

# Talking Coastal

In this conversation, an expert designer shares her outdoor design perspective and process at a North Carolina waterfront home project. **BY LAURIE RUDD**



Sally Williams

## NESTLED OVERLOOKING LUSH NATURAL MARSH GRASSES AND TIDAL OYSTER BEDS, A CONTEMPORARY WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA,

home's outdoor spaces deliver spectacular views and a welcoming vibe, thanks to the design expertise of a Raleigh designer. At the request of a repeat client, Sally Williams, principal designer and owner of Colorful Concepts Interior Design, took on the multilevel exterior project for her client's second home. The homeowner's desire for visitor-friendly functionality and exterior durability were captured in

*TOP LEFT: Designer-styled outdoor furniture creates a seamless transition from indoor to outdoor spaces.*

*BOTTOM: Stylish and quality outdoor seating and shade products create a resort feel in residential settings.*



Williams' detailed design plan and selection of outdoor furnishings.

"We had collaborated with this client on their Cary, N.C., home when their family was growing," Williams says. "Now that they are empty nesters, we were eager to address the casual lifestyle of this locale and this beautiful Oyster Point home to accommodate outdoor expectations and experiences for their guests."

With the creation of a cohesive color palette based on the natural waterfront location and a selection of leisure elements in keeping with the relaxed vibe, Williams and her team were able to deliver to the client's satisfaction a multilevel outdoor living design. In this conversation, Williams shares her outdoor design perspective and process from a fresh coastal viewpoint.

### What was the client's desire for this project?

Primarily, the client envisioned the outdoor spaces from the perspective of accommodating, hosting, and entertaining family members and guests. When pulling together each outdoor "room" and selecting individual design elements, we never lost sight of this specific request.



Custom pillows make outdoor seating areas come alive with color and flair.

### What was the scope of the project's multi-level outdoor living areas?

This project encompassed the entire rear of the home, including a full-length second story balcony that connected guests and their guest rooms to the outdoors. A large deck wrapping around the lower levels of the home offered covered and open areas that were ultimately perfect for cooking, conversation, and lounging.

### What elements were used within your outdoor design plan?

With the multiple levels, our design team was able to create a variety of outdoor living spaces. As I mentioned, the second-story guest balconies were designed to give visitors a private space to enjoy the tremendous sunset views or an

early morning coffee directly off their bedroom. For these areas, we selected durable, natural wood seating as well as tables. Accessories included outdoor rugs to ground and define individual spaces. The orientation of the home was perfect for capturing the North Carolina sunsets; therefore, all outdoor areas on both levels were planned for use from early morning into the evening. The need for outdoor illumination was addressed with decorative string lighting installed along the top-level balcony railings and wall sconces, and a trio of basket-like pendant lights lit up areas on the lower porch area.

Also, on the lower level, elements for cooking, conversation, lounging, and even a handy bar cabinet met the client's request for creating welcome guest experiences. We added a vintage porch swing as a statement-making feature that proved to be very popular with guests as well as the homeowners.

Other sitting areas were planned on the lower level, including chaise lounges for sunning and deep seating for conversation. The homeowner has a passion for container gardening, so we included plenty of modern planters for her to show off her skill and add color to the neutral surroundings.

### What inspired your color and style choices?

With a focus on the spectacular views of the adjacent

wildlife-filled waterway and brilliant coastal sunsets, our inspiration came from our surroundings for colors and furnishing styles. With the collection of outdoor living spaces, we found that we were able to accomplish a restful and cohesive flow, including a blurring of the line not only between indoor and outdoor areas but between each exterior living space.

### What would you say is the highlight of the project?

Our client was especially happy with the results and the functionality of the design plan. It not only accommodated their love of the outdoors and nature, but also their love of gathering with family and friends. The cohesive outdoor living plan allowed everyone to feel at home in this coastal retreat. ■

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### ABOUT SALLY WILLIAMS

*From Architectural Digest and Southern Home to Elle Decor, Williams has been recognized for designing personality driven spaces to call home. For over two decades, she has been designing homes in the most meaningful way. An avid traveler and former art gallery owner, Williams brings an artisanal flair to her interior and exterior spaces. Her enthusiasm for sophisticated family living is apparent from the functional details to the welcoming nature of her designs. Showhouse projects have also been rewarding experiences for Williams, with a favorite being the She Shed for the Junior League of High Point Showhouse. Website: [www.colorful-conceptinteriordesign.com](http://www.colorful-conceptinteriordesign.com).*