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Bright White Light

story by Liesel Schmidt | photos by Nicole Hill - Emerald Coast Real Estate Photography

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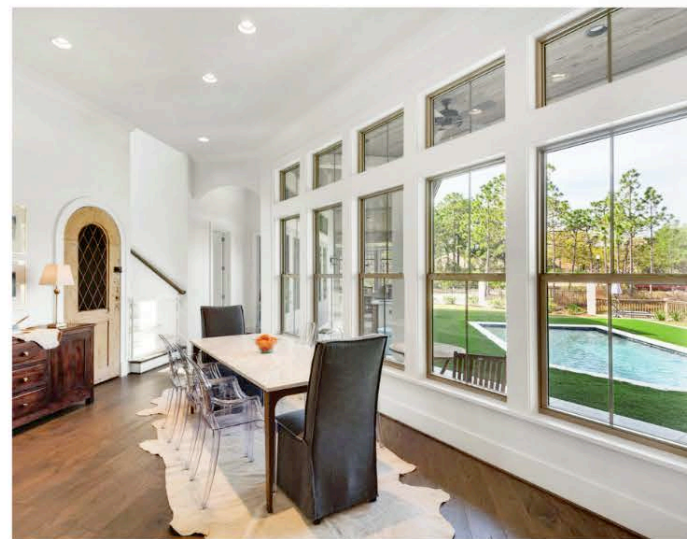
There is no sense of sameness in the many white spaces comprising the home that Phillip and Lauren Vlahos have created in Regatta Bay, no chill monotony or sterility that could so easily result from white on white on white. Instead, there is an almost indescribable feeling of layering air on top of light, a calm and clean openness that is at once crisp and soft. It's a masterful design, perfect for a young family whose aesthetic is a balance of traditional elegance with a modern touch. Despite the fact that such a prevalence of white could be considered a bit risky in a household with children, a preservation of perfection is given little concern in the interest of livability. "When Phillip and I designed the house, it was important to us that we achieved a look and feel here that would provide our family and guests with the comfort of being able to relax and make themselves at home," Lauren says.

Built in late 2016 by Destin Custom Home Builders, the 4,482 square-foot Vlahos home was every inch a labor of love. It was a place they created to raise their growing family that would truly feel welcoming and cozy to them and also a place where they could find sanctuary and peace. As a residential contractor and developer, Phillip's expertise came greatly into play as plans were put into place—but, more so than with any other project in his portfolio, the house was a personal investment of time, head, and heart. Its finished product is a direct reflection of what Phillip and Lauren believed the word "home" would truly embody.



of Bermuda, with its white stucco façade, flat tile roof, raw wood accents, and copper gas lighting. Large cedar brackets, exposed rafter beams, and shed roofs over the garages are yet even more examples of such island sensibility, creating a home that is by no means cookie-cutter and is in no way mistakable for a stamped-out standard design plan.

Working with designers Bob Chatham and Allyson Runnels, Lauren and Phillip were able bring their style fully to life; and now each of the home's many rooms is part of their own piece of paradise. "We designed this house with our specific family needs and desires in mind," explains Lauren. "As parents, we knew we wanted to choose a location that would afford us a family friendly outdoor space, with plenty of room for entertaining and play, as well as an interior space that provided our children with enough of their own space to learn and create," she continues. As the stay at home mother of two year-old Grayson and new baby Bennett, Lauren knows well the importance of dedicated play space and so the Vlahos home

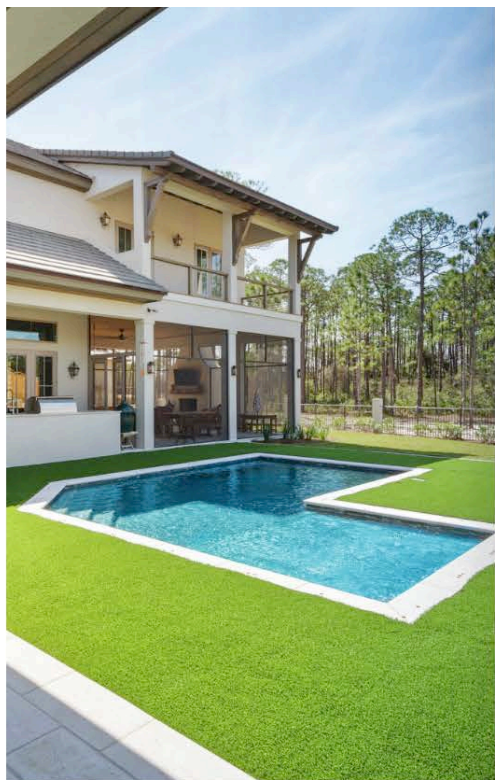


An open concept floor plan keeps the main living areas feeling airy as floor to ceiling doors and windows flood the spaces in light while twelve-foot ceilings give the home a sense of limitlessness. Cloud-like whiteness is contrasted with an abundance of textures in stone, woodwork and textiles, each a study of white that offers an appealing uniqueness. There are curves and lines and angles everywhere, breaking up starkness and sharpness to achieve interest...something new to catch the eye, something different to marvel over.

In its easy flow between living, dining, and kitchen, the house is united in certain elements, grounded by accents of wood used as stunning features whose raw beauty seem to stand out in high relief against the sleekness of so much white. Easily the dream space of any chef, the kitchen is one of Phillip's favorite areas in the house, equipped with top of the line appliances that inspire his culinary creativity and adorned with luxurious white quartz countertops that could be thought the crowning glory of white custom wood cabinetry. Double islands extend the prep space and offer extra seating, taking the grandeur of the kitchen and making it serve its purpose well—especially for a couple who love to entertain friends and family. "We designed it to be accommodating to all of our needs—not only in our daily meals together, but also for having guests," Lauren explains.

Wide plank oak flooring runs throughout the many spaces of the two-story home, just one of the many examples of finely crafted wood details that add charm and warmth and just that perfect hint of rusticity. Each are notable in their own way, from the antique wooden doors of the walk-in butler's pantry and the wine room to the herringbone pecky cypress ceiling and wood paneled walls of the foyer entry. There's an echo of the exterior here: whispers of an architectural style evocative





features playrooms and kid-friendly options aplenty.

Not to be forgotten, of course, is the space solely dedicated to the grown-up members of the family; and the master suite is easily at the top of Lauren's favorite places at home. "Our master bedroom is my serene place," she says. "The decor and color palette give me a feeling of tranquility, creating a real place of escape that's serene and private." Coffered ceilings in the bedroom are inlaid in wood, drawing the eye upward and playing in harmonious accord with oak flooring. Mere steps away, a fretwork of Italian marble imbues the master bath with spa-like opulence, setting off the cast iron soaking tub to make it a showpiece.

From the patterned turf leading up the drive to the backyard patio and each inch and foot in between, every aspect of the Vlahos home was selected with care and sourced with much purpose and intent. Theirs is a cloud of light and air, softly sleek in its way, a respite of comfort and calm. And for this young family, it's a place of peace to learn and grow and play, a place to take a breath, a blank canvas for making memories for years to come. 🌿



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