



Key West

COTTAGES AND GARDENS

Inspiration from America's
Special Tropical Island

Leslie Linsley

Photography by Tamara Alvarez
Styling by Michael Pelkey



LIVING WITH COLOR

Marge Holtz is a fabric artist who has been making art since she was a child and her parents sent her to the Columbus Gallery of Fine Art. She says, “I am an artist who paints and makes contemporary art quilts.” Many of her quilts are in the collections of several major institutions and corporations. “Most of the work in our house is mine.” Marge is an artist who loves color. She knows how to create art with color and how to decorate with color. Her house is exuberant and joyful. She has designed a one-of-a-kind space that incorporates vivid hues into every room to create the ultimate “wow” factor. Big doses of whimsy imbue this house with a common thread that keeps it all harmonious. The house exudes a sense of sophisticated playfulness.

Marge and her husband Rick came to Key West in the early 2000s and moved here permanently from Washington, D.C., in 2016. What attracted them was, aside from the weather, the bright colors, and the people. “The house was habitable,” she says, “but very old and not in a charming way. The walls had been paneled with plastic stuff, but it was clean, the plumbing was working, and the neighbors were welcoming. Best of all there was enough room on the lot to put on an addition.”

They knew they wanted three bedrooms, three baths, and a pool. They wanted lots of



The flower collage is by Elizabeth St. Hillair who Marge took a class from.

light and open space. Thinking like an artist, Marge says, “Think of it as a white canvas.” With the restoration done, they now have a historic restoration star from the Historic Florida Keys Foundation. The house first appears on Sanborn

The painting above the purple door is by Marge Holtz, the homeowner.

The fabric on the poolside bench is one of Marge’s quilts. You can see how tight this neighborhood is. You have to get along with your neighbors.

The living room is filled with colorful art, most by the homeowner.



The dining table has one of Marge's table runners and the wall is filled with her art. Even the fabric on the chairs and the bowls are colorful.

fire insurance maps of Key West in 1884. The sawtooth addition that is now the living room appears on maps in 1912.

The overall design of the house is very modern and uncomplicated. It provides a good background for the quilt designs this artist creates for framing. They set the tone of the house. "We like to entertain," she says, "so large areas were important as well as easy access to the outdoor area." The deck roof is home to solar panels which help power the house.



Quilt art by Marge Holtz.



A cheerful bedroom at the front of the house continues the colorful theme.

The couple's neighbor in Bahama Village, Andre Joris and his business partner designed and installed all the plantings and planned the garden with an emphasis on native plants. Marge says, "Though we love flowers, the iguanas love them too."

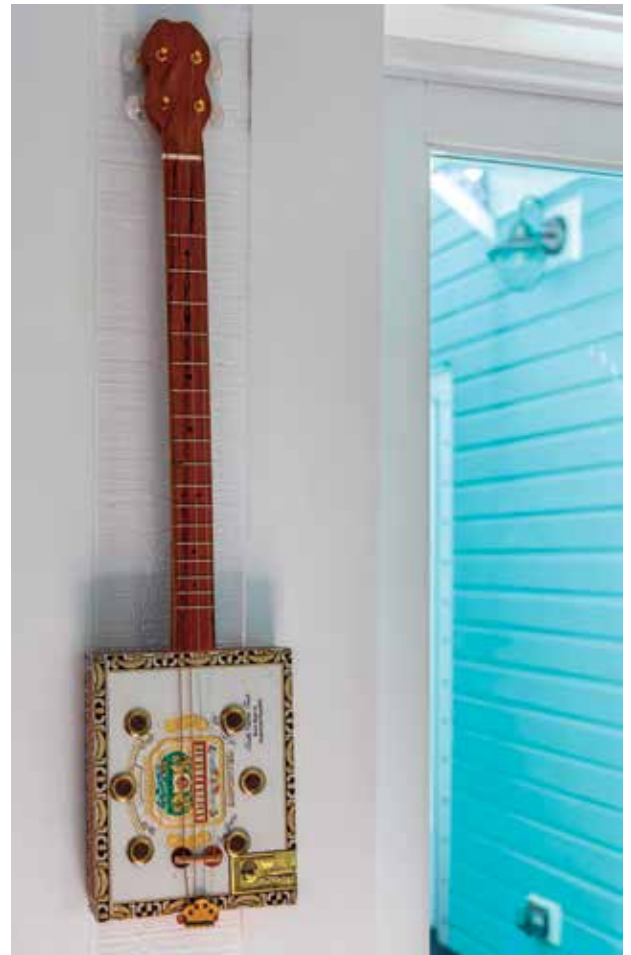
This retired federal employee, and naval officer as well as IT consultant, respectively, love to travel, principally outside of the United States. Rick is an avid volunteer with interests in history and carpentry. "He's my go-to guy for framing and mounting," Marge says.



Colorful fish adorn the poolside of the house.



Even the bathroom continues the colorful theme, started before you even enter the house.



A cigar box made into an instrument by the couple's son actually makes music.