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Old World, New Tricks

TODAY'S CHARMING INTERIORS PROVE THE DRAW OF PASTORAL STYLE IS ALIVE AND WELL IN AMERICAN DESIGN.

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY GRACE BEULEY HUNT

In this Southampton residence by Elizabeth Lawrence of Bunny Williams Interior Design, a secluded sitting room cloaked in a pale lilac toile serves as flexible sleeping quarters thanks to a twin bed-sized sofa. In a nostalgic flourish, an antique secretary offers guests a place to sit and tend to written correspondence.

PHOTOS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG.

Limestone pavers flow through the entry (left), bathroom (below) and living-dining space (opposite), creating a timeless thread that welcomes sandy feet and muck boots alike.

EASY ELEGANCE

For designer Elizabeth Lawrence, a ground-up guest residence in Southampton provided a unique opportunity to bridge the old with the new. Building upon Georgian-influenced architecture by Michael Dwyer (largely inspired by Frances Elkins' interiors), and led by her client's appreciation for antiques, Lawrence began layering palette and pattern to imbue a sense of calm, collected sophistication to the dwelling, which serves as a year-round getaway. The result reads "a bit like an English country home, but with a Southampton twist," notes Lawrence. She kept the ethos of-a-place with choice details like subtly coastal paint colors custom-crafted by Donald Kaufman throughout, and a bespoke entry mural by Artgroove depicting the seaside town.

"The mix of casual living in a formal setting is what makes this project so interesting," muses the designer, pointing to the breezy spirit of the open-concept living-dining room—a pleasing contrast to the grand architectural detailing. A similar dichotomy can be found in the surprising throughlines that lace together collections of wooden antiques, sumptuous, high-pile carpets and historically reverent textiles. Modern artworks and contemporary lighting are hallmarks of the design, and Lawrence's artful placements—like an enormous Noguchi lantern above the dining table—typify the "Southampton twist" she endeavored to achieve at the outset. "At night, when that's the only thing lit," she notes, "it almost looks like the moon is hanging there." **bunnywilliams.com**

PHOTOS: FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG.