

The lifestyle magazine for Mobile and Baldwin counties

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## Sunny Bungalow

Plenty of porch space and Bay views liven up a couple's home away from home.

*text by* D. FRAN MORLEY • *photos by* MATTHEW WOODD

Bright and comfortable: There are no better words to describe Elin and Tim Murphy's waterfront house in Fairhope.

"The home was built in 1904, and when we bought it in 2002, we knew we wanted to take it back to its original bones," Elin says. The house belonged to the same family for most of its life, and the Murphys wanted to preserve it while adding a few contemporary details and cheerful furnishings.





The bright light and colors give the house a fun feel ... a coastal vibe.

— ELIN MURPHY

The Murphys worked with architect Clay Adams of Wilcox Adams Vernieuille, as well as custom homebuilder Tom Bierster. During the renovation, the team tore down walls that were not original to the house, added a downstairs master bedroom, updated the kitchen, converted an old porch into a delightful sunroom, and hurricane-proofed the place.

Elin calls it a "holiday and someday retirement" house. The couple lives in Kansas City, but has deep ties to Mobile

Bay from their days at Spring Hill College. More recently, two of their four children attended Spring Hill. "We often drove down to Fairhope, and when we saw this house, we loved it right away," Elin says. "My sister, Kristin Duficka (who lives in Pensacola), and I did most of the decorating ourselves, and we had so much fun with it. We wanted a coastal look, but not too beachy—white walls and dark floors. Then we splashed it with bright colors and local art. We love it!"



**ABOVE** The Murphys completely gutted the old kitchen and cased off a door to the former dining room, which became part of a new master suite. While cabinetry, stone counter-tops, stainless steel appliances and a farmhouse sink modernize the space, a backdrop of Murano glass tile in shades of blues and teals with touches of metallics resembles sea glass. Like much of the vibrant local artwork featured in the home, it really makes a bold statement against a clean ivory backdrop.

**LEFT** The new sunroom, a space for relaxing and dining, opens onto the kitchen and main living area. "The bright light and colors give the house a fun feel," Elin says. "We wanted a coastal vibe."



**OPPOSITE TOP** Age-old oaks, draped in Spanish moss, gently frame the drive up to the Bayside bungalow.

**ABOVE** Multiple porches and cool breezes beckon the family and their visitors outdoors.

**FAR LEFT** Elin and Tim turned the home's original dining room into a luxurious master suite, adding a private pocket porch (also seen above) that overlooks the pier and Mobile Bay. It's a cozy spot to enjoy a morning cup of coffee.

**LEFT** Simple wicker furniture is punched up with vibrant cushions. A bold, turquoise rug sets off the space. Whimsical local art pieces made from tin and other found objects are eclectic, cheery additions.