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At HOME with Terry Haas

While we normally watch HGTV's Terry Haas critique the homes of hopeful sellers, I had the opportunity to change the perspective and catch up with Terry at her own home on Daniel Island. We nestled into her comfy couch where she spoke candidly for the first time about her new coastal Carolina home and all that it has to offer.

interview by Ashley Boquist photography by Michael Costa

AB: *Being a real estate agent as well as a home staging expert, you have obviously seen your fair share of houses. What about this house stood out to your discerning eye and made you want to buy it?*

TH: This one was easy—the quality of the craftsmanship and the abundance of architectural details. They took enormous amounts of time to make sure that there was extra crown moulding, bigger than normal crown moulding, extra pillars, and generally, better quality. This is also an Earthcraft house which is a higher standard of green, eco-friendly building, something that was really important to my husband and me. Everything is very sealed-up, very tight, very eco-friendly, very energy efficient. All the additional details as far as the extra granite, the beautiful hardwood floors, the extra large porch, open floor plan, everything sold me on this house.

AB: *Do you think that green features will continue to play a more and more important role in the home staging business?*

TH: I hope it does. I think it's necessary. I think we need to do it and, as a society, we need to pay attention to more eco-friendly ideas. And it doesn't hurt you to do it. All it does is give your house a step up above everybody else. It saves you money; it saves the new buyer money when you go to sell it. It helps the environment; why not do that? It was important to us—we now have a new baby and I wanted to make sure it was a good environment for him.

AB: *Do you immediately see through other sellers' marketing and staging tactics or are you still impressed when you walk into a home that is properly staged?*



(above) Terry enjoys finding unique, decorative pieces to personalize her space.

(below) As viewed from the front entryway of her home, the entire first floor is completely open as the living room and dining room flow into the kitchen.

TH: I am still impressed. In my mind, there are really two reasons why a house doesn't sell. It's either been priced wrong or it looks bad. Every house and every seller has their own personality. No two houses and no two people are the same, so every little detail is different. And when you walk into a house and it has a personality and it looks like you've put it together the right way, it absolutely impresses me. There are still some things that scare me that people do but, absolutely, I'm still impressed.

AB: *I know you purchased your home new, but was there anything you felt had to be done or changed to bring it up to par?*

TH: Absolutely. We walked into this house and this was the house we fell in love with. We love the floor plan, we love the colors—everything is white and coastal and fresh and open. Then both my husband and I stopped and said we can't buy this house because there is no screened-in porch, we'll just have to keep looking for another

one. But our brilliant real estate agent said, 'Why don't we ask the builder if he would consider adding it on.' So they actually built on a screened-in porch before we moved in and it was the best final touch to this house. When you live in the South, you have to have a screened-in porch, that was one of my requirements and this house did not have one. I believe my home is the only one of this floor plan on Daniel Island. Just adding the screened-in porch gave it that final finish and now it looks like it has always been there—it was just that icing on the cake.

AB: *Because you are primarily based out of your home, was it important for you to have a house that had a dedicated and efficient office space?*

TH: The way that this house is set up, it's all one open space, which we fell in love with. Because if you think about it, that's really where you live. You don't live in formal living rooms and formal dining rooms anymore. You live in big open spaces where the kitchen is connected to the living room. This





(left) Terry's kitchen has crisp, clean lines with plenty of storage, making it easy to navigate and entertain.

(right) One of her favorite pieces, this culinary pig welcomes guests to the Haases' "home sweet home."



(above) Notice how the staircase extends to the window creating a unique architectural detail.

(below) These glass jars from Arhaus Furniture are quick and easy to create, but add an elegant display element.



home happens to have a space that is right behind the kitchen that is still open, which is our office space and it still has lots of windows, still the hardwood floors, more crown moulding. It is the perfect home office for me.

AB: *You mentioned your fondness for the architectural details of this home... What are the major things buyers should primarily look for?*

TH: Crown moulding, good quality flooring, and good quality cabinets rather than pressed board or cheap cabinets will make a difference. You want it to feel sturdy; you want it to feel heavy and solid. The casings around the windows made a big difference to us. We have these wonderful columns in our house that they actually wrapped additional crown moulding around the edges just to finish it off. It was all those tiny details of the structure that made the big difference.

AB: *What would you consider your design style to be?*

TH: My design style is very casual, very

laid back. When I walk into a house, I want it to look like somebody lives there and enjoys it – that it is not so formal and so sterile you are afraid to sit in the living room. Growing up we had a room in our house that we only used for the holidays. I just never wanted that. I want it to be able to have it look elegant, but look comfortable, like you want to spend time there. Open floor plans are great because we entertain a lot. I love having open, breezy floor plans and windows and sunlight are very big for me.

AB: *Do you think that your style has changed at all after moving to Charleston in comparison to your last home in Virginia?*

TH: It's what I wanted my house to look like in Virginia, but because of the environment I was living in and the style of homes up there, it just

wasn't feasible. When you come down here and you get to live in the South, this just opened it up for me and I was able to be completely creative and have a white couch and have these coastal colors and open all my windows and have everything light and airy. Up in the North, you have to pay attention to bad

You don't live in formal living rooms and formal dining rooms anymore. You live in big open spaces where the kitchen is connected to the living room.



(above) Simple, yet elegant, these white on white vases with seagrass add height and texture to the space, while creating a unique focal piece.

(below) The office, located behind the kitchen, mimics the open feel of the rest of the home and maintains all the architectural detailing.



weather and it's less of a breezy, coastal feeling up there. This definitely gave me the opportunity to incorporate everything that I wanted.

AB: *How do you think this home will fare with the new baby and the accumulation of all of the toys and accessories that come along with having a little one?*

TH: Because of the open floor plan, I am able to be cooking lunch, cooking dinner, watching him, playing with him on the floor...whether we're watching Baby Einstein or working in our office, we're always able to be together. I don't have to use a monitor in here. I am

able to be with him most of the time. This house makes it very easy for that. Not to mention, rocking on the front porch makes it very easy at nighttime.

AB: *Do you think you will stay in Charleston and this house for a long period of time?*

TH: I love this house. I don't know if size-wise it will always work, but I do know right now it is perfect for us. But if I had my choice I would never leave South Carolina. This may not be the house we end up in, but I would definitely consider this builder for our next house if we choose to build. Living in South Carolina and the Charleston area is definitely the direction I'm headed. This is where I want to be! ❖

To contact Terry, visit www.TerryHaas.com.