



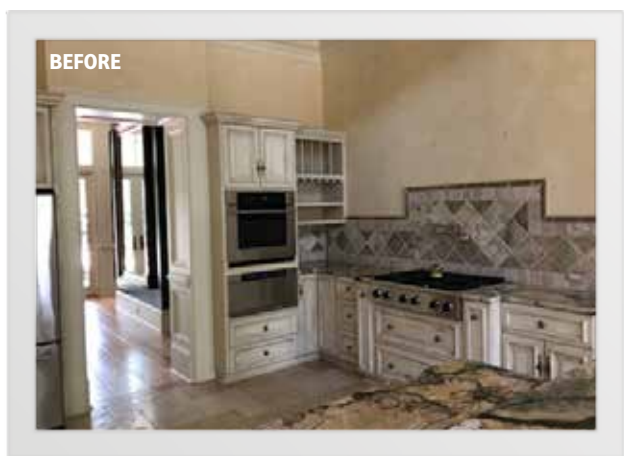
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May River remix

A MIAMI FAMILY TEAMED UP WITH LOCAL EXPERTS TO TRANSFORM THEIR MOUNT PELIA ROAD HOME INTO A LOWCOUNTRY MASTERPIECE.

STORY BY CLAIRE ANTHONY + PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANNE

From the moment she stepped inside the foyer of the sprawling May River retreat, Martha Fernandez realized, "if we don't act now, these spectacular marsh views won't ever be ours to enjoy." Thankfully her husband, Eloy Padron, shared her conviction and within months, the couple was immersed in a full-blown home renovation. They had previously purchased a home site across the street in the prestigious Palmetto Bluff neighborhood; however, it wasn't destined to become their new address.



BROUGHT TO LIGHT The previous outdated kitchen needed love and light. It was completely opened up, allowing for installation of a majestic center island set in Everest Pearl Quartzite.

Fernandez and Padron did an about face. "We decided to rethink the floorplan of 83 Mount Pelia and transform it to fit our dreams, a home where time stands still and we can unwind with family and friends," they explained. The couple has two children, Christian, 24, and Natalie, 18. "Entertaining is our way of life, so the great room and dining areas became our priorities once we purchased the home."

The couple enlisted the guidance of luxury builder Element Construction Partners and interior designer Kelly Caron. "Our role was to creatively reconfigure the space," explained Element Construction Partner Andrea Eldred. "For instance, what was once one of two walk-in closets in the master suite became a much-needed back kitchen, which now allows additional storage and prep space for our favorite perpetual host and hostess."

Eldred and team performed other structural feats, removing walls and moving



NO DETAIL LEFT UNNOTICED Through architectural intrigue, elegantly intricate stonework and a cleaner color palette, this home realizes that vision and creates something both familiar and all-new in the process. The raw pine flooring was given a new, darker finish to contrast with the overall lighter palette of the house, a move which also accents the wood's rich texture.

doorways to open the floorplan and enhance lifestyle flow throughout the first level. Element Construction Partner Brandon Edwards said, "it's always a pleasure to collaborate with clients who know exactly what they want. For Martha and Eloy, if that meant creating a wine cellar in the space originally designated for a front hall closet, we found a way to do that and then took it a step further by adding a companion wet bar just steps away," he added.

While the Element team masterfully redirected the home's focal point to the breathtaking rear views, interior designer Kelly Caron infused its Lowcountry vibe with a luminous, luxurious palette, including ultra-custom fabrics and finishes.

"Our first encounter with this home left us feeling a bit conflicted," said Caron. "There was no doubt it had magnificent features, but they seemed mismatched." Caron pointed out the darker, honey-colored palette and rustic details in the great room which was predominantly formal. "We brightened the color scheme with whites and ivories and deepened the raw pine floors to create a sophisticated contrast," she said.

"Entertaining is our way of life, so the great room and dining areas became our priorities once we purchased the home."



Full-length draperies were added to frame the French doors with sheer ivory fabric be-dazzled with waves of metallic thread. Lighting became the centerpiece in the remixed space with the strategic installation of large brass sconces and sculpted wire chandeliers, reminiscent of Parisian decor.

