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Open spaces. Large rooms.

THIS PALMETTO BLUFF HOME STARTED WITH TWO SIMPLE MANDATES. IT ENDED WITH A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF LOWCOUNTRY LIVING.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LEO JOHNSON

For Bill and Diane Hammack, it was love at first sight.

"We had an anniversary coming up, and a friend of mine said you need to go to Palmetto Bluff. After I took her the first time, the next anniversary she wanted to go back," said Bill. "By the third time I just said, 'You know what? We're going to build a house... I need to get serious about this. She really likes it.'"

Working with architect Wayne Windham, builder Richard Best and Plantation Interiors' Dean Huntley, the couple began work on their permanent vacation home amid stunning waterfront views in Palmetto Bluff.

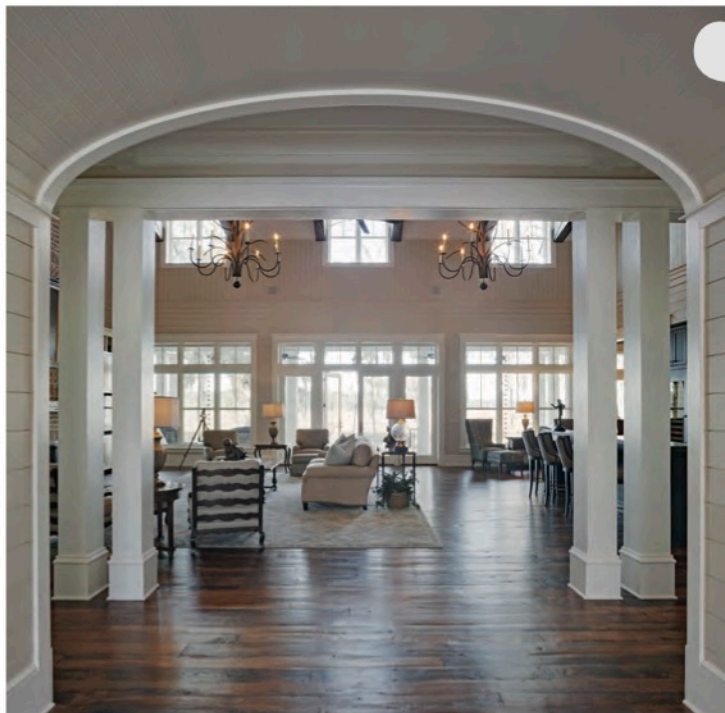
"We took a lot of ideas from the cabins we stayed in," said Diane. "We liked that Lowcountry look. That's where we started."

Along with adopting some of the elements of Lowcountry style, Bill Hammack had one simple rule. "What I told Wayne to start with was, we want open space and large rooms. That was priority one."

That priority resulted in one of the most jaw-dropping aspects of the home, the towering two-story great room. Marked by antique hand-hewn alpine beams and a trio of Juliet balconies above, and a wall of glass doors soaking in scenery below, the room stands in marked contrast to the understated living spaces typical in a Palmetto Bluff home.

"They wanted a relaxed place to gather with family and friends," said Huntley. Filling that space with furnishings challenged Huntley to work outside her normal boundaries. "The sofa in there is probably 100 inches and the chandeliers are around 60 inches," she said. "When you have that much volume and you put a petite chair in there, it can look ridiculous."

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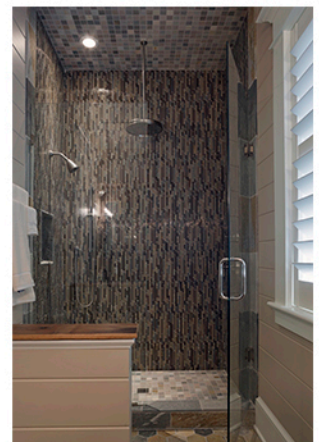
GREAT WALLS The two-story great room is a majestic statement, with reclaimed beams towering overhead in contrast to stark white shiplap.

ALL THE SMALL THINGS
 Exquisite attention to detail fills the house with visual magic, from the coffered ceiling in the kitchen to the bold contrasting orientation of the siding on the walls.



