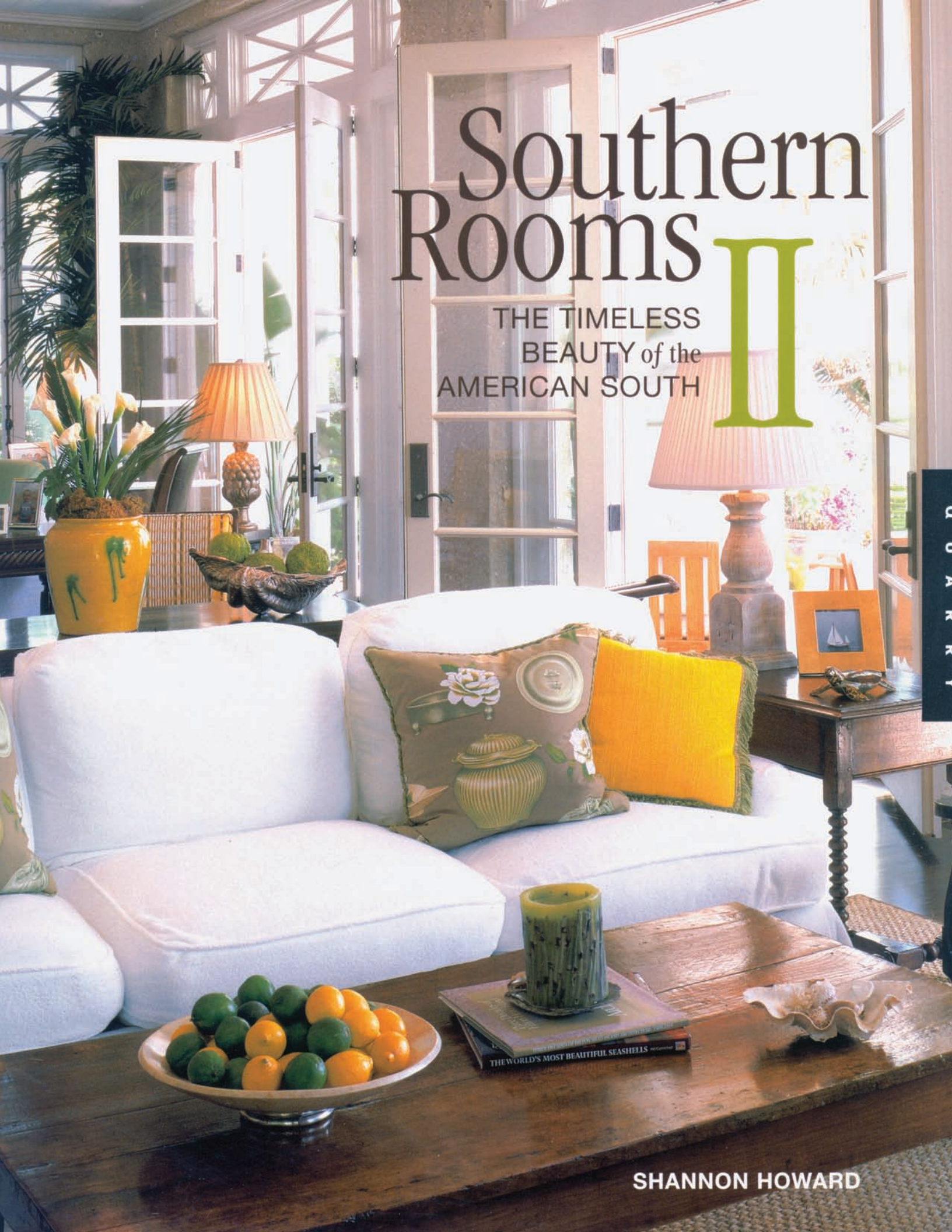


Southern Rooms

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II



SHANNON HOWARD

“We’re lucky to live in such a great vacation atmosphere. To really take full advantage of that, I think a Southern home needs to be airy and uncluttered.”

ROD MICKLEY

Tropical Punch

Like the Canadian family that owns this festive Florida home, Rod Mickley knows the importance of sun and fun. A native Northerner who weathered many winters before finally heading south, this leading Vero Beach-based designer tries to take full advantage of his tropical environs. In every seaside space he creates, Mickley arouses a sense of mellowness and lazy-day leisure by using casual fabrics and comfortable, lounge-around furnishings.

