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Above: The formal dining room's soft hues were intended to dim the liveliness of the adjacent, colorful living room while still "playing really well together." Gilmore paired acrylic chairs with a sturdy, distressed wooden table against fabric wall wrappings for a bit of texture. But most guests can't help but look up to ogle the antique, French-style chandelier. **Opposite:** One of the home's most treasured spots, the walk-in wine room strikes an Art Deco tone with Parisian flair, alongside surprising James Bond-quality tech touches. "On the tiled wall, there's a hidden door with a biometric print, so only the homeowner can open it," says Gilmore, adding that inside this secret nook is where he houses his finest Scotch and spirits.



What was once a dark and dated Mediterranean home now *vibrates* with **new life** and playful energy on the Florida coast

TEXT KAITLIN CLARK PHOTOGRAPHY NATIVE HOUSE PHOTOGRAPHY INTERIOR DESIGN LISA GILMORE

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA

"One too many shades of gold and burgundies can turn a home into off-balance, monochromatic mayhem. It's a common carryover from the popular, late-'90s mini mansion style," notes Florida-based designer Lisa Gilmore. And this cookie-cutter, excessively planned, over-styled home was the exact opposite of what her Clearwater, Florida, client had in mind for her new family home.

"She had interviewed a handful of designers before me, and she felt like it was going to be too perfect, too matchy, too planned," says Gilmore. "It was really important to her to use cool materials that don't look quickly sourced, that look like maybe they could have been traveling somewhere and found a tile they loved. They wanted it to feel like the decor was kind of curated over time."

Rolling up her sleeves, Gilmore scrapped and gutted the home's cookie-cutter crumbs to set about making the 5,500-square-foot residence feel warm and inviting, yet a little bold, and certainly luxurious...But don't call it that.

"I don't really like the word 'luxury,'" she explains. "I feel like luxury should speak for itself. You shouldn't have to say your home is luxury. I want people to feel glamorous in their homes, but also approachable, and I think this home really presents functional, everyday glamour without saying a word."

Grounding colors create the foundation with creamy-white walls throughout. The formal dining room's soft hues were intended to dim the liveliness of the adjacent colorful living room while still "playing really well together." Gilmore paired acrylic chairs with a sturdy, distressed wooden table, against fabric wall wrappings for a bit of texture. But most guests can't help but look up to ogle the antique, French-style chandelier.

One of the home's most magical spaces is the wine room, featuring the client's antique, 300-year-old French doors, which evoke a sense of fanciful whimsy. "She had the doors leaning against the wall in her dining room as art, and she didn't know what to do with them. So we made them a focal point."

As for the complementing, cut-out glass antique window, it was sourced from a local historic hotel on the Gulf Coast and placed within the wall. "There's so much natural light here, and I wanted to allow it to still pour through the space and not create solid walls to darken it up," Gilmore recalls, adding that she topped the room off with another vintage score: a chandelier with aged-brass flowers.

"One thing I try to emphasize with clients is that if you lead your design with things that you are truly attracted to, you don't have to worry about it matching so much because it winds up being a collection of the things you love."



Opposite: "We wanted to do something a little more jazzy over here," says Gilmore of the makeup station dotted with feminine touches, like the elongated, gold floral sconces on either side of the mirror. "The cabinetry is all handmade, hand-scraped and stained by our carpenter; he actually, truly made that weathered look using a burning technique. It's not one bit mass manufactured." • "This bathroom had three types of wallpaper in it originally. You'd walk in and get vertigo," laughs Gilmore. Hand-painted Tabarka terracotta tile serves as a kind of backsplash for the tub, with sleek white subway tile above the mosaic. But the variety of glamorous tiles also presented a challenge: it needed to withstand water splashes and exposure. "We had to use a really durable finish in the doors and the framing around the handpainted tile, so we took rubber and had it mitered, carved and hand-painted by a local artist to look like pieces of tile to complete the look." A star-shaped chandelier composed of metal, wood beams and pendulogues offers a hazy, candlelit glow that "creates a delicate shadow on the tile that feels really romantic." **Above:** The large primary suite has layers upon layers of texture, from the custom, cotton-braided rug to the geometric drapes displaying two-dimensional crewelwork embroidery to the bed swathed in Pierre Frey fabric with a delicate hidden detail. "All of those black stripes that look painted are actually embroidered, so it's not like a flat paint was applied; it's actually got a lot of really cool texture." And no Gilmore room would be complete without a retro touch: the show-stopping, magnificent feathered chandelier is vintage Italian Murano glass from 1960.