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HGTV star David Bromstad talks new show 'Beach Flip,' reveals the secrets for the perfect beach house



David Bromstad knows what he's talking about when it comes to interior design. The winner of the first season of HGTV's "Design Star" is now the host of two more shows on the network, "Color Splash with David Bromstad" and the brand new hit "Beach Flip."

So when he sat down with AOL for an exclusive interview, we immediately had to ask him what he looks for in the perfect beach house.

"Beach houses are all about being comfy and cozy and not being formal. You want a lot of mixed metals and materials. You just want to keep it light and airy. You don't want to take away from what's really happening -- the beach."

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His time on "Design Star" undoubtedly helped him in his multidimensional role as a mentor, judge, and host – or as the fans call the role, hojentors – on "Beach Flip."

"Yeah, I was the only one who really knew. I get it. I know what they're going through, I understand the time constraints, I understand the pressure they're under."

Did that tendency to sympathize with the contestants ever inspire a nostalgia for the past or a desire to return to his time as a competitor?

"Would I do it again? No. But, then again, maybe I actually would at the same time."

But the aforementioned hojentor role was difficult, too. Understanding the different requirements of the various aspects of his title required a sort of balancing act of emotion and restraint and dedication.

"When you're a mentor, you're going in at an early stage and you're finding out what their concepts are. You're kind of just letting them know your opinion and suggesting ideas or directions. Whether they follow those ideas is a whole different story."

"Being a judge is much more difficult, just because you're like, 'Why didn't you listen to me, you fools!' Or, if they did, 'Glad you listened to me -- you won!'"

Though his tidbits of advice for the contestants were all across the board, Bromstad definitely has certain rules he follows – and tells people to follow – when it comes to beach houses.

"Keeping it beachy is always about keeping it effortless, natural, and simple. [...] It's a lot of organic materials, like rope, but also industrial materials to complement the comfiness."

"It's all about mixing and matching," he says.

Known for his energetic demeanor and vibrant taste, Bromstad exudes an undeniable enthusiasm for design and color, so it's refreshing to hear that he understands the value of neutrality and simplicity at the beach. This, he says, has come from the fact that he's "grown as a designer" and considers himself to be "more sophisticated."

That sophistication also carries over to his suggestions for entertaining at the beach, which is essential knowledge for the summer months.

"There should be no transition between indoor and outdoor. It should feel the same. If you're walking out onto your porch, it should feel like a living room or dining room or both. There should be a chandelier and cool lighting and a beautiful place setting."

Bromstad says that his time on "Beach Flip" has been a joy and that "the contestants were amazing and super talented and it was really fantastic to see them grow."

As for who ends up winning, Bromstad wouldn't give us a hint. But he did say that they had no idea which pair would end up on top.

"For the first four episodes we were kind of like, 'OK, the girls are going to win. They do this for a living,' but then it just became so much more intense."

"There's one episode," that hasn't aired yet, he says, "That it was so close that it made it so hard to decide. It was killing me, and it was up to the last second."