He usually chooses a breezy palette of soft, natural colors, but for this project the clients had very specific hues in mind. They wanted an overall scheme of cool blues and whites throughout most of the house, but in one room—a cozy little nook for reading and relaxing—they had their sights set on bold. Eager to experience a true island atmosphere, they liked the idea of splashy fabrics, bright walls, and just a hint of Caribbean sophistication.

Mickley responded by drawing inspiration from the local community, which features a wealth of British Colonial architecture. Pairing dark-stained wood pieces with vibrant red-and-yellow pillows and West Indies artwork, he was able to strike a perfect balance between upscale and utterly charming. “The colors are quite striking,” Mickley says, “but the room is so fun and fresh that the whole family really likes spending time in there.”



ABOVE: Anchored by an eye-catching plaid sofa, this tranquil living room embraces a variety of styles. The table is British Colonial, many of the accessories have an ocean theme, and the lamps (an original Rod Mickley design) are based on old candle stands from a church.

OPPOSITE: The variety of textures in this sunny family room strikes a balance between earthy and elegant. Red and yellow fabrics meld with natural woven materials for a look that's easy but upscale.



“When you can let the outdoors peek in and keep a room crisp and clean, that’s Southern style at its best.”

ROD MICKLEY

Holiday Getaway

Florida’s Treasure Coast, which covers a lush expanse along the Southern Atlantic, was originally named for the treasure-filled Spanish galleons that sank off its shores. But today, the most brilliant find in this upscale resort region is not what lies below the waves. It’s the tranquil villages that rise above.

Vero Beach, one of the oldest and most beautiful coastal towns, is where you’ll find this timeless Southern home. Built as a casual vacation retreat for an Atlanta family, the house has a breezy, mellow feel that perfectly complements the mood of the golf community in which it’s located. Dark wood furniture mingles gracefully with lush, jewel-toned fabrics and classical architecture, creating a space that’s both refined and cozy.

Designer Rod Mickley, who was tapped to decorate the interior, calls the look “traditional with a tropical twist.” Working closely with the homeowners, he artfully melded the clean lines and pared-down beauty of British Colonial style with a light-hearted infusion of vibrant color. “I was trying to bring a sense of freshness to the typical English aesthetic,” he says.

Guided by the philosophy that clutter has no place in a vacation atmosphere, Mickley kept every room airy and unfussy by choosing simple furnishings and allowing myriad textures to create depth and interest. In the living room, where dark mahogany tones anchor the space, zebra-print strikes a playful contrast with candy-colored silk. And in the family room, where warm, casual fabrics invite guests to lounge, the walls were left largely unadorned to draw more attention to the view outside.

Another consideration for Mickley was the wealth of architectural detail throughout the house. Nearly every room has intricate moldings and exquisite beamed ceilings, this despite the rooms’ relatively small size. To deal with this challenge, he chose light, bright, neutral colors for most of the walls and



opted for simple, natural flooring. Antique chestnut floors span much of the public portion of the home, while hand-woven rugs, most in pale hues, add extra comfort to the bedrooms and other private areas.

“It can be difficult to create warmth and texture and still keep things simple,” Mickley says. “But I think most people really feel better in rooms that are balanced—not empty and cold but not busy either.” So does this house pass the test? Mickley thinks so. “It’s lovely, it’s comfortable, and there’s not much to dust.” What more do you need?



ABOVE: Bathed in natural sunlight and filled with eye-catching textiles, the formal living room exudes feminine charm. The bold tones on the cushions and sofa are a nod to the homeowner's love of luscious color.

OPPOSITE: With a dreamy shade of seafoam on the walls and gauzy linen curtains draped from the canopy bed, this romantic master bedroom is a restful haven that's rich with detail.



OPPOSITE: This antique Bessarabia rug inspired the rich red palette in the family room. Similar crimson tones are echoed in the cushions of the sea grass club chairs and in the subtle paisley print on the pillows.

BELOW: "Anyone can hang a painting above a bed," says designer Rod Mickley of this delightful mirror collage. To emphasize the lively fabric in this tropical guestroom, he kept most of the accessories simple and sweet.

