



# Cool Oasis

For a shot of summer bliss, look no further than this backyard renovation, complete with a pool house by Massey Martin Design

Written by MARGARET DANIEL

**SAVANNAHIANS KNOW SUMMER.** Long, sunny days both beguiling and sweltering, the air heavy under the tree canopy, sidewalks steaming after a midday shower. To stay cool, locals long for a dip in the ocean, a boat ride down the river or, best of all, a pool just beyond their own back door.

Thanks to Jay Massey and James Martin (Massey Martin Design), one Skidaway Island family's backyard boasts not only a pool, but a chic sunning deck and luxuriously appointed pool house — the trifecta for ensuring even the balmiest of the dog days are bearable.

What began as a request for a firepit during the height of the pandemic evolved into a complete overhaul of the family's outdoor space. "Somewhere in the process, we all arrived on this cool, contemporary oasis that felt worldly and yet steps away from the main house," says Martin.

With the brick firepit complete, the designers carved out an elevated sunning deck alongside the existing pool, topping it off with Astroturf panels — an ingenious solution for hiding unsightly pool equipment without limiting access for maintenance.

Next on the list was a pool house with a full bath, kitchenette and laundry room, ensuring the couple's three teenagers, their friends and even out-of-town family members have enough space to spread out.

"We mimicked the existing architecture of the house, carrying on the same stucco, columns and the traditional gables," says Martin. "And yet, when you arrive in the interior, it's something totally different."

With a gaggle of teens hanging poolside all summer, durability and performance were key to the interior design scheme. "Our client didn't want this to come out as a Serena & Lily pool house," says Massey, noting a chic, earth-toned color palette felt more enduring and hard-wearing against the elements.

"We put vinyl cushions on the McGuire dining chairs, we used Perennials fabrics on the Pavona armchairs and a Sunbrella-type fabric on the Lee Industries sofa," says Massey. "Everything had wet bathing suits in mind."

To complement the textured furnishings, the designers gave the salvaged beams and concrete floor custom stain treatments (Coastal Heart Pine and Grand Garages, respectively), adding depth with layered area rugs.

"We started with an indoor-outdoor rug as the base and layered it with a vintage Oushak rug that is all patchwork," says Martin. "Therefore, if anything were to affect one piece of the rug, it wouldn't impact the rest."

To echo the floor, Massey and Martin clad the chimney in 2-by-4-foot cement-look tiles whose colors are continued in the Phillip Jeffries wallcovering on either side. The hemp panels covered in horizontal washes of grays and browns reminded Massey of a Lowcountry landscape.

"Early on in the planning phase, we went with the clients to visit pool houses in different places. We loved the idea of doing something other than two pieces of art or bookcases," Martin says



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— *James Martin, Massey Martin Design*

of the inspiration behind the wall mural. "We wanted something simple and transformational that would relate to where we are."

For depth, the designers placed an antique pair of Indian wedding tables, historically used in ceremonies, in front of the wallpaper panels. "With many layers of peeling paint, there was no fear of putting a drink on [the tables] and leaving a water-mark. Likewise for the coffee table," says Martin. "The interior is sophisticated and worldly, but when you are outdoors by your pool, you should be comfortable."

Atop the tables, an artful mix of similarly aged olive jars, an oil portrait and a stack of decorative boxes find their home. “We loved sourcing touches like the olive jars, a cool painting by Dawn Sweitzer, and the chandelier that is made from recycled glass bottles by Currey & Co.,” says Massey.

With large windows and a pair of sliding French doors revealing the picturesque scene outside, Massey and Martin wanted to push light around the interior as much as possible, opting for a three-tiered glass chandelier instead of the expected ceiling fan (they mounted a pair of oscillating fans to the wall for extra air circulation), and polished nickel bar shelving designed in collaboration with Urban Archaeology. For added oomph, they polished the edge of the glass shelves to reflect the room, says Martin.

Behind the kitchen, the windowless bathroom is just as bright thanks to a pair of cut glass sconces throwing light across the glazed Moroccan shower tiles and onto the Shagreen vanity’s polished nickel hardware sourced at Sandpiper Supply. “[It’s] just gorgeous,” says Martin.

With the construction complete and the hottest days of summer months ahead, the homeowners are ready to fling open the pool house doors and start hosting in their new space.

“It’s been a baby we’ve seen hatch and grow, and the best part is we’re now seeing it be loved and used,” says Martin. 📍

## Details

**Neighborhood:**

The Landings

**Year built:** 2022

**Square footage:** 709

**Project Timeline:** 2 years

**Interior designer:** Massey Martin Design

**Contractor/builder:** Shore Blanton Construction

**Tile:** Garden State Tile

**Flooring:** Grand Garages

**Paint:** custom reactive stain in beams, Farrow & Ball

**Wallpaper:** Phillip Jeffries, Thibaut

**Windows/Doors:** Coastal Sash & Door

**Furniture:** Lee Industries, Restoration Hardware, McGuire (Baker Furniture), antiques sourced by Massey Martin Design

**Lighting:** Visual Comfort & Co., Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Currey & Co., Pace Lighting, Regina Andrew Design

**Appliances:** Livingood’s Appliances & Bedding

**Accessories:** Asher + Rye, Anadol Rug Co., Arhaus, Made Goods, Dixon & Rye, ADAC, One Fish Two Fish, Scott’s Antique Market

**Art:** Dawn Sweitzer, Massey Martin collection

*All details supplied by interior designer.*



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