



HOME SHOWCASE

Look and feel

INSPIRED INTERIORS AND A WEALTH OF TEXTURES CREATE A NEW KIND OF LOWCOUNTRY LUXE IN PALMETTO BLUFF.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD

There's an old saying, "No risk, no reward." For the Forlenza family, building their dream home in Palmetto Bluff was an exercise in proving that statement to be true.

"Ellen Forlenza was a dream client," said architect William Court. "She was willing to take risks because she had a really fun design aesthetic already. She allowed us to go to places a lot of clients wouldn't let us go."

Taking chances through bold textures, eye-catching details and an inspired sense of scale, the Forlenzas worked with **Court Atkins Group** and **Element Construction** to create a home that took the timeless Lowcountry look of Palmetto Bluff in dazzling new directions.

"The family had toured another home that we built in Palmetto Bluff and they liked the layout, which is what led them back to Court Atkins to modify it to fit their needs," said Andrea Eldred with Element Construction. "Even though they liked the layout of the other home, it was very traditional, and they wanted something much warmer feeling to fit their family's vibe."

Throughout the home, this desire to shake up the Palmetto Bluff formula manifested itself in myriad ways: the intersection of materials found in the great room; the staggering scale and flow of the kitchen; the bold color choices found in more intimate spaces. Even the sheep stools, found throughout the home.

"I wish I could take credit for that," said interior designer Adrienne Warner, who worked closely with the Forlenzas on the home's aesthetic. "They were on vacation at a hotel in the Cotswolds, and there were sheep all over the lobby... that was one of the most outside-the-box ideas they had."

DESIGNED WITH DEPTH

A daring interplay of textures and materials transforms the great room of this Palmetto Bluff home into a vibrant showcase of modern Lowcountry luxury. From the rich tones of brick and wood to custom built-ins and whimsical details like a charming sheep stool, every element reflects the Forlenza family's bold yet balanced approach to creating a welcoming and innovative living space.



Each room became a testament to bending the rules and creating something brand new in the process.

Blending brick with bold ideas

Even before entering the home, its exterior speaks to this respectful tweaking of the rules. Architectural guidelines for Moreland Forest, the Palmetto Bluff neighborhood where the home can be found, demand brick or tabby on the exterior. The team complied with that demand by running brick along the front porch, up a large gable and across the breezeway toward the garage.

"There's a materiality to it, a strength in adding the brick," said Court. "And that big brick gable next to a glass wall really exposes the front stairway in a contemporary way. It's one hint toward a more contemporary interior."

A grand welcome

That interior reveals itself in the sweeping openness of the great room. Rather than centering the great room on the entry, the team shifted it over to the right, putting the doors to the porch at the heart of the sightline when you walk in.

"It's an interesting take on the old center hall arrival with the foyer and separate spaces, so it's all one open space," said Court. "When you walk in, you get a great linear symmetry between the great room and the kitchen."

CONNECTED LIVING

The kitchen and great room's seamless flow create a welcoming space for entertaining, effortlessly blending functionality with artistic design elements that captivate at every glance.



A material blend that steals the show

And that stretching view between the two spaces, framing mesmerizing scenery of Palmetto Bluff's inland waterway, also serves as an introduction to the playful blend of materials throughout the home. In the great room the rich tones of brick and wood come together beside brilliantly designed built-ins, custom crafted with slots that allow the look to be changed at will, with ease. In the kitchen rich quartzite waterfalls down wood accents on a center island, transitioning to a tile backsplash accent wall.

"It was important for them to bring in a lot of different textures. If you look at how the brick and wood in the great room compliment the plaster and tile in the kitchen, creating a cohesive atmosphere," said Eldred.



Design harmony in every detail

The great central space, anchored on gorgeous water views, serves as a great spot for entertaining while also introducing the fearless blend of materials and textures that sets the home apart.

"You can really see where the homeowners wove in some traditional elements, like the big slipcovered sofa juxtaposed with the cleaner lines on the armchairs," said Warner. "It's more challenging for designers because you're going to see all those elements at the same time, so they have to flow together." LL

Function meets artistry

This seamless kitchen design combines practical elements with artistic details, creating a space that is as functional as it is visually striking. "The plaster hood in the kitchen became a focal point," Eldred said. "A local vendor, Prestone, came in and applied the plaster finish to a custom hood design built on-site. In addition, the tile backsplash going wall-to-wall adds another layer of depth."



