

# PALMS DOWN

Island elegance abounds without clichés in a family room makeover



A makeover proves that an island theme can be classy instead of kitschy.

Even though Hawaiian style was a favorite for globetrotter clients, the palm-tree stair posts in their newly acquired Escondido home didn't blow them away. That décor seemed more like a tropical motif for a vacation rental. What they wanted was a sophisticated Hawaiian-inspired theme.

"The metalwork palm trees and carpeted stairs did not reflect the plantation style that they desired," says designer Susanna Samaniego. "To draw on the plantation style, the balusters were switched out to solid white wood with a more beefed-up column at the base. We also tore out the carpet, replacing it with an exotic acacia wood on the stairs and throughout the rest of the family room flooring."

An opening behind the stairs was closed off to gain additional seating with an

L-shaped sectional that Susanna dressed up with nailheads and throw pillows.

"We custom made the pillows," she says. "I looked for fun, colorful patterns like the coral and seashell fabric. The homeowners are young, free-spirited travelers; so I wanted to bring a youthful and fresh vibe to the space."

The chartreuse window drapery, another custom element, blends well with greens and yellows found elsewhere in the home. A mirror frame that Susanna and her business partner, Elaina Myers, made out of a hand-carved medallion piece from India became a statement piece at the entry. Refined, carved-wood furnishings contrast with playful copper drum tables for an interior that's as relaxing as it is posh.

"The goal in achieving the well-traveled Hawaiian concept is to marry a mixture of



BEFORE

carved woods, metals and bright colors," Susanna says.

Reflecting that concept, this space has reached its target destination. ❖