



In a home in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, designer Andrew Howard jazzed up the living room's fireplace with Masala Wood Moroccan tiles. "They're the star of the room," says. He finished the skirt of the homemade sofa with Schumacher fabric. Tiki Taps, China and Hickory Chairs and chairs in China Seas. Salsola, Scones, Cops Lighting. The coffee table and stool are vintage.

ZINGING THE BLUES

Florida designer (and Next Wave alum!) Andrew Howard explains why he went bold in a beachside home. The rock-the-boat results push blue and white into an untimid—and sophisticated—new direction.

Living Room Design: ANDREW HOWARD | Art: TALLIE BATHJEN HENNA

Photography: DAVID R. LANG | Production: DEBORA TUNN

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"My fellow designers might not be too happy with me, but I'm going to reveal a professional secret about blue-and-white rooms: The truth is that they're impossible to mess up. I could close my eyes, shuffle a fan deck of blue paints, pull one out at random and—ta-dá!—it's guaranteed to be fabulous. Combined with white, it's a sure thing.

"I needed that kind of foolproof palette for this new-construction home because there were definitely challenges along the way. The homeowners, Amy and Steven Wacaster, were relocating from New York City to the east coast of Florida. She envisioned a chic, relaxed home reminiscent of the Hamptons, where the family had vacationed. Amy, who's really knowledgeable about design, stressed that she loves blue and hoped to incorporate some existing traditional pieces from their Manhattan apartment, including a four-poster bed and roll-arm sofa. But then came the plot twist: Rather than an expected beachy look, Amy wanted something more fearless and adventurous. She pushed both of us way outside of our comfort zones—and it was a blast.

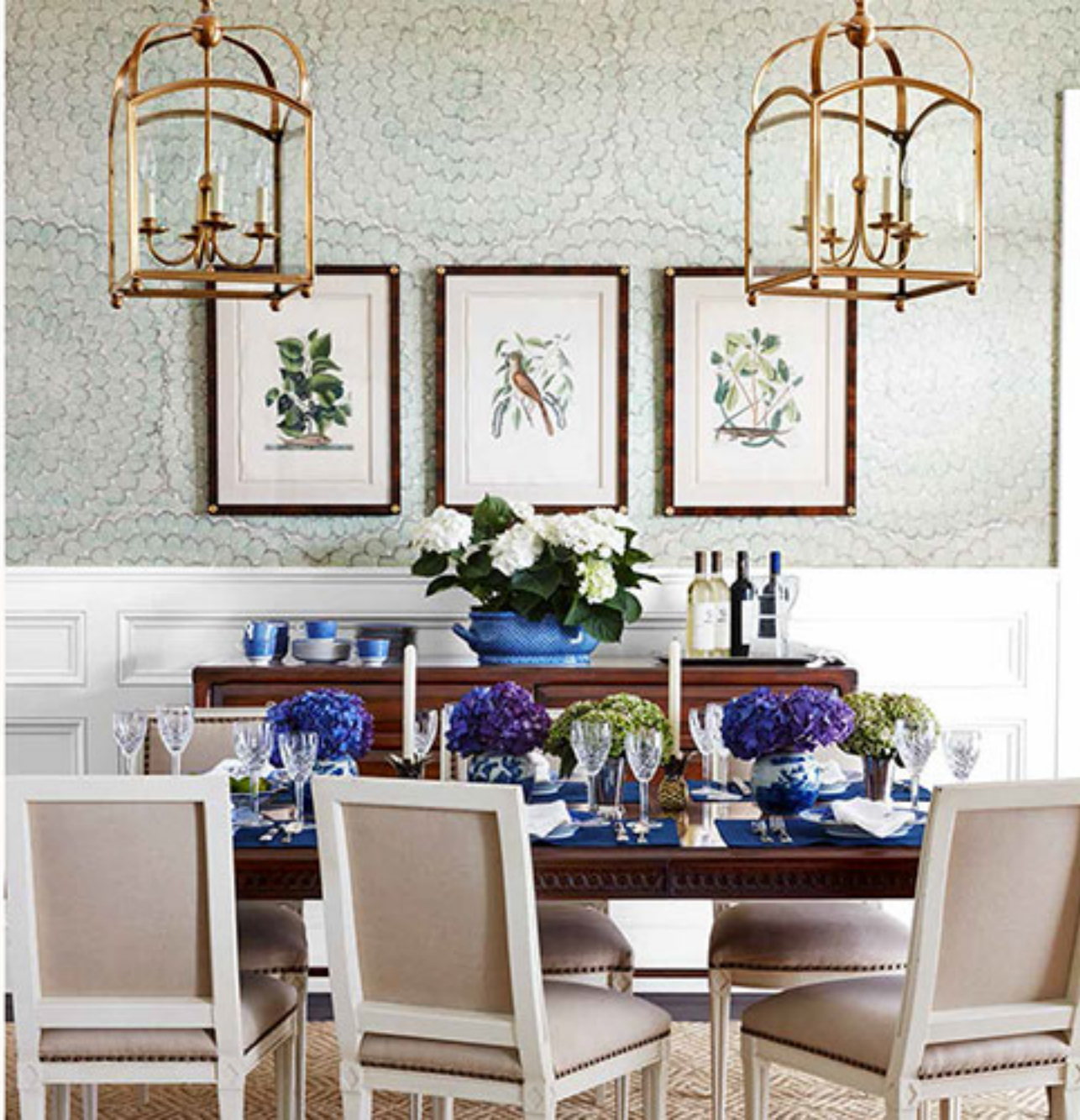
"So, instead of blue walls outlined with white trim in the living room, we did the reverse. In a guest bedroom, we went full throttle with pattern mixing. The bunk room where the kids play has bright, wildly patterned wood floor tiles.

