

Coasting OH

THREE CHEERS

AN AWARD-WINNING GLOBAL DESIGN FIRM BLENDS A TRIO OF UNIQUE ELEMENTS INTO A DELIGHTFUL COASTAL HOME IN GEORGIA

words by **Regina Cole**

Three's company
Coastal Georgia, the flavors of the Caribbean and a dash of 16th-century Italy combine in this lovely home on Hawkins Island by Harrison Design.



At first glance, a family home on a small coastal island in Georgia, infused with the flavors of the Caribbean and a splash of 16th-century Italian architecture, might seem like an unlikely scenario, but the result is little short of spectacular thanks to the masterful creative team at Harrison Design.

The global and award-winning architecture and design company, based in Atlanta and with offices in St. Simons Island, Ga., New York, Washington, D.C., California and Shanghai, took the three distinctive elements and turned them into a beautiful custom-designed residence on secluded Hawkins Island.

“Hawkins Island is an interior island wedged between the mainland and St. Simons Island,” says Chad Goehring, a principal associate at Harrison Design who heads up the firm’s St. Simons Island office.

“These clients had purchased a really special lot, perched on a point and with a 270-degree marsh view that includes the Frederica River and the Intracoastal Waterway.

“They came to us with an idea sparked by their travels in the Caribbean,” he continues. “They wanted to build a family home in the vernacular style of the islands, where they could live with the doors open and enjoy indoor spaces that flow seamlessly outdoors.”

As the home’s principal designer, Goehring also turned for inspiration to the company’s long-held regard for



Classicism, an abiding design influence since leading architect Bill Harrison founded the firm in 1990.

“We are deeply rooted in classical style. Palladio is a major influence,” says Goehring, referring to the seminal 16th-century Italian architect Andrea Palladio, whom Harrison studied when he toured the palaces and villas of Italy as a young man.

Goehring set to work on the 6,000-square-foot Hawkins Island residence, designing an H-shaped house

The home front
The house speaks a stylistic vocabulary of the West Indies, with a second-story gallery, overhangs, louvered shutters and railings and tall French doors.

that opens seamlessly onto terraces, porches, patios, decks and courtyards. These outdoor living spaces add another 2,500 square feet of seasonal living options.

The house speaks the stylistic vocabulary of West Indies architecture with a second-story gallery, deep overhangs, louvered shutters and railings, tall French doors and a formal, arched central entry, all crowned with a distinctive zinc double-hipped or bonnet roof.

A two-story central block is flanked by master bedroom, guest room and garage wings; approaching the house, these wings create a formal entry courtyard. To the rear, they encircle a courtyard and pool court, which, in turn, open to the far-reaching water views.

Indoors, pavilion-like rooms echo the Caribbean sensibility with butted-board ceilings, louvered window elements, travertine and mahogany flooring and windows designed to take in the beautiful panoramas.

“The owners have wonderful artwork and we had to find room for its display,” says Goehring. “With such fabulous views, we struggled to remember to leave wall space for their paintings.”

Besides art, the owners are avid wine collectors, so Goehring’s design for the dining room includes a wine room entered via an arched mahogany door.

Interior designers Lisa Torbett and Dee Simmons, both based in St. Simons Island, executed a chic interior décor in the muted colors of sand and sea.

Classic upholstered furniture suits the view-centric rooms and complements the homeowners’ collections of art glass and antique light fixtures.

Three bedrooms and a large screened porch occupy the main house’s upper floor, while the guest and master suites are located on the first floor.

For the homeowners, a favorite feature of the master suite is how the sitting area opens to a private screened porch, an example of the way the outdoors is brought into even the most private spaces.

While the house is traditional in appearance, with millwork a defining element of its architectural style, it was



actually designed to be as low maintenance as possible.

The second story’s plank siding looks like cedar or oak, but is actually cement board. The louvers that form a recurring design motif throughout the house are not wood but painted PVC.

The cornice, rafters and trim work are also all constructed of composite materials, making them long on wear and short on maintenance.

“This is truly easy coastal living,” says Goehring. “Not only does the house look as though it could be in the Caribbean, but the owners can live that way too.”

With 25 years of luxury custom residences across America to its credit, the firm is celebrating this year with the release of a special monograph of Harrison Design homes.

THE DETAILS
For more information, visit harrisondesign.com.

“The company shares a singular belief that a well-designed home is a work of art, an enduring investment and a place to express a client’s individuality,” says Goehring. Much like this family home on Hawkins Island. **OH**

Art and soul
Interior designers Lisa Torbett and Dee Simmons executed a chic décor in muted colors of sand and sea to complement the owners’ array of artworks collected on various travels.