

House Beautiful

How to Budget for a Second Home—Without Sacrificing Style

Dek: Plus, our favorite tips for mixing color and pattern.



ERIC ROTH

The easiest way to decorate a home by the water is to go completely nautical. However, it's also the most clichéd, which is why Massachusetts-based designer [Liz Caan](#) knew that she had to do something different for her clients, a young family who were remodeling their second home on a budget. "I knew I wanted to keep the house summery and [beachy](#), but I didn't want it to feel overly beachy," elaborates Caan. "To make it fun, we added in some punched-up [color](#), since the family is thankfully not afraid of color and pattern."

As the family wanted to use this space as more of a vacation getaway, Caan upped the colors to make it feel like a playful respite from their more serious family home. "I loved mixing pattern, and we did it in a way that had personality, but also didn't overwhelm the home," she says. The open floor plan on the lower level of the home gave Caan ample opportunity to meld textures and colors with some techniques and tricks that she utilizes when playing with so many factors in a single space.



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"I think my biggest tip for mixing color is to use one, and then dilute it throughout the space," elaborates Caan. "For instance, the bathroom has that great green wallpaper, and you see touches of it in the dining area chairs and the carpeting in the foyer. I love odd color combinations too, so I wouldn't say anything is necessarily off limits—if you think it feels right in a space, it probably is." Some interesting color combinations include lime green and blue in the living room and pale pink with beige in the small sitting area near the window. This proves that you can select traditional color combinations and take them up a notch with different shades instead, in order to sway a bit from the ordinary without going crazy.

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In terms of pattern, however, Caan takes a different philosophy: "With pattern, you don't want to do similar patterns together in the same room. I think it looks too monotone," she says. "Instead, I like to mix the bold with the quiet prints: In this way, you can really have a conversation of pattern and color in one room." This is most clearly seen in the bedroom area upstairs, where touches of pink pattern heighten up the white bedding. Here,

Caan has creatively combined several prints through the throw pillows, but because some are more subtle than others and all in the same colorways, the whole room works really well together.

One of Caan's biggest challenges was combatting the high ceilings in the home—particularly the entryway, which looked rather cavernous in size, as well as fairly oddly-shaped. "I had no idea what to do with that space!" she admits. However, a little creativity went a long way, with Caan adding in an antique table for some personality, as well as providing a way to extend the entertaining space through the connecting dining room.



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"This was a nice way to be a little more bold and give the family an opportunity to entertain with two full tables—they can seat 16 people now!" says Caan. "I also had some trouble with the awkward wall space between the door and windows, since putting a painting felt weird to me." Instead, she used some of her client's old vintage fishing rods, and drilled them up there in order to push her theme of the "new nautical" directly as one enters the home.

Caan opted for a more muted family room. "Because of the light, we didn't really need bold colors to brighten up the space," she explains. Instead, the designer added pops of color through the accent pieces on a neutral backdrop. The blues tend to be more on the nautical side, while the reds are subtle—a prime case for mixing colors in a way that's just a little out of the ordinary.



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The upstairs area, although not open floor, has its fair share of pattern as well, with the little dining nook allowing the kids plenty of space to play. "I think when a home has kids, you can get away with taking a few more risks, since kids are so adventurous and fun," says Caan. The cheerful octopus painting matches the navy and white in the carpeting and chairs, while the green custom light fixture adds a pop, allowing for a true melding of color and pattern that Caan adores.

The outdoor area, however, is where Caan used more woods like teak and wicker, as well as woven accents, in order to not draw attention away from the gorgeous views the home offers. "I wanted to keep it organic," she explains about her design philosophy. "I wanted to add color through fresh flowers and pillows, similar to the inside space, because I like when the outdoor area looks like a diluted continuation of the interior. It shouldn't look like it came from another planet!"

Creating a home that was more affordable was also a bit of a challenge for Caan, but she dealt with the problem by going for readymade items from stores like Madewell and Anthropologie for the most part, only adding in custom touches, like reupholstered chairs, for a pop. However, a few items deserved more of a splurge, like the custom lanterns in the kitchen. "The key here was buying pieces that were affordable and accessible, and then changing maybe one or two things about them," says Caan. "As for the more expensive pieces, figure out what you absolutely need, and budget accordingly. For instance, the runner on the stairs in the entryway had to be of higher quality, since we knew it would get a lot of traffic and take a beating." By mixing high and low, she created a home that's anything but cookie cutter.

Entryway



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Kitchen Nook



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In order to create additional family space, even with an open floor plan, Caan cornered off a little section of the kitchen for a calming dining nook facing the water.

Bathroom



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Since it's on the smaller side, Caan could take some more risks with the bathroom—and the bamboo, lime green wallpaper was the perfect fit, since it added a pop without overwhelming the space.

Kitchen



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The light and airy kitchen serves as an extension of the entryway, with the massive light fixtures drawing one's attention up toward the high ceilings.

Entrance



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Since she had the space, Caan decided to create some storage right at the entrance of the home, with hanging woven bags for people to leave their things. "It added some fun texture," she says.

Family Room



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"I think using accents in this room was smart, because now, they can swap them out as and when they need to," says Caan. "The home can evolve with the family!"

Bedroom



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Using different prints in a single shade over a white backdrop allowed the bedroom to still have a tranquil feel, despite the multitude of pattern.

Outdoor Area



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"I loved adding all those accents, similar to those used inside," says Caan. "I think it's all those little touches that truly make a house a home."



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