These gutsy moves gave each room its own stand-alone personality. Blues and whites in a variety of hues connect them all, so they harmonize beautifully.

"To be honest, there were some contractor freak-outs. That can happen when you paint a powder room's vanity and ceiling trim an electric teal, then wallpaper the room in three different patterns. Or when you paint the ceiling and outline the walls of the living room in aqua, but tile the fireplace a Moroccan blue. And did I mention the slide we installed in the kids' bunk room?

"Despite all of these curveballs, the rooms don't feel chaotic. I think the reason is that there are still a lot of classic elements happening: The main furniture pieces—the master bedroom's upholstered headboard, the living room's armchairs—are time-proof. The rugs are neutral sisals and wools. I added timeless wainscoting and molding to the rooms (as a one-stop shop, I also do the interior architecture). The end result is approachable and kid-friendly. My sons are the exact same ages as Amy's kids, and I know the realities of what she's going through. I've seen my son wipe chocolate off his face onto our matelassé coverlet. But you can't shy away from having nice things just because you have children. Otherwise you'll be living in a shack for 18 years—even if it is a beach shack."

»»» In the dining room, Schumacher's Feather Bloom vinyl wallpaper by Celerie Kemble "acts like a breathers," Howard says. He hung a pair of lanterns by Circa Lighting above the homeowners' existing Hickory Chair table and chairs. "They feel less formal than a chandelier." The 18th-century prints are by English naturalist Mark Catesby.





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This windowless powder room under the stairs feels hidden away from everything. Total excuse to go big! We used three different wallpapers and a vintage tiled mirror freckled with blue and green paint.

—Andrew Howard

opportunities. The powder room is covered in three Schumacher wallpapers: Samovar and Topkapi on the walls and Taj Trellis on the ceiling. Sink fixtures, Watermark Counter, Carrara marble, Soonic, Visual Comfort, Snow, Clockwise, Snow for Light. The Palecek rattan pendant in the kitchen feels “old-school Florida,” Howard notes; the appliances are from Viking, the Lee Industries stools are in fabrics by Perennials and Link Outdoor, and the window shades are in a Peter Dunham Textiles linen. Howard on the home’s terrace: The master bedroom’s wallpaper is by Phillip Jeffries, and the ceiling light is by Calen & Company. Homeowner Amy Wacaster in the bunk room with her kids, Harris and Gigi; the beds and slide are custom, and the flooring is engineered wood tile from Mirth Studio.



