



David Bromstad's Beach House Decorating Tips

The *Beach Flip* host, mentor and behind-the-scenes reporter answers our questions about his coastal design pet peeves and how to create a stylish by-the-beach space.



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Beach house decor can be tricky: It's easy to skew in a kitschy direction, and the materials need to be able to withstand sand and sun. I chatted with *Beach Flip* star David Bromstad to find out his must-haves for a beach house that's both chic and durable...and which coastal decor pieces have worn out their welcome. Get his best tips below.

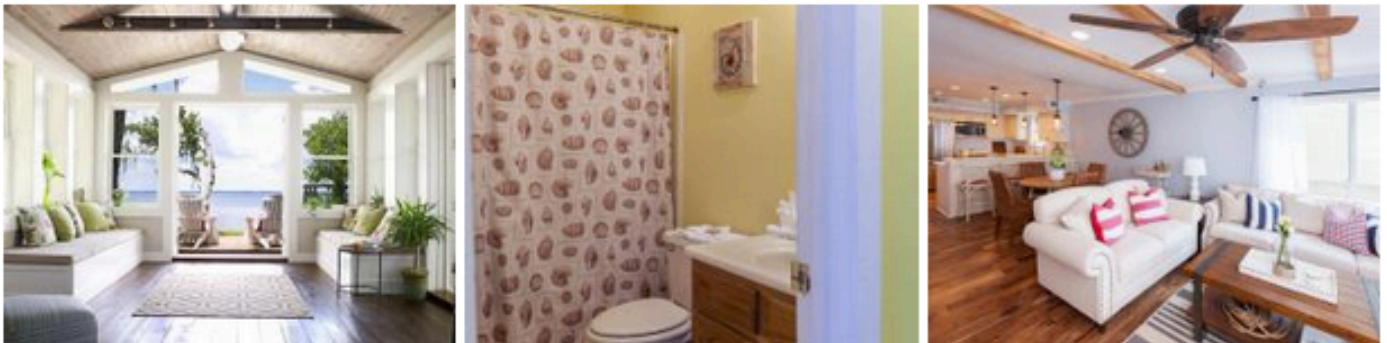
Liz: What beach house decor are you tired of seeing?

David: I wouldn't say that I am tired of a beach house decor piece, but I think we can begin to think outside what most of us envision as "beach decor." Beach style and design is timeless, it just must be updated like our wardrobes. Having seashells everywhere, fish netting and every sheet and blanket covered in shells or some type of sea life is old news.

David's Beach House Dos and Don'ts

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Get 18 top dos and don'ts for better beach house design.



Also, many beach homes contain furniture made of wicker. Update that with some synthetic wicker pieces in bright colors. There are many different styles, from nautical to more contemporary, for a beach home. It all works when done tastefully and doesn't go crazy on the "themed" look.

Liz: What are some ways to decorate a beach house without having a "themed" space?

David: You can choose colors and materials that will offer the "beach" feel without doing a themed space. The use of driftwood or reclaimed wood gives that sense of beach. Think about the natural materials and elements that surround the beach or water. Choosing the appropriate home colors, material, textiles and art can create a beach look without doing the theme.

Liz: What colors lend themselves most to beachy style? Any colors to avoid?

David: When we think of colors that pertain to beach home, we have to take into account our environment. A more tropical setting may have colors that are a bit bolder and more vibrant because tropical areas have gorgeous flowers and plants that grow naturally in that environment. It really depends upon your own personal taste and also where you are geographically. For me, when I close my eyes, I see many colors that represent the beach. Soft blues to striking turquoise, muted oranges and reds for accents throughout; I adore whites and creams for that gorgeous soft luxurious beach feel.

I wouldn't avoid any color if it's done in the right way. I have even seen black in a beach theme and it was gorgeous, but it was done tastefully. Any color can work honestly. I simply love a neutral palette of beiges or grays. Adding your beach colors with accents and accessories really makes a huge impact. You can achieve the look of the beach without painting your walls in color by adding color with throw pillows, throws, lighting and art through bedding and bath.

Liz: What materials should never be used in a beach house?

David: Carpet for sure. Remember, there is a lot of humidity by the beach and carpets tend to get musty. Go for area rugs: they can be cleaned easily. I love the look of area rugs with a gorgeous flooring underneath. The indoor/outdoor area rug choices these days are unbelievable.

Choose durable materials for the environment you are in and be careful of certain metals that can rust. The salt air can rust things easily, especially when doors are left open.

Liz: What are some fabric and flooring options that can be stylish and durable for a beach house?

David: I love wood floors in a beach house, especially the ones that have that weathered feel. Wood is soft to me and when I picture a beach house, I want it to be cozy and stylish at the same time. Another option, although not as warm, is porcelain tile that has the look of wood. I have seen them in every color of wood and texture you can imagine and they look amazing. They obviously are not as warm as the feel of wood, but are both durable and practical.

As far as fabrics, it depends on you and what your needs are, and most importantly, your budget. Personally, I love engineered textiles for a beach home. They hold up to kids and pets, and are much more durable than natural materials. They are gorgeous. There are many options to choose from and very price competitive.

Liz: Fill in the blank: Every beach house needs ____.

David: ART.

Liz: What are some of the biggest beach house design mistakes people make?

David: Over-cluttering, going overboard with the "theme" look and being afraid to add color.