

HOME DESIGN / ART / WINE / LIFESTYLE / REAL ESTATE

CHARLESTON STYLE & DESIGN

THE

ART

ISSUE

SPRING 2024



FROM WINDY CITY TO HOLY CITY

*A couple trades a Chicago condo for
breezy coastal living on Fish Tale Island*

by ROBIN HOWARD / *photography by* HOLGER OBENAU



The dining room table was built by the homeowner's daughter.

previous:
The home is designed for open plan living with indoor-outdoor continuity.

W

WHEN A SEMIRETIRED COUPLE MOVED TO CHARLESTON from a condo in Downtown Chicago, they were ready to upsize to a spacious home with lots of windows and light. They also wanted a waterfront lot, which can be tricky to find in today's market. Through a mutual acquaintance and prior client, the homeowners reached out to Steve Kendrick of Structures | Alair to build their home. They just didn't know where.

Kendrick located the perfect lot on Fish Tale Island, a peaceful, exclusive enclave of just seven homes on Daniel Island, and helped them make the connections to buy the last homesite available. "It wasn't luck; a lot of people wanted this lot. It was one of those moments you felt someone upstairs was looking out for you," the client says.

Once the land was secured, the clients worked with architect Neal Van Dalen, whom Structures | Alair had worked with multiple times over the years, to design their dream home. "Neal is very talented and really fun to work with," Kendrick says. "He's old school—he still draws with pencil and a T square if you can believe that." For interiors, the clients worked with Kathryn Elliott of Kathryn Elliott Interiors and SBC Designers—a division of Structures | Alair—throughout the design and building process.

The clients asked the architect for an open home with an easy flow, spacious rooms, and indoor and outdoor continuity. Since they were coming from a much smaller place with low ceilings, they wanted the house to be larger but still feel cozy and livable. They also wanted a home that blended into the island's aesthetic while having its own personality. Once the plans were complete, it was time for the Structures | Alair team to turn a Windy City dream into a Lowcountry reality.

Founded in 1999 by Steve Kendrick, Structures is known first for exceptional customer service, as well as creativity, craftsmanship and a laser-focus attention to detail. The team is also known for going the extra mile to make building a home fun and stress-free. "One of the hallmarks of our process is that everyone on the building team, including our in-house designers, values the creative process and input from architects, homeowners, designers and tradespeople. To bring this home to life, we had to gather and consider a significant amount of input, but that's what our designers and project managers do best," Kendrick says.

Two years ago, the company joined Alair Homes, a network of luxury custom builders. "We saw Alair as an opportunity to build an even stronger company, leveraging the resources available through a builder network, while maintaining our individuality and ownership structure. Alair has been a game changer and perfect fit for our company, now called Structures | Alair. We offer the same quality and service that have defined our company for 25 years, only now they are amplified with the strength and support of Alair," Kendrick says.

The kitchen features a large island where guests can gather. A spacious scullery behind the main kitchen keeps everything tidy.





"Lotus" wallpaper from Farrow & Ball gives the powder room an art nouveau vibe.

right: The homeowner's den features "Flight Deep Emerald" wallpaper from Phillip Jeffries.



The client's bedroom is in its own wing. It has vaulted ceilings and tall windows and doors that highlight the view.



An outdoor living room with a built-in grill and hood is a favorite place to entertain and enjoy the Lowcountry weather.



Because the homeowners love to cook, the kitchen was their priority. After the build began, the team realized some changes were needed to make it more functional. Elliott worked with the architect to move the island and the powder room to create more space. Changes aren't unusual after construction begins, but tweaks go more smoothly when the architect, builder and designer work together as a team. "The best projects are those where the client has the wisdom to put a team together; they have trust in the process and the people to create their dream home," Kendrick says.

The final result is an open kitchen with a large island where the homeowner can prep and cook but still have room for family and visitors to gather. Here and throughout the rest of the home, black-and-white elements form a crisp, timeless, limited color palette.

The clients asked the architect for an open home with an easy flow, spacious rooms, and indoor and outdoor continuity.

