

# ATLANTA HOMES<sup>TM</sup> & LIFESTYLES

## *Easy Living*

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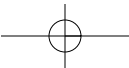
An early-morning fog rises above Lake Martin, Alabama, home to the week-end retreat designed by Susan Ferrier and Bobby McAlpine.



# LURE OF THE LAKE

*ALONG THE SHORES OF LAKE MARTIN, ALABAMA, DESIGNER SUSAN FERRIER AND ARCHITECT BOBBY MCALPINE CREATE A CHIC CAMP-STYLE RETREAT*

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In the living room, a Belgian-inspired sofa by Dmitry & Co. “sits like a barge in the middle of a river,” says designer Susan Ferrier, providing ample seating for guests. Silk pillows in shades of deep blue and silver add some shimmer to the sofa’s Harmony White linen-and-cotton upholstery by Calvin Fabrics. Mounted rams’ horns were chosen for both their texture and silhouette.





Commanding attention above the stone fireplace is “Magnolias,” a Michael Dines painting that Ferrier considers a “modern way of looking at trees.” Equally striking is Coup d’Etat’s Silo light fixture, fabricated from rusted and weathered hay balers. Both pieces help fill the room’s expansive volume of vertical space. *opposite* The aptly named “reading room” has plenty of spots upon which to lounge, including Bradley Hughes’ Brooks Chair, upholstered in a Christian Fischbacher fabric. A round wood-and-metal table draws the walls’ honey tones into the center of the room.





WHEN A STYLISH, BUSY COUPLE APPROACHED SUSAN FERRIER to decorate their newly purchased lake house, they presented the Atlanta designer with a tall order: Create a clean, contemporary-looking home that would be warm and welcoming for family and friends. Rising to the challenge, Ferrier mixed polished furnishings with rustic elements to craft a lake house interior that is comfortable and surprisingly sophisticated, too.

Located at Lake Martin, Alabama, the house is part of a camp designed by Ferrier's colleague, architect Bobby McAlpine. While the houses have similar exteriors and the same open floor plan, the interiors are where the homeowners' individuality flourishes. The heart of this particular house is the living room, a soaring space from which other rooms radiate. According to Ferrier, the cool color palette was a "reaction" to the honey-colored, cypress-clad walls throughout the house. Inky blues and shades of white were chosen as "a counterpoint to the natural warmth of the walls as well as an attempt to cool down a very warm space." So as not to intrude on the home's modern feel, Ferrier bypassed antique furniture in favor of sleek, clean-lined pieces. An upholstered sofa and chairs are covered in durable linen and cotton, while silk and metallic leather pillows introduce a glamorous sheen to the space. And in an effort to tame the living room's impressive volume, Ferrier selected a striking industrial light fixture and statuesque curtains to fill the room's upper reaches.

To "take away the slickness" that often pervades contemporary interiors, Ferrier also introduced layers of texture to warm up the spaces.

In the dining room and kitchen, for instance, metal, stone and unique fabrics create tactile counterpoints to wood walls, floors and ceilings. The dining room console, covered in faux leather with nailhead trim, all but begs to be touched while white linen-slipcovered chairs form a soft, airy perimeter around the wood-slab dining table. Meanwhile, in the kitchen, hide-covered stools and white leather benches provide comfortable perches at the wood-and-concrete island.

Because the upstairs master suite has the same distinctive cypress walls, Ferrier again called on a color scheme of blues, creams and steel grays, this time in less high-contrast shades. "Using softer variations of the color palette utilized in a home creates a more restful environment," says the designer. But even though the color scheme is lighter, the room is no less dynamic thanks to Ferrier's deft mix of straight lines and organic shapes. Nowhere is this more evident than in the master bath, where sinuous wooden branch sconces hold court amidst metal mirrors and rectangular wooden-and-porcelain vanities.

Her approach to working with contrasting elements is to "meet somewhere in the middle," says Ferrier. "Using varying elements in an interior challenges you to take a leap from one of the elements to the next, and in that dynamic arc or middle ground, you experience a completely individual and personal way to see a space." By skillfully and strategically playing color, scale and texture against one another, Ferrier has managed to design an interior that is not just visually and intellectually stimulating but—more importantly—physically relaxing, too. **SEE RESOURCES, BACK OF BOOK.**









Two leather-clad benches flank the kitchen's concrete-topped island. In the foreground are stools by McAlpine Home for MacRae Designs, covered in luxurious white hair-on-hide; their low backs allow for easy access to the island's work surface. On the wall is a framed assemblage of dried fern leaves, taken from a c. 1890 English botanical book.





Atop a glamorous credenza upholstered in faux leather is a tableau of found objects. Mounted millstones impart rusticity to the vignette while one of a series of framed gray driftwood pieces is hung on the window frame. *opposite* The dining room is a balancing act of materials, scale and shapes. Wing chairs dressed in linen slipcovers flank the slab-cut table, which is supported by curvy metal legs. Tangled driftwood branches add sculptural interest.





## Designer Susan Ferrier's *STYLE SECRETS*

*WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIALS FOR ANY LAKE HOUSE?* A comfortable place outside to lounge with evening cocktails, a great sound system throughout, WiFi and comfortable beds to land in at the end of the day. *WHAT'S ON YOUR WEEKEND PLAYLIST?* On the weekends, I like to listen to movies, mostly old, because it makes me feel like my house is full of stimulating people that I would not normally have access to, and it takes my mind to remote locations. *I CAN'T LIVE WITH ...* small ideas and ideals. *I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ...* my husband, my jewelry, global travel, my pets and my dreams. *NO HOME IS COMPLETE WITHOUT ...* reminders of the life you have lived and the life you intend to live. *HOW DO YOU RELAX?* I have to leave the country. Traveling abroad places me in unfamiliar settings and circumstances, so I am forced to let go and walk through it all by observing but not participating. It is like listening to music rather than having to compose the music that makes up my everyday life. *HOW DO YOU BEAT THE HEAT AND STAY COOL?* If I cannot be totally submerged in water with a cocktail full of ice, an air-conditioned parked car will do.





Tactile finishes are a hallmark of Ferrier's designs. In the master bedroom, that includes a quilted sateen bed cover. The chair in the foreground is upholstered in Jean de Merry's silk/nylon/hemp Alma fabric, available through R Hughes. Chocolate brown Venetian blinds