An outdoor living room

A DIZZYING SENSE OF SCALE AND INSPIRED MATERIALS CARRY OUTSIDE TO A PORCH BUILT FOR ENTERTAINING.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD



Set along Palmetto Bluff's inland waterway, all this screened porch really needed to do was exist. But in a home where the entire mandate was to tweak the formula, the teams at **Element Construction** and **Court Atkins Group** took a different approach.

"Obviously any time you can get a water view, it's about maximizing how much of the living space will capture the views," said Brandon Edwards of Element Construction. "Court Atkins' design achieved this for this property."

The living space along the screened porch allowed it to stretch the entirety of the home's rear, adding to its appeal as an entertaining space. "It increases connectivity, having all those rooms along the porch," added William Court of Court Atkins Group. "This design allows the study, the master bedroom, the great room, the kitchen and the back kitchen to all have immediate access, and it becomes essentially an outdoor living room."

Grounded in style

While it appears to be blue stone, the flooring found throughout the outdoor spaces is actually a porcelain tile. Informing a bold sense of color found in the black framing on the windows and doors, it ties the porch's aesthetic together. "That floor is a great example of the way they took in so many textures and brought them together," said Andrea Eldred with Element Construction.



Party perfect

Even with its impressive footprint, several brilliant design elements have added even more functionality to the porch. The first is in the pass-through window leading into the kitchen, creating bar seating along one wall. Another was in the way the grilling porch was moved outside. "Most people have their grill inside the screened porch, but by moving it onto the patio — the outdoor living space is extended and it encourages flow out of the porch," said Eldred.



A bold take on tabby

One area where the playful tweaking of materials that define the home's interior makes its way outside is in the fireplace. Rather than the scattering of oyster shells found in the typical tabby, the Forlenzas went with a stacked oyster-shell look. "We suggested it to her to bring in a little bit more texture," said Eldred. "This tabby style gives homage to the historical construction of tabby structures seen throughout the Lowcountry. We don't have the opportunity to integrate it very often, but it really worked here."

Not your average mudroom

FUNKY REFINEMENT CREATES AN ENTIRELY NEW AESTHETIC
IN THIS TUGGED AWAY OWNER'S ENTRANCE.

STORY BY BARRY KAUFMAN + PHOTOGRAPHY BY KELLI BOYD



The owner's entrance to a home often gets sadly overlooked. If you're designing your dream home, you want your wow moments front and center, where everyone can enjoy them. For the place where you leave your shoes and drop your keys, a family photo or one of your less-dazzling pieces of art is generally the extent of it.

Not here, in a Palmetto Bluff home where the order of the day was creating something entirely new with the Lowcountry aesthetic. The home's living spaces exult in a fearless remix of the brick and wood elements that have long defined the Lowcountry look, and that philosophy doesn't end at the kitchen.

At the heart of this space, a bold console table anchors the space with a rich dark statement.

"This owner's entrance is right off of a powder room that has a beautiful dark blue board-and-batten look, so playing with that contrast of lighter and brighter, with the cane texture on the doors adding a kind of casual air, really gives you something interesting," said interior designer Adrienne Warner of **Court Atkins Group**.

Up above, a pair of bold woven light fixtures carry the home's dedication to texture. "Those came from the High Point Market. We had to make two trips – they're bigger than you think," said Warner.

Along the walls, the typical shiplap has been broken up by alternating size boards that created a new spin on the typical nickel gap accents.

"This is one of the design elements that the homeowners allowed us to incorporate into a design beyond the typical Lowcountry aesthetic," said Brandon Edwards with **Element Construction**.

And tying it all together is a piece of artwork that carries the playful sense of whimsy found throughout the home. In the great room and beyond, playful sheep stools add eccentricity and charm. In the owner's entrance they are joined by an enchanting Paul Meyer portrait of a humble donkey.

"The homeowner was so trusting. There was worry at first that maybe we had too many animals, but I saw the donkey portrait at High Point, and it just worked," said Warner. "And they were my cool clients, who were game." LL