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A FAMILY'S HOMECOMING
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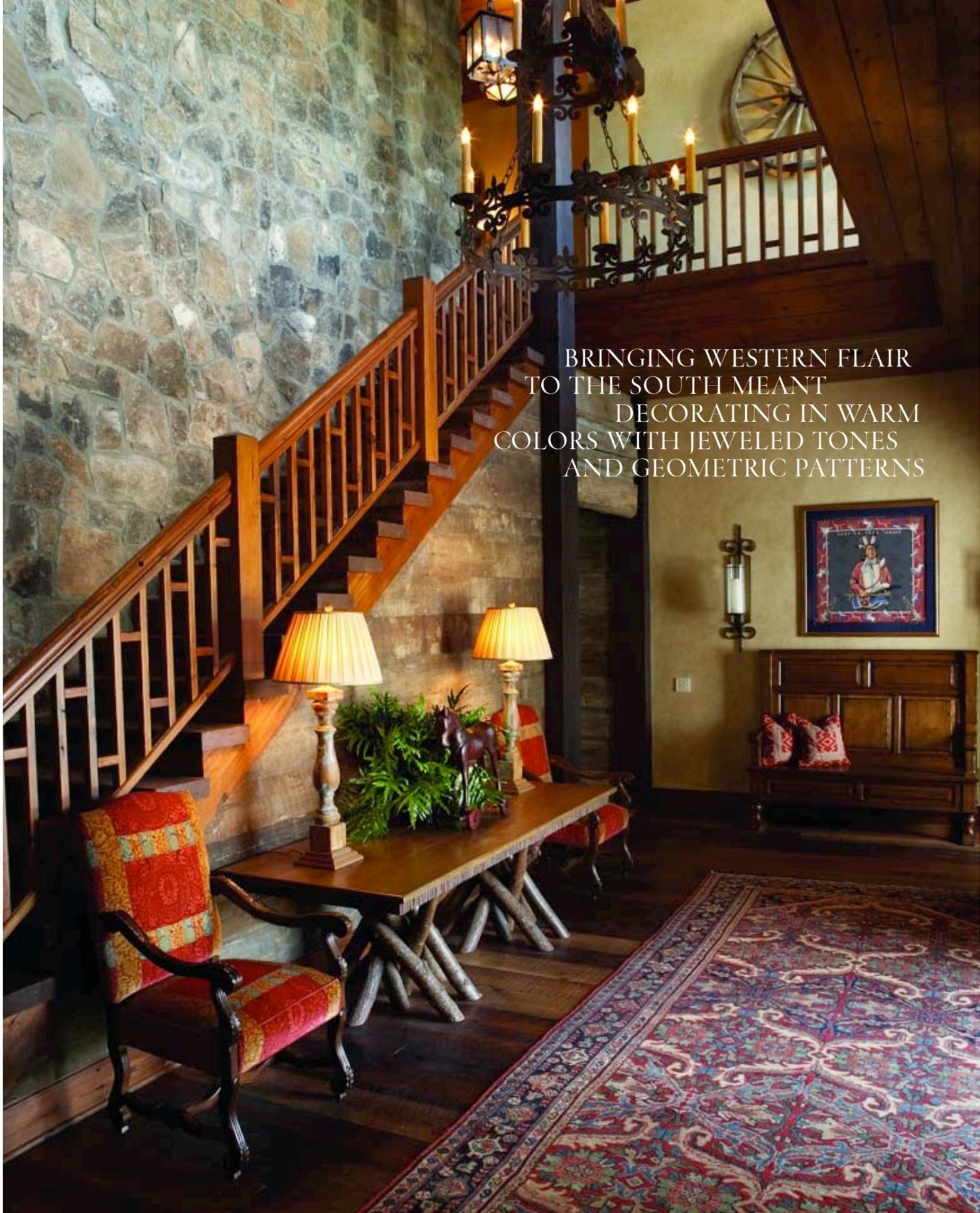
HOW ONE FAMILY'S LOVE OF
THE OLD WEST FILLS A NEW HOME

