible blend is also a reflection of Masters's approach to interiors as a whole.

For more than three decades, her luxe residential interiors firm has sought to create an artful mix within each project, a philosophy expounded on in its name—Panageries Interior Design Studio, which combines the words panache and menagerie. "It's about selected, collected, and curated pieces," Masters says, "marrying tastes as well as sentimental pieces with new additions."

Following a visit to friends in the area, the owners—who currently make their primary residence in Houston but plan to retire here—fell in love with the South Carolina resort community. After finding a home on the water with a layout conducive to entertaining, they sought to make it their own and reached out to Masters. "This house had great bones, but the previous owners' style didn't align with my clients' taste," the designer says. Here, the marriage of tastes came in tying together the existing masculine structure with more feminine

Previous pages: With rustic stone and natural timber, the home's style fits both its neighborhood and mountain setting. Masters retained the beams and changed out the fixtures to update the facade. Left: When entering the home, guests can see through the living room to the lake beyond. To keep the outdoors as the focus, Masters designed a neutral backdrop that is accented with pink tones, which were pulled from the existing stonework. White oak built-in cabinets house a pottery collection and tie in with the pair of wooden, curved-back chairs by the fireplace. The artwork on the mantel is a commissioned piece from artist John Folsom that reflects the home's Lake Keowee setting.





spaces. Similarly, in the keeping room, plaid chairs with tapered legs and piping and pillows in the same salmon color family illustrate the aesthetically pleasing juxtaposition.

Additionally, custom Oushak rugs were a source of inspiration for many of the rooms. “I love to start here, because it’s the biggest piece,” Masters says. The rugs also provide pattern, something Masters notes she tends to show restraint in using on fabrics. However, she is fond of subtly incorporating a motif throughout an interior. The trained eye will catch herringbone and diamond embellishments repeated in the living room, kitchen, and primary bedroom. “It’s very understated,” Masters says, pointing to the effect on the kitchen’s stone backsplash and the island lanterns.

Carving out an office that was feminine and tranquil was also a high priority, as the wife is a busy executive with an international company and frequently needs to take calls and complete projects at the property. While this room had to function well, it was equally important that it reflect her style and ultimately become a place she wanted to be. “This is her command station, but it’s also a place of refuge and a place of peace, so again, there’s no pattern,” Masters says, pointing to such features as the window seat and reading nook surrounded by built-in bookshelves, both of which seem to invite calm.

While the main level was lightened, Masters notes the home’s downstairs has a “different, almost club-like vibe.” Formerly a second kitchen and dining area, the owners felt the space would function better for them as a bar and entertaining space. “He is a golfer, and this lower area is a wine-tipping, whiskey-sipping room,” Masters explains. With windows along only one side of the room, the designer played up its dark, moody vibe with rich brown woodwork, travertine, and a copper countertop while maximizing overhead lighting and lamps to keep it from feeling cavernous. With the guest bedrooms located on the same level, the area also serves as a hospitality space for overnight visitors, who are fortunate to receive an invite to the couple’s newly designed abode.

Above: The stone and timber seen on the exterior continues into the entry, where it pairs with a tongue-and-groove ceiling that was painted white and a more contemporary entry piece and mirror. Opposite: In the dining room, Masters repeated the salmon color that appears in the adjoining living room. A copper light fixture, wood-grain furniture, and the existing stone niche balance the feminine hue.

furnishings and flourishes. “Both of the clients want to feel like this house is them in the end, and we helped them achieve that,” she adds.

To accomplish the goal, only the stone accents, wooden beams, and existing mantels and kitchen range hood were left intact; everything else was removed, replaced, or reworked to freshen the home’s palette and presence. In particular, the relationship between his and hers is on display in the living room, where the fireplace surround and timber beams are paired with shapely, inviting furniture selections and salmon-hued accents, a color that was pulled from the stone and flows throughout the main gathering







Above and left: Masters notes the kitchen's existing hood was the largest she has ever worked with, leading the entire design to hinge on it. She kept the room's layout but updated the cabinetry and added a pewter countertop, which will patina over time, to the island. Right: The mudroom's lockers neatly conceal drop zone items. Opposite: The keeping room is an oft-used space when the couple is at home alone. A vintage map of Paris, cut into a grid, adds character to the walls and also holds special meaning, as one of the owners lived in the City of Light for a period. Here, the marriage of masculine and feminine is seen in the pairing of the chocolate sofa and plaid chairs with the blush and salmon accents.



Southern  
home





Clockwise from top left: In the wife's office, a cozy nook houses a sofa along with plenty of storage for books. The homeowner loves flowers but prefers not to use them in fabrics, thus Masters incorporated a collection of vintage pressed botanicals set against a grasscloth wallpaper. One of three downstairs guest rooms, this space pairs a classic four-poster bed with a comfortable seating area. Opposite, clockwise from top: With natural light streaming in from just one wall, the downstairs media room's dark palette creates a cozy, refined environment for enjoying a post-golf glass of whiskey. The stone on the front exterior carries throughout the house and onto the back porch, where separate areas for conversation and dining are ideal for entertaining a crowd.







Masters custom-designed the arched storage cabinet in the primary bedroom's entry. The arch is repeated in several places throughout the en suite bath. Here, masculine stained-wood cabinetry juxtaposes with daintier mirrored fronts, while limestone can be seen in several applications from the barrel ceiling to the flooring. Opposite: The rustic beams and white tongue-and-groove ceiling seen in the living room is repeated in the primary bedroom. The metal bed and faceted diamond chandelier contrast with these wood accents.