The home has high ceilings throughout, and a full-height backsplash of neutral-toned subway tiles accents the kitchen's 12-foot ceilings. Instead of using upper cabinets, which would overwhelm the space, Elliott added white oak floating shelving for additional storage and visual interest.

The 48-inch Sub-Zero Wolf range is situated in a nook with a full-height backsplash for a dramatic punch of interest. Lower and side cabinets provide additional storage. To anchor the island, Elliott chose large brass pendants from Circa Lighting. The café-style refrigerator disappears behind a panel painted to match the cabinets.

A large scullery behind the kitchen, a favorite room for the homeowner, helps keep this hardworking room tidy. Sculleries were traditionally used for washing dishes or keeping clutter out of the central kitchen, but this space provides additional pantry and cabinet space and a counter specifically designed for baking. Elliott chose Sherwin-Williams "Evergreen Fog" to tie in the blues and greens in the den and powder room. The scullery also holds a lighted, custom-designed china cabinet to display the homeowner's serveware.

Also downstairs is "her" den, which serves as a beautiful retreat for the homeowner. On the accent wall, Phillip Jeffries wallpaper called "Flight Deep Emerald," featuring flying cranes and clouds, creates an art mural. Elliott painted the shiplap ceiling a coordinating emerald green and installed a warm statement chandelier that resembles a flower with graceful petals drooping downward.

The nearby powder room is another stunning small but mighty space. Wallpaper from Farrow & Ball called "Lotus" brings a 19th-century art



The pool, spa and cabana are situated to take in the island's sweeping marsh and river views.

nouveau elegance to the room. A floating white oak vanity supports a stone vessel sink and wall-mounted brass faucet. A custom board-and-batten half wall painted in Farrow & Ball's "Oval Room Blue" ties in the wallpaper.

The downstairs primary bedroom is situated in its own wing and has high, vaulted ceilings and tall windows and doors that make the most of the pool and marsh views. From outside, the bedroom resembles a standalone cottage connected to the main living area by a remarkable hallway with large-format windows that frame the view. With a step down to the pool, the homeowner's bedroom feels like a luxurious hotel suite in a fine resort.

The spacious en suite bathroom has an expansive zero-entry wet room that's home to the shower and tub. On the floor, black-and-white tiles form a subtle diamond pattern to differentiate this space from the rest of the bathroom. Matte black fixtures are a sophisticated contrast to the white large-format wall tiles. Behind the large soaking tub, tall windows admit cathedral-quality natural light. Because there is a house nearby, automated blinds provide privacy when needed.

The second floor hosts three guest rooms and a media room with plenty of seating for watching TV. Elliott created a moody vibe with Benjamin Moore's "Mount Saint Anne," a medium gray with blue undertones that brings a touch of refinement to the casual space.

Outside, a spacious cabana and outdoor grill kitchen are a great place to relax year-round. The porch has automated screens and is large enough to kick back and watch a football game with the fire going or grill dinner in the summer while taking a dip in the pool. The hot tub sits right outside the primary bedroom and steps down to the pool. The way the home sits on the land, the back porch and pool area offer a stunning view of Beresford Creek.

Though the team had supply chain challenges while working through the pandemic, the clients were extremely pleased with the process and the end result. "I can't say enough good things about Steve and the whole team. They get a 10-star rating from us," the homeowner says. "There are a lot of builders out there, but you get what you pay for. Steve's got a full staff, and we had a full-time project manager. He answered my calls on the first ring and still does even though the house is finished. Everything was done right the first time, and we've had virtually no problems. Some of our neighbors haven't been so lucky."

"This home is just so stunning, not to mention welcoming and inviting," Elliott says. "All the design elements came together so well to provide a beautiful home with a beautiful view. You just feel peace as you enter the front door."

"It was a joy working with our clients and this talented design-build team," Kendrick says. "Budgeting and building during the pandemic presented a host of challenges, but remaining proactive, building trust and communicating those challenges with the team is what defines a successful building experience." *

Robin Howard is a freelance writer in Charleston. See more of her work at robinhowardwrites.com.

» **STRUCTURES | ALAIR**
875 COLEMAN BLVD.
MOUNT PLEASANT, SC 29464
843.856.6901
STRUCTURES.NET