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M A S T E R P I E C E
*a waterfront
in Destin*

When a Nashville-based general contractor who has always loved the Destin area purchased as an investment an unfinished residential property on the canal, he faced plenty of challenges. Finishing the construction was at the top of the list, which he tackled immediately, but his pressing concern was being able to create a unique home, in move-in condition, complete with furnishings, art and accessories, floor coverings, and window treatments and more - in other words, a home in move-in condition, no easy feat, considering that the home consisted of four levels, all with balconies, a pool, decks, and more.

Enter Destin designer Risa Priestley. Priestley is the owner of Risa's Interiors, and she possessed the imagination and the inventory to take the home from a shell to move-in ready, with everything in



By Sabe Fink

place. Priestley was ready and willing and in a strong position to accomplish this seemingly impossible feat. In addition to her 13,000-square-foot retail showroom, she also has three warehouses in the area that hold a treasure trove of home furnishings, floor coverings, window treatments, soft goods, lighting fixtures, lamps and art. "This is my niche," says Priestley. "I love to bring a home together with just the right pieces, and my team and I are able to make it happen quickly because I have the inventory right at my fingertips." Priestley was able to furnish and accessorize the entire home, down to the smallest detail, in just about two weeks, and all the furnishings will remain in the home. "I take great pride in - and derive great pleasure - from being able to pull together a huge project like this." Her personal favorite space is the open,



spacious living-dining area, with its crisp white leather sofas and its panoramic expanse of floor-to-ceiling glass. Her biggest challenge, she notes with a chuckle, was getting the oversized furnishings up the stairs!

The owner had already tackled the pool, which was in place but needed a lot of work. He contracted with Ken Creel Pools to completely refurbish it. In addition, he was able to purchase and install all the custom-crafted cabinets that the original builder purchased and had in storage. For the kitchen, he worked with Viking, which offered the quickest turnaround on top-quality appliances. From there, the owner relied upon Priestley's skills and her considerable inventory to make the house a home. She was able to furnish every room, complete with floor coverings, window treatments, artwork, and more. The living spaces range from the ground level "Captain's Quarters," which boasts casual





open space, access to the pool and deck, and the canal beyond, to the fourth-floor observatory, which provides a panoramic view of the Gulf of Mexico and the dazzling night sky and is a great place to watch holiday fireworks. The four levels of the home all have water views and balconies overlooking the canal and the Gulf and are all connected by an elevator.



The buyer had purchased the unfinished home with the intention of completing it and selling it. He thought at the start he could accomplish that in six months. The construction took significantly longer, however, with covid and the related supply chain issues adding to the challenge. Finding Risa's Interiors was a huge bonus. "Working with Risa was amazing," he says. "She has a great eye for design and color, and she had every imaginable thing we needed. Any buyer will be thrilled to have all this done and a home that's move-in ready! Someone will be getting a wonderful, one-of-a-kind home." Destin realtor John Baldree of Mainsail Realty Company is the listing agent for the home.





Griffin selected Risa Priestley, owner of Risa's Interiors, to bring the entire project together with her design expertise and her extensive inventory of fine furniture, artwork, soft goods, window treatments, floor coverings, accessories and much more.





DA

DOUGHERTY ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN PA

(850) 650.5881 | doughertyarchitecture.com
4100 Legendary Drive Suite 220, Destin, FL
admin@doughertyarchitecture.com

A C C O L A D E S

RISA'S INTERIORS

10123 Emerald Coast Parkway
Miramar Beach FL 32550
850-654-7472
www.risasinteriors.com

MAINSAIL REALTY COMPANY

12815 Emerald Coast Parkway N°106
Miramar Beach FL 32550
850-585-1284
www.mainsailrealtycompany.com

DOUGHERTY ARCHITECTURE

Joe Dougherty
850-598-9881
DoughertyArchitecture.com

