



Seduced by the Sea

An all-out renovation
creates space for
work and relaxation

By Lyla Haggard | Photos by Johan Roetz

"We looked for a year before we found this waterfront property online," says Barbara Krai, "and then spent nine months in renovation. But it was worth the wait." ♦ She and husband Doug Eadie wanted their home to be a sophisticated, elegant space that would, at the same time, embrace the casual Florida lifestyle. And they needed to incorporate his-and-hers home offices, each with a different purpose. But what they encountered was a typical bungalow that hadn't been updated since the 70s. Although the location—in up-and-coming Oldsmar with a bay view of Safety Harbor—was ideal, it took a lot of imagination to envision turning this old-fashioned structure into their dream house. "Let's just say, it had tremendous potential," Barbara adds wryly.

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OPPOSITE: Stainless steel rails line the two-level foyer staircase. The treads are made of solid oak and finished with several different stains.



A style all her own

As head of Barbara Krai Interior Design, Barbara certainly has the design sense and experience to take on such a task. Her background in commercial space design, such as lobbies and restaurants, enabled Barbara to do all the design and technical drawings for the renovation. In order to open up the living areas into one large space, she immediately realized that the screened-in porch would have to go. Solid walls were opened up with lots of windows to create a 180-degree view of canal and open bay. Seven-foot ceilings were raised to ten feet throughout and all walls painted neutral so as not to compete with the outdoor feel.

Barbara is frequently asked by potential clients to describe her "style." She prefers the phrase "design philosophy and discipline" to explain her holistic approach of incorporating diverse interior components into one harmonious unit. Scale and proportion, color and texture, traditional and transitional styles: all contribute to the character of the home. Barbara notes, "I am always happy to introduce a modern piece into a traditional interior or an antique into a modern interior, as long as they meet the criteria of my design discipline. This is what makes an eclectic mix work and creates an exciting, unexpected interior."

Staying true to her philosophy, only the dining room chairs and barstools were new purchases for this home; every other piece of furniture or accessory has a long and loving family history. "My husband and I wanted to incorporate the many beautiful pieces of furniture that we currently owned into the new space, as well as the art and personal mementos we have collected in our travels over the years," says Barbara. "As I tell my clients, you don't have to give up the pieces you love. I'm always happy to work with existing pieces and give them new life."

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In the foyer, a contemporary vase made of etched glass and gold leaf accompanies a French eighteenth-century chest with marquetry inlay and gold ormolu mounts.

OPPOSITE TOP: The media room and adjacent living spaces enjoy bay views of Safety Harbor and its active wildlife.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: A custom bar area with circular glass tabletop at the end of the kitchen counter appears to float on a stainless steel and mahogany stand.



The use of glass continues into the kitchen and dining area. Here glass cabinet fronts and a glass dining table help to keep the space open and bright.





Open spaces

Since the home's entrance was a relatively small area, Barbara went up instead, creating a two-story foyer with floating staircase accented by stainless steel rails. The treads are made of solid oak, then finished with an industrial ebony stain followed by an American walnut stain and yet another specialty stain for just the right result. A contemporary vase—gold leaf inside with etched glass swirled around the outside—of the *Tornados* series by Cohn Stone sits on a French eighteenth-century chest with marquetry inlay and gold ormolu mounts. Above are original monoprints entitled *Edge of Water* (top) and *Field and River* (below) by graphic designer Bruce Tinch.

To the right the foyer opens into a large L-shaped area with travertine marble floor surrounded by floor to ceiling glass doors, lots of over-sized windows and the gorgeous view. In the media area, a deep brown Century leather sofa, accented by three containers of tall dried grasses along the back, faces a tall ebony cabinet that houses not only a large-screen television but also six deep storage drawers in the base. The Maitland Smith etched bronze cocktail table is supported by rattan legs adorned with carved bronze lions' heads and paws. A dramatic, but very comfy, Marge Carson chaise sits next to a lovely glass-topped accent table with large bronze palm leaves.

A smaller conversation area abounds with light, day or night. Another Marge Carson sofa and two Italiiamond chairs encircle a glass Le Barge cocktail table, on which are placed clear and colored art glass pieces that sparkle in the sunlight as well as under the carefully positioned overhead lighting at night. A paper construction abstract by Cleveland artist Tom Balbo accents a side wall, and a quirky metal sculpture with copper patina, *Bicycle Balloon Man* by Miami artist Jim Lewk, fits a corner niche perfectly.

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Where's the coffee?

The kitchen area doesn't look much like a kitchen...and Barbara planned it that way. She is passionate about good design with clean, simple lines. Because the living, dining and kitchen areas are open to each other, she did not want the kitchen—with its numerous appliances and gadgetry—to dominate visually. Surrounding the Sub-Zero refrigerator and Wolf double ovens is floor-to-ceiling Sapelli cabinetry of horizontal grain exotic mahogany (a renewable resource, Barbara points out) that conceals microwave, toaster oven, coffeemaker and more in the two-foot deep drawers and pullout shelves. The state-of-the-art ovens utilize a dual convection logic control system that includes eight cooking modes, plus they have beautiful cobalt blue porcelain interiors with bake elements hidden, broil element recessed and dual halogen lighting. The 36-inch Wolf electric cooktop sits below a contemporary curved glass and stainless steel exhaust hood that could function as a piece of art as well. The wall behind features a staggered pattern of foot-long seaspray green glass bars.

