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## STYLISH RETREAT

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almer Carter evokes a modern-day Gidget. OK, so she lives in Neptune Beach, Florida, not Malibu, California, and has a nine-to-five real estate job that prevents her from being a round-the-clock beach bunny. But spend an afternoon with her and you'd swear the movie character, with her effortless coastal style, magnetic ebullience, and endless energy, had come to life. Better yet, step inside her house and you'll start channeling Gidget, too.

From its party-friendly layout and oceanfront pool to its cheerful decor that combines warm natural materials with blue-green accents, Palmer's house radiates her happy-go-lucky, bohemian spirit. But that wasn't always the case. "When I first saw the house, it was contemporary and masculine and had a stark feel. That just wasn't my personality," Palmer says. "It needed some color, texture, and warmth."

So she turned to interior decorator and family friend Phoebe Howard, of Mrs. Howard and

Max & Co. in Jacksonville, Florida, and Atlanta, to transform the house into an inviting bachelorette pad. "Ranging in style from Mediterranean to French Polynesian, the house's architecture gave off this modern, free-spirited vibe that served as our inspiration inside," says Phoebe. "I wanted the interiors to suit Palmer's surfer-girl, hippie-chick lifestyle."

Setting that fun, breezy, relaxed tone for the house's living spaces was top priority. "The best beach houses have a certain atmosphere that makes everyone feel comfortable sitting anywhere," says Palmer. "The house also had to accommodate Palmer's incredibly active, work hard/play hard lifestyle," adds Phoebe. The duo chose plush but simple upholstered furnishings covered in durable fabrics like linen and chenille that can withstand sand

**A sectional sofa makes room for a party crowd or for Palmer to curl up with her dogs on a rare quiet night. The pillow fabrics are Alan Campbell and Hable Construction; the garden stool, from Max & Company.**