In addition to selecting lighting, palette, finishes and fabric for the renovation, Caron was charged with steering all furniture installations. One of her favorite recollections for the project was equipping the dining room with a remarkably large rectangular dining room table surrounded by custom overstuffed chairs, intended to endure hours of dining and dialogue.

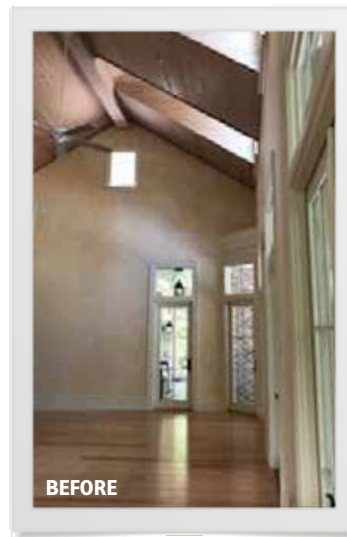
Meanwhile in the adjacent kitchen, the homeowner's request for an extreme upgrade unveiled repurposed counter and island landscapes plus the addition of a stunning Francois & Co. cast stone range hood illuminated by thoughtfully reconfigured recessed and pendent cone lights.

Caron elaborated on details of the kitchen island, now a brilliant show piece for dozens of guests who frequently surround it for year-round celebrations hosted by Fernandez and Padron. "We selected a quartzite countertop with laminated ogee edging," she pointed out. "It looks similar to a top-grade marble but in reality, it's more durable, a real benefit for families who entertain as often and Martha and Padron do."

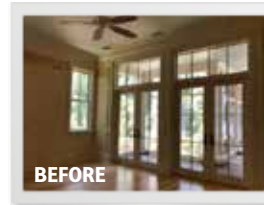
The secret to the ongoing success of Caron's interior design business is her ability to listen to clients. In Fernandez's own words, "Kelly not only listens, she actually hears you. She spent a lot of quality time with us, getting to know our wishes and guiding us through decision after decision," Fernandez said. "She's not pushy yet she offered many suggestions that were often exactly what we had in mind."

Fernandez recalls her introduction by Caron to the local Ben Ham Gallery. Caron recommended Ham's fine art photography for the home's entry and now a half-dozen of his signature black and white images fill the entry, hallways and wine cellar. "The themes of Mr. Ham's work deeply touched us. We found familiar milestones and memories through his lens," Fernandez added. "He's now a trusted friend."

A luxury resort developer based in Miami, Fernandez was relentlessly committed to spectacular first impressions at her new Palmetto Bluff address. Hence the majestic front entry also received a face-lift with pearl-white paint, impeccably intricate molding and an



ELEGANT TOUCHES A vibrant palette and spectacular lighting replaced the former lodgy vibe of the great room (left). Show-stopping style and modern custom cabinetry elevated the media room (below). Brilliantly transformed, the new entry hall is all about elegance (bottom).



REVITALIZED RETREAT From grand stairway to master bedroom and en suite, enhanced flooring, finishes and fabrics revitalized the May River retreat.



exquisite antique brass Visual Comfort chandelier to offset the regally winding staircase that climbs to two-stories to the Ben Ham gallery. The combination of ascending grace and grandeur is simply breathtaking, as planned by Caron.

Reoccurring themes of brilliant white, mixed metals and ethereal fabrics reach a crescendo in the master bedroom and en suite. "This intimate retreat quickly draws you in with its marsh views, vaulted ceiling, fireplace and canopy bed," said Caron. "We further elevated the old-country European vibe with an ornate crystal chandelier, Italian linens and layering of fabulous finishes."

The decadent drama flows into the en suite where a custom-fit mosaic glass tiled shower and heirloom polished nickel soaking tub rise above the marble tile floor and beneath a crystal drop chandelier. Not to be upstaged in the context of so much elegance, the vanity counters are Calcutta gold premium and Italian marble. "It's easy to forget this bathroom was once all about green, yellow and travertine," Fernandez notes.

Both Fernandez and Padron believe they've fully accomplished their mission to reimagine and reconfigure their new Mount Pelia address. Among their countless renovation triumphs, several continue to especially awe guests, including daughter Natalie's deluxe second level bedroom suite, a dreamy escape featuring vogue vintage pieces and a palette of ivory and cotton-candy pink.

