

Savannah
MAGAZINE

HOMES

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THE HOSPITALITY ISSUE

A PALMETTO-BLUFF
PROPERTY FIT FOR
ENTERTAINING

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REAL HOMES

REAL HOMES

Many Hands Make Light Work

A creative couple finds friendly collaboration when
designing their Lowcountry vacation home

Written by KENDALL MCKINNON // *Photography by* ANNE CAUFMANN

Landscape architect
Winters Jones Koefer
designed a luxurious pool
deck with latticed greenery
commanding attention
and ensuring comfort.



WHEN MELISSA AND MIKE PEREYO, co-founders of apparel brand OOBÉ, set out to craft their ideal vacation home in Palmetto Bluff. Residents of Greenville, South Carolina, the couple dreamed of a private oasis with marshland views to serve as their family’s summer getaway.

One lot overlooking Cauley’s Creek offered the scenery they were looking for in spades, though the space was tightly bound on either side by neighboring homes. Seeking help to design a modern home that maximized the view without sacrificing privacy, the Pereyos turned to Tom and Leighann Markalunas of Markalunas Architecture Group and Leighann Markalunas Design.

“When we identified the property, we tried to be really intentional to make sure that we weren’t just building a house, but we were trying to create a home,” Mike says.

A creative professional himself, Mike understood what the design process would be like and aimed to leave room for the experts to roam free. The couple brought some specifics to the table, such as five bedrooms and a private pool deck, but even Melissa’s proposed mood board was an open-ended conversation starter rather than a requirement. »



An open staircase creates a cozy nook for resting, playing and reading. Beloved band posters and memorabilia pop against the white shiplap walls.



“Away from our upstate routes, this is a place where we can come and really find some rest and silence and solitude.”

Mike Pereyo, homeowner

“We had a vision to not put boundaries on what we were looking for so we wouldn’t stifle the creative process,” Mike says. “We spent a lot of time with Tom and Leighann to talk through some of the things that were important to us, and then let their talents and their gifts shine.”

The Pereyos and the Markalunas drew up a home that seamlessly blended Palmetto Bluff’s neutral and textured aesthetic with standout modern and industrial features. “We juxtaposed more modern material, like concrete walls with more textural elements that speak to the local vernacular,” Leighann says.

The team prioritized locally crafted materials and drew inspiration from regional suppliers, with the majority of the home’s custom wood, iron and metal work sourced from Lowcountry artisans. Incorporating unexpected materials — including steel doors from an old textile mill and reclaimed rack house oak from bourbon barrels as an accent wall — added to the home’s sense of place while creating a one-of-a-kind atmosphere.

“We were so thrilled with the integration of all the elements because sometimes you can be too creative and then it looks fragmented. [Tom and Leighann] did a great job of making sure that everything had some synergy to it,” Mike says.

Industrial features stand out upon »



The Markalunases equipped the kitchen for double duty dining. Guests enjoy cooking conversations from the island and dinner party chatter from the adjacent dining table set underneath oversized pendants.





entering the home, from the custom steel and glass front door to the open wood and steel stairway. Clean architectural lines are balanced by a rich layering of inviting materials in the front rooms, including warm gray concrete walls, bespoke textiles and patterned wallpapers.

A testimony to the ingenuity of the Markalunases' thoughtfully considered design process, extra space under the stairs was transformed into an endearing nook with the addition of personal touches, like meaningful family photographs and Mike's refurbished record player. It's now a destination in the home, perfectly suited for reading, listening to vinyl and sitting without distraction. "It's a place of refreshment and refuge for me," Mike says.

Tom agrees, emphasizing the way the stair nook illustrates the team's collaboration. "That was the space that encapsulated how the process worked because everybody on the team brought something to that space. The house exceeded the sum of its parts; it wasn't just one person's vision. It represents the relationship between all of us," he says.

Full of thoughtful gathering spaces and accessorized with many of the Pereyos' personal items, the rest of the home makes room for hospitality and invites guests to gather. A wide open kitchen hosts both dining and bar seating beneath statement lighting pieces, while the living room furnishings cozy guests around the fireplace.

When it came to maximizing the marshland view, Tom and Leighann prioritized »



A stylish wet bar off the kitchen makes serving dinner party cocktails and poolside beverages a breeze.



transparency through their expansive use of glass and windows. The unique floor plan solved the problem of privacy; Tom designed the house to wrap around the courtyard, where landscape architect Witmer Jones Keefer brought in natural elements to provide additional screening.

In the courtyard, the pool deck offers an oasis rivaling that of luxury hotels, complete with a fire pit and screened porch. It is exactly what the Pereyos first envisioned for their family vacation home. "Away from our upstate routes, this is a place where we can come and really find some rest and silence and solitude," Mike says.

In addition to a beautiful family retreat on the water, the Pereyos and the Markalunases walked away from the project with a lasting friendship. "Their creative energy, their openness to ideas and their trust in our direction turned inspiration into collaboration and ultimately into a wonderful design experience," Tom says. ❸



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Paul and Deb Fagan



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REAL HOMES

DETAILS

Homeowners: Mike and Melissa Pereyo

Neighborhood: Palmetto Bluff

Year built: 2023

Bedrooms and bathrooms: 5 bedrooms; 5 full and 2 half bathrooms

Square footage: 4,571

Architect: Markalunas Architecture Group, LLC

Interior designer: Leighann Markalunas Design, LLC

Builder/contractor: Resort Custom Homes, LLC

Landscape design: Witmer Jones Keefer

Landscape installation: The Kayan Group

Cabinets: Carolina Custom Cabinetry

Countertops: Stoneworks

Appliances: Livingood's Appliances & Bedding

Plumbing: Ferguson

Bathroom tile: Savannah Surfaces

Paint: Benjamin Moore

Wood flooring and wood stair treads: The HeartPine Company

Pool: Year Round Pool Co.

Exterior concrete pavers: Fire Rock (Savannah Surfaces)

Wood accent cladding at exterior and wood exterior ceilings: Thermory

Windows: Marvin (Coastal Sash & Door)

Front door and additional steel interior door: Clark Hall Doors (Grayco)

Custom interior doors: The Heirloom Companies

Steel stair and railing: The Heirloom Companies

Custom steel shelving: The Heirloom Companies

Reclaimed wood beams and accent walls: The HeartPine Company

Concrete surrounds, counters and hearth/mantels: Trueform Concrete

Exterior decorative lighting: Bevolo

Interior lighting: Restoration Hardware

Art: Four Hands; Arteriors; pieces from the Pereyos' personal collection