

The sofa is from Restoration Hardware. The coffee table and armchairs are from Pineapples, Palms, Etc.



at home in the sand

Golfer Greg Norman and his wife, Kirsten, up their game with a stylish, nautical makeover of their beach cottage in Hobe Sound, Florida



Greg Norman is more comfortable than most professional golfers hanging out in the sand—not in traps, of course, but on the beach. “My parents moved to the beach when I was 3 months old, and I’ve lived on a beach ever since,” he says. “The ocean has always been in my soul.” In fact, the Australian hall of fame golfer, who’s also made a name for himself in golf course design and real estate development, was a beach boy long before he ever swung a golf club. As a teenager, Greg had an accident while surfing that prompted him to take up a land sport instead. “When I made it back to the shore that day, I thought, ‘This just isn’t worth it. It’s time to try something else,’” he says.

In light of Greg’s upbringing, it’s not surprising that he still feels most at home with his bare feet in the sand right

outside his charming Hobe Sound, Florida, cottage. The oceanfront, 1600-square-foot guesthouse is only a small slice of his 8-acre estate there, which includes the Norman family’s larger, primary residence, a practice golf area, Greg’s home office, and a dock on the Intracoastal Waterway for his yacht. But it’s a slice of the property that is especially precious to Greg: During a ferocious storm in the 1990s, the pro golfer stayed up all night, working tirelessly to protect the cottage from tidal surges by shoring it up with large rocks and sandbags. In the end, the house was spared, but Greg didn’t want to take any chances during future storms. So, in addition to building a seawall along the island’s main road, he had the home raised onto supportive pylons that keep the structure high and dry.

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The cabinetry is by The Kitchen Strand; the pendants are from Ralph Lauren Home.



The banquettes are by Lee Industries, with slipcovers in Ralph Lauren fabric. The table is by Tritter Feefer.





The hanging daybed was fabricated by Onshore Construction. The fabric is by Ralph Lauren.



Despite its storied charm, though, the house was in sore need of an update when Greg's wife, Kirsten, a designer, got her hands on it. It was a far cry from the fresh-faced, family-friendly place she had envisioned the couple and their young daughters, Kaya, 8, and Kelly, 5, sharing with guests. "It was dark with lots of wood, lots of tchotchkes," says Kirsten. Her goal was "to make it feel beachy and like a vacation spot," and Greg was on board. "We talked about wanting to maximize three things: the limited space, the connection to the water and environment, and comfort," he says.

The first step to making the tiny cottage feel more open and better suited to its surroundings was infusing it with a lighter, brighter palette. Now every surface, from the floors to the shiplap-paneled walls, is painted white. All that white makes the ocean, which is visible from three sides of the open living space, look even bluer. Navy elements—ikat and striped fabrics, a painted console, trim on the natural-fiber woven rugs—amplify the watery shades and add depth to the airy scheme. "I love blue and white, especially at the beach,"



Both bedrooms feature Phillip Jeffries grass-cloth wallpaper and Merida rugs.

"We'd rather spend a night or a weekend in the beach house than in any hotel. It doesn't get much better"



The home is elevated to protect against high tides and storm surges.

says Kirsten. “It’s fresh and crisp.” Plus, the colors are an ideal complement to the many nautical details throughout the house, which were implemented to reflect the seaside setting and Greg’s passion for boating and yacht design.

“I was trying to achieve the look and feel of being on a boat,” says Kirsten. The marine-inspired decor starts up front, where a large bell and a life preserver, both of which are artifacts from *Aussie Rules*, a boat Greg designed, hang by the front door and on the mudroom wall, respectively. From there, a narrow galley kitchen leads to a central island, which feels like the helm of the house. Details such as teak decking in the showers, built-in chrome magazine racks, nautical pendant lights, and porthole mirrors in the baths reinforce the maritime look.

The cottage has a real getaway feel, combining casual comforts that are durable enough to withstand sandy feet (whitewashed floors, slipcovered furnishings) with exotic touches (grasscloth wallpaper in the bedrooms, a hanging daybed) that make it feel like a true escape. The couple jokes that, now that the house is finished, they don’t have far to travel to feel like they’re on vacation. “We go there for special occasions and we pretend like we’re going out of town,” says Kirsten. Greg adds: “We’d rather spend a night or a weekend in the beach house than in any hotel. In the evenings, I go out to the sand and practice my swing. Then Kirsten comes down with a glass of wine, and the kids and dogs play on the beach. It doesn’t get much better than that.” **For more information, see Sources, page 119.**



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Greg and Kirsten look on as the girls go for a romp on the beach.



Greg’s kitesurfing and wakeboarding photographs were framed by Profiles.