A FREDERICA FRONTIER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREAS TRAUTTMANSDORFF

THE FAMILY OCCUPYING a beautifully rustic lakeside home in Frederica first visited Sea Island 35 years ago. Their regular trips from the Northeast were interrupted by a brief Florida interlude. "When we heard about Frederica," says the family matriarch, "we couldn't resist the chance to be a part of Sea Island again." Now, each time they enter the cathedral-like foyer of their Georgia idyll, it's a homecom-

ing. One thing that makes their Sea Island house so special is its link to the owners' longtime interest in the Old West. That passion is reflected in everything from chairs with cowhide coverings to an authentic wagon wheel gracing one of the golden-hued walls. "Our love of this art started while growing up with cowboy shows and movies," the lady of the house says. The indoor spaces of the eight-bedroom shin-



BRINGING WESTERN FLAIR
TO THE SOUTH MEANT
DECORATING IN WARM
COLORS WITH JEWELLED TONES
AND GEOMETRIC PATTERNS



The stones, woods and well-chosen accents in the dramatic entry hall (left) create the strong Western sensibility. Large cozy furnishings (above) lend a lodge-like feel to the great room.

gled house, which includes an adjoining guesthouse, were overseen by interior designer Dee Simmons, of Lisa Torbett Interiors in St. Simons. Simmons, who had worked on the boathouse at Frederica, enjoyed bringing the West to the South. That meant decorating in warm colors with jeweled tones and geometrical patterns in the furnishings. In scouting design accents, Simmons was clear about her clients' goal: "They said, 'If you see a teepee, grab it!'"

Above all, the home had to be family friendly, since its owners might entertain up to four generations. Consequently, durable fabrics and other materials were chosen, especially for the kids' bedrooms. When they're not enjoying the ample grounds or fishing off the dock, the youngsters have a rambling indoor/outdoor play area on the house's wide wraparound porch. One part of the porch, however, is reserved for the gentleman of the house. "It's my husband's favorite place," says his wife. That area is screened in and has such comforts as a TV and a grill. It's a running joke in the family that the indoor oven doesn't get very much use.

"You could tell that they were building this house for their family," says Simmons, whose enthusiasm impressed the client (who remarked that "Dee is a wonderful listener"). The Frederica residents also established a solid rapport with their architect, John R. Rentz of St. Simons. "John was better at verbalizing what I was trying to say," the client notes. "He has a way of looking at something,

and coming back to say, 'What you *really* want is . . .'" One thing she really wanted for her family's Frederica home was a lodge-like sensibility. "Something log-cabinny," as she describes it. "I just love coming into a house with that woody smell." So there are plenty of oversize windows to bring the outdoors inside. Its construction features generous amounts of slate and natural stones, as well as heavy beams made from reclaimed woods, which satisfied the family's desire to literally "have some pieces of history in our house."

Besides availing themselves of nearly all of Sea Island's amenities, including golf, tennis and its array of children's activities, the family takes particular pleasure in the benefits nature offers to resort residents and guests. "The serenity of Frederica allows us to totally relax," says the matriarch. "This is quiet and restful, and we love our privacy. We wake up to the most gorgeous views of the lake. We can hear the birds landing on the water. And our grandchildren are so in love with the deer that go by?"

Indeed, the marriages of man and nature, South and West, come together in this unique homestead. And the allure of the outdoors remains at its heart—whether enjoying a breeze off the lake from the porch or curled up on a large sofa in the great room, with its sight lines through the large kitchen yielding lush, sweeping views. It's a place for what endures, says the family matriarch: "Our entertaining is more to do with our kids and grandkids. We're blessed for every minute we can spend with them." ■

For inquiries about resort properties at Frederica or elsewhere on Sea Island, call 866-879-6126 or visit www.seaislandproperties.com.