



FLOOR PLAN



The New



NAUTICAL

Somerset Bay designs take us to the sand and sea in style

← A pale palette truly encourages rest in this Somerset Bay collection.

↓ The colors call to mind a beach strewn with shells, seaweed, and bits of driftwood.

↓↓ The hand-rubbed, spectacular finishes are just as important as the colors for each piece, says the designer.



BY CHRISTINE HOLM

IF YOU'RE LIKE MANY OF US, when you think of classic nautical style, mahogany Chris-Craft boats and the movie *Summer of '42* come to mind. We envision fabric prints with white boat steering wheels on a navy background or striped canvas-covered chairs and pillows.

The new nautical style sails far beyond those old standards into fresh, new territory thanks to Michael Beaver, owner of Somerset Bay. Here, the furniture is inspired by nature: the sea, the sand, and the sky.

“Our concept of nautical is drawn from timeless, classic forms,” Beaver says. “They’re often drawn from iconic, antique designs, which we then further interpret through a playful coastal palette.”

According to Beaver, a great deal of time is spent designing the pieces—adapting and reinventing in stages based on feedback from the trade and from clients—and even more

on developing and selecting their colors. “Before we even rolled out the first designs, we spent a year and a half with the paint factories, tweaking the color,” he says. These colors are natural in essence, breezing gently on the eyes while they beckon the mind to wander in comfort. The Somerset Bay showroom experience is much like being casually barefoot at the shore, knee-deep in vacation time.

According to Beaver, the finish of each piece is equally as important as the color.

“Each is hand rubbed to give it that antique look,” he says. “We wanted warmth and comfort. We weren’t looking to be trendy, but at the same time, there’s a synergy you have to factor in there with being in the coast.” Hand-rubbed finishes impart the passage of time and the timeless elegance of treasured heirlooms shipped from the old country to new lands.

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This is very high-end furniture, which is to say that beyond its carefully considered design, it’s very well made. Each piece is handcrafted from the finest plantation-grown mahogany and premium veneers and trim. Their craftsmen use state-of-the-art techniques to produce that timeless, soft patina. Their skills can further be seen in the distressing, drybrushing, and antiquing that shapes the character of each piece of handcrafted furniture. Closer inspection reveals drawers constructed of renewable, plantation-grown mahogany made with traditional dovetail joints. Such quality is meant to last; Beaver calls it “continuity of execution,” and it’s why the collection, which started with four pieces, has jumped to more than 150 in a mere four years. It’s well made, and we want it.

We also want it because each piece seduces in unexpected but quite calculated ways; the names given to each of the finishes are meant to make the mouth water. “They all have names of foods that are fattening, like Key Lime Pie,” the designer notes. “Each collection is named after iconic travel destinations, such as the Cape Porpoise Poster Bed. We did this quite purposefully, to evoke images of travel and dining well and indulging ourselves.”

Such images of travels to the shore, for many of us, conjure up good feelings. “This is happy furniture,” says Beaver. “It’s elegant, but it’s simply designed.” The new nautical style: It’s how you can transport your rooms into spaces that feel as if you’re seaside, right at home. ✨

Photos courtesy of Somerset Bay