WIDE OPEN SPACES

The master suite is a suitably expansive answer to the mandate for larger rooms.





CABIN FEVER
Having fallen in love with Palmetto Bluff during their visits, the Hammacks based the design of the home on the cabins where they stayed.

The oversized furnishings complement the vastness of the great room perfectly, establishing a sense of scale that only enhances the feeling of spaciousness. And beyond its size, the great room contrasts with typical Lowcountry stylings in another way – rather than the standard open kitchen to one side, a wide bar serves as the main hub for gatherings.

“The great room was going to be the main entertainment point of the house, so I told them I want a bar on one side with wine coolers and a wet bar,” said Bill. Straying away from the standard layout is just one way the Hammacks made this house their own. The other was by incorporating their artwork into the design aspects of the home, building around it.

“They had quite a few treasures, artwork and bronzes they wanted to incorporate into the design scheme,” said Huntley. This includes easier-to-incorporate pieces like the heron that greets you in the foyer, as well as larger works like the oil painting of a grizzly hanging over the mantle. “We had to make sure the fireplace was big enough to accommodate the art.”

Ultimately, this home is a master class in personalization. It’s the best elements of Lowcountry homebuilding, subtly tweaked and altered by the Hammacks and their team to truly make it their own. And that includes, but is certainly not limited to, open spaces and large rooms. *LL*

The home team

Interior Design: Plantation Interiors **Architect:** Wayne Windham Architect **Contractor:** Richard Best Custom Homes
Cabinetry: Coastal Millworks **Countertops:** Creative Stone Accessories, Inc. **Wood Flooring:** Timberstone Antique Flooring
Tile and rugs: KPM Flooring **Lighting:** Visual Comfort, Chaddock Lighting, The Light Post, Low Country Originals

Get the designer look of this home

If you’re looking to recreate a bit of this featured home’s elegance, Dean Huntley of **Plantation Interiors** suggests incorporating these accessories.



A seat at the bar DALTON SWIVEL BARSTOOL

These swivel barstools come in counter and bar heights and are available in your choice of finish, fabric or leather. Customization is possible.



Come to light LAMBAY TABLE LAMP

This chic ice blue porcelain Lambay Table Lamp from Chapman & Myers features graceful proportions and classic styling.



On the table MARITIME DRINK TABLE

This classic piece deserves a stately setting, perhaps next to a comfortable leather sofa in an elegant, wood-paneled library.



Flower power DRIED AND PRESERVED FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS

Brighten up your home with floral designs that use only materials that were once living.

Five ideas for your home

MINOR ENHANCEMENTS & UPGRADES THAT MAKE A MAJOR DIFFERENCE.

SECRETS TO STEAL FROM OUR FEATURED HOME

1. DON'T OVERDO IT

This is a classic hallmark of Lowcountry décor, but it bears repeating: don't overdo it. Employ subtle touches of texture and color to create a subdued atmosphere and let the Lowcountry do the rest. "The natural beauty of the Lowcountry is one of the reasons we are here," said Huntley. "Don't compete with that. Let the outdoors come in and work with it."

2. MAKE IT YOUR OWN

Beyond swapping out the traditional open kitchen for a bar, the Hammacks found other ways to personalize their home's footprint, like the wood-paneled room designed specifically for tying flies. "It turned out to be everything the owner wanted," said Huntley.

3. WORK WITH YOUR LOT

Building your house to complement your property is a must. "We have a million-dollar view. The view of the water and the marsh is just beautiful," said Bill. "We don't have a room in this house that doesn't capture that."

4. EMBRACE THE OUTDOORS

One of Diane's favorite aspects of the home is the bank of doors in the dining room that can be opened up to let in gentle breezes off the water. For the couple, the outdoors are crucial to their lifestyle. "The outdoor kitchen has a wood-burning fireplace that is great this time of year," said Bill.

5. GET EVERYONE INVOLVED

For this 14-month build, the architect, builder and designer worked hand-in-hand with the owners to make it a true group effort. "It makes for a very satisfying experience for everyone involved," said Huntley. "Most surprises get talked through before you start hammering and nailing."