Also not to be missed, Padron's media room, where a large custom entertainment center by Litchfield Cabinetry accommodates an 8-foot TV screen and elaborate sound system. "The Element team suggested a sleek sliding barn door to permit better views of the marsh," Padron said.

Panoramic marsh views are the centerpiece of the massive back porch which spans the rear of the home and offers multiple gathering vignettes. A swimming pool and marsh side terraces complete the Mount Pelia backdrop. "This is where we spend most of our time. It's the main reason we're here," Fernandez reminded us. She sees her family growing and building new traditions in Palmetto Bluff. "When we're in this home, it feels magical. The warm welcome from the neighborhood is the icing on our cake." LL

The home team

Interior Design & Furnishings: Kelly Caron Designs, ASID **Furnishings:** Builder: Element Construction
Countertops: AGM Imports **Countertop Fabricator:** Distinctive Granite and Marble
Cabinetry: Litchfield Cabinetry **Appliances:** Billy Wood Appliances **Tile:** Savannah Surfaces
Cabinet Hardware: Bird Decorative Hardware **Wood Floors:** Ziel's Antique Flooring **Lighting:** Capital Electric
Millwork: Grayco **Custom Kitchen Hood and Master Fireplace:** Francois & Co.
Landscaping: Hilton Head Landscape **Custom Iron Wine Door:** Saltmarsh Metal



KITCHEN COUNTER STOOLS Eat your bacon and eggs in style by pulling this beauty up to your kitchen counter. wesleyhall.com

Get the look of this featured home

Designer **Kelly Caron** offered a few home accessory suggestions to help achieve the look of this beautiful Palmetto Bluff home.

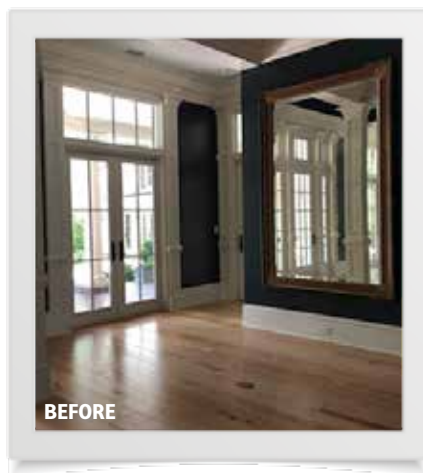
BEDROOM LAMPS This Saxon Large Table Lamp from Kate Spade New York is the perfect accent to a bedroom, living room or dining room. circlairighting.com



GRAND FOYER MIRROR This Keyhole Mirror beveled center mirror is surrounded by various-shaped beveled mirrors in a classic wood frame. johnrichard.com



LIVING ROOM COCKTAIL TABLE This Campana Cocktail Table has a fancy face top of flat cut and quartered white oak veneers, one shelf and adjustable glides. bernhardt.com



Five ideas for your home

MINOR ENHANCEMENTS & UPGRADES THAT MAKE A MAJOR DIFFERENCE.

Secrets to steal from our featured home...

1. TAKE IT OUTSIDE

A full renovation doesn't just transform this inside. A fresh coat of paint outside took an oddly dark exterior and made it the neutral-toned introduction to the color schemes that await within.

2. GET IN ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Create a unique atmosphere with patterned flooring. This black and white design is great for traditional and contemporary room settings. Other trendy color combos include soft greys and taupes and variations of traditional deep blue colors.

3. USE ART TO CREATE UNITY

The massive Ben Ham print above the foyer is joined by a series of Ben Ham prints down the front hallway, creating a subconscious sense of unity between spaces as you enter the home. By placing thematically tied works of art at key places in your home, you can join spaces and set the mood.

4. DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING OUT

The laundry room might not be on the top of your renovation priorities, but just look at the effect a new set of open shelves, black absolute leather finish granite counters and farmhouse flair had in this house.

5. GO FULL MARIE KONDO IN EVERY ROOM

If you're not familiar with the organization guru, her driving question for everything is "Does this spark joy?" Does your coat closet not spark joy? Well, maybe a wine cellar will.

