



# at the BEACH

Santa Rosa Beach, FL



### A MODERN NEW BUILD

**BUILT IN:** 2015  
**SIZE:** 2,900 sq. ft.  
**HOMEOWNER:** Nikki Nickerson  
"Sometimes newer coastal homes have a cookie-cutter look. I wanted mine to be full of personality and little quirks, inside and out!"

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LESLEY UNRUH STYLED BY KARIN OLSEN



Nikki in her kitchen—the exposed beams and gray-washed wood island give it that timeless *Fixer Upper* look.

**M**any houses in the town where Nikki Nickerson resides on Florida's Emerald Coast are built to be vacation rentals—think smallish bedrooms, basic kitchens, and neutral beige color schemes—not for full-time living and entertaining. After calling Santa Rosa Beach home for 16 years and seeing countless properties as a real estate agent, Nikki was ready to build a place tailored to her needs. That meant stylish yet functional, with ample room for cooking and hanging at home with friends (she's also a restaurant owner). She teamed up with architect Andrea Plunk and designer Paige Sumblin Schnell to create a house that embraces the local cottage vibe, with rustic twists: exposed beams, sliding barn doors, and whitewashed reclaimed-oak floors. "It's *better* than a vacation home," says Nikki, "because a vacation requires coming home, and I already am."

### wall color

White Dove  
by Benjamin Moore

**living room** The soaring two-story ceiling may be the first thing friends notice, but then it's all about the leather chairs by Lee Industries. Their smoky blue-gray color says beachy; the material says cool. "These are the most coveted seats because they swivel!" says Nikki. The planked walls, which resemble shiplap, were installed with a nickel gap between the boards (the builders actually used coins to get a sleek, evenly spaced look). The curtains, made with fabric by Vervain, tie the room's colors together. The rug is by Surya, and the coffee table is by Four Hands.



**dining room** As owner of the local Cowgirl Kitchen Restaurant Group, there are plenty of times when Nikki would rather eat at home with friends than go out. That's easy, since her good pals live close by, she says, and "we have dinner parties in our pajamas." Reclaimed-wood beams (used throughout the house), a driftwood orb pendant by Curry & Company, and a trestle table by CFC deliver the natural elements Nikki was after. She polished the look with upholstered linen chairs from Restoration Hardware.



**kitchen** Another beachy all-white kitchen? Not for Nikki! She painted the cabinetry Hale Navy by Benjamin Moore. "It really defines the space," she says—important, since it opens to the living and dining rooms. One coastal touch: a gray-washed island with a clean white marble top and gray cotton twill chairs from Restoration Hardware. For a hint of industrial style, she chose stainless steel open shelves. The sliding barn door opens to a walk-in pantry.

**patio** The screened outdoor kitchen, with its 7-foot-long teak table by Kingsley Bate, is handy for college football game gatherings—the TV in the living room is visible from it. You can frequently find Nikki here, grilling her signature Thai sticky ribs with her 4-year-old Australian labradoodle, Billzey, by her side. The concrete flooring by Peacock Pavers and the stackable wood and powder-coated-steel chairs look cool and casual.



**master bedroom**

Mixing different materials and textures—a wood sleigh bed with an antiqued finish and a galvanized-steel ceiling fan (both from Restoration Hardware), woven shades, and nubby blue bedding by Annie Selke's Pine Cone Hill—created a layered, relaxing room for Nikki to come home to. "I work a lot, and this is my escape," she says. The dimensional floral art above her bed is by local artist Justin Gaffrey.

**master bathroom**

"This was my biggest indulgence—it's my hangout at the end of the day," says Nikki. There's a glass-enclosed area with a luxurious soaking tub and marble tile all around. The cabinets are painted soothing gray (Ozark Shadows by Benjamin Moore). Wood tones—a stool, a bench, and baskets—warm up the space.