To reinforce further the concept of visual simplicity, Barbara chose a Bosch dishwasher, not only because of its quality but also because the controls are found inside the door, leaving no dials or handles to interrupt its sleek lines. Likewise, the controls for both ovens flip inside when not in use. Electrical outlets and even the garbage disposal switch have been hidden inside frosted glass cabinets on either side of the cooktop. She selected a Franke sink and faucets, also due to their contemporary design. Her countertops are limestone because it has a subtler pattern than most granites. At one end of the counter, Barbara created a custom bar area, where a circular glass tabletop (54-inch diameter, ¾-inch thick, 150-lb.) appears to “float” on a stainless steel and mahogany stand. Two open weave metal barstools by Harry Bertoina were also chosen so as not to impede the view. Underneath the kitchen counter facing the dining area is a built-in china cabinet.

Doug and Barbara's glass dining table fit perfectly into its space, separated from the kitchen and looking out onto the patio and bay. It is supported by the flipped-up tails of frolicking cast stone dolphins. Six newly-purchased chairs were selected for their uncluttered architectural lines: the classic square and

circle design. At each end of the table, Barbara placed two chairs from her former residence to complete the seating. Overhead another intriguing light fixture, referred to by the couple as the “octopus,” and seaweed-like wall sconces carry out the seaside theme.

Home office

Since both Barbara and Doug have the luxury of working from home, they wanted to create “ideal” offices on the second floor of the addition. The offices, however, could not be more of a contrast. “He's words and I'm pictures,” says Barbara, “so I made it a priority to design a space in which Doug would feel creative and comfortable at the same time.”

As a consultant and author of seventeen books, Doug loves the 8-foot-tall bookcases along one wall, filled with all his favorites. He swears he's read them all. “It's a perfect writer's study. I feel it's very much my space; I love working here in my sanctuary.”

To achieve a warm, inviting space, Barbara chose a deep burgundy wine hue for the walls, a rich oriental rug atop the wall-to-wall carpet, relaxing leather chairs and a non-traditional desk that was formerly their glass-top kitchen table. On the wall behind the desk hangs a colorful tapestry, a gift from a student when Doug was a Peace Corps volunteer in Ethiopia.

Barbara's office, on the other hand, is “like a blank canvas on which to create my designs,” she explains. The walls and carpet are neutral, so there will be no reflections that might affect the color of the samples she uses in her designs. Twenty-year-old teal file cabinets have followed Barbara's career moves and now are a perfect fit for her newest work area. Deep two-foot storage shelving is hidden behind mirrored doors that reflect the beautiful bay view. Even the etched glass table tops blend into the water vista. Barbara's antique oak drafting table stands in contrast to other chrome-and-glass furniture. The ceiling fan, moved from the now non-existent porch, features five blades made of sail fabric and attached with nylon cord to resemble a curved fishing rod. A Gary Bukovnik limited edition floral print brings a dash of color above the computer desk. SheerWeave sunscreens minimize the heat while allowing Barbara to see the view. “Because the office faces due west, the sunsets are magnificent, and I'm especially

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Mirrored doors in Barbara's office conceal two-foot deep storage areas and reflect the sparkling waters of the bay.





fascinated by the rainstorms and lightning,” she says.

Having moved here from northern Ohio, Barbara and Doug still can't believe their new lifestyle is real. “We can sit on our sofa or be on the phone in our second floor offices and see dolphins, manatees, ospreys, blue herons, egrets...even pelicans scooping up their dinner,” she laughs. “It’s an incredible experience. We feel like we are in the middle of a nature preserve!” Doug adds, “I never imagined this house could be so beautiful and so easy to live in.” 🐾

RESOURCES

Builder:

Vaughan Yost Construction

Interior, lighting and space designer:

Barbara Krai, ASID; Barbara Krai Interior Design

Cabinetry:

designed by Barbara Krai, ASID;
fabricated by Harbor Woodworks

Countertops:

Florence Marble & Granite

Paint:

Benjamin Moore/Vanilla Ice Cream
(downstairs), Benjamin Moore/Cream Silk
(foyer and stair walls)

Range:

Wolf electric cooktop, 36-inch

Ovens:

Wolf convection

Hood:

Best

Dishwasher:

Bosch, Famous Tate

Refrigerator:

Sub-Zero, Famous Tate

Kitchen sink and faucet:

Franke

Refrigerator:

Sub-Zero

Lighting fixtures:

Gulfstream Lighting, Keystone Lighting and Fans, Light Bulbs Unlimited

Stainless steel railings:

Mike Tearney

Front door panel:

leaded glass, Art Glass Studios

8-foot-tall bookcases line an interior wall of Doug's office. A deep burgundy wine hue was chosen to create a warm and inviting atmosphere.