

WHETHER you aim to simply lighten up one room for the summer season or create a new design style throughout your Florida home, Summer Chic may be the right track for you to take. Built on either the clean and crisp traditional combination of navy and white with nautical accents, or on one of several nature-inspired palettes featuring the colors of sand and sea, Summer Chic flows from the coastal style. It does not have a set definition; it is a light and breezy look that varies according to your own experience with coastal living. Depending on where you grew up or where you have travelled, your concept of coastal design could be influenced by New England, the Mediterranean, or our own warm, azure waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

What binds these styles together is the use of textures, finishes and accessories to create an easy, carefree ambiance. You don't have to actually live smack on the beach to do that. You can create that feeling away from the shore using well-constructed materials and well-chosen accessories.

Beware: You can have too much "beachiness"! Some people think they need to cram a palm tree into every corner. Don't hit people over the head with this look. The Summer Chic feeling is about not trying too hard.

Open space itself is an element. You want a clear vista and sight line – it allows you to clear your mind, acts like a breath of fresh air, helping you to visualize yourself getting away from the clutter of life, because, after all, isn't that what a summer vacation is all about?

If you have wonderful, open views from your windows, don't cover them. You can simulate a summertime view with artwork, but again, not too kitschy.



This room incorporates all of the elements of Summer Chic – a background of white painted wood, fabrics in turquoise, and a punch of citrusy green to keep things fresh and summery, and underfoot, a natural sea grass area rug.

THE LOOK: SUMMER CHIC

with claudia leah

Chose furniture that does not sit heavy on the floor. You want a sense of air underneath your furniture. Consider using a floor covering of sea grass and jute to add the right amount of texture to a Summer Chic look.

Wood tones should remain light for the most part. White painted wood, woven pieces or driftwood tones suit the Summer Chic look best, with maybe one dark piece added for contrast.

Our final piece of advice on creating this look is not to mix it up too much. Either accentuate nature's neutrals with tropical colors like aqua, lime green or perhaps coral OR stay in the navy and white realm with clean, crisp fabrics, like a pressed sailor's uniform. The goal is to have a calm cohesiveness without looking too matchy-matchy.



A touch of whimsy is a great accent, after all, vacation is supposed to be FUN! This whale pillow is at once fanciful and nautical.

Rendered in pure white resin, this coral chandelier takes Summer Chic to new heights.



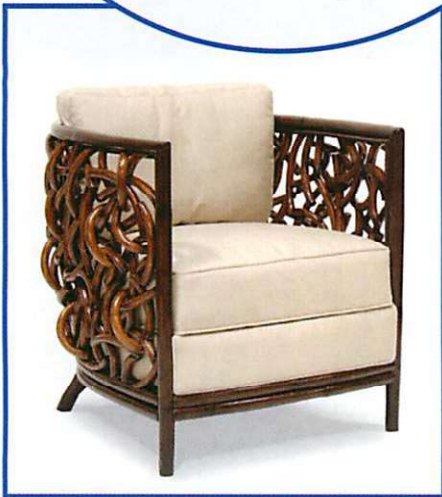
While this piece is fashioned for outdoor use, it could easily take up residence in a Summer Chic room. Its European influence is reminiscent of the French Riviera.



This brass-legged table trio, topped with petrified wood, brings natural, beachy elements into the home.



This classy traveler's desk features a leather-clad writing top and woven-faced desk drawers. Brass hardware adds a nautical touch.



With arms composed of tangled branches resembling driftwood, this clean-lined chair boasts a high gloss finish reminiscent of a classic wooden vessel. Neutral oatmeal colored cushions temper the subtle mix of "beachy" with "nautical."



Coral motifs, even when depicted in unnatural colors like this vibrant blue, are the perfect touch of fantasy. A rope "handle" atop the bell jar emphasizes the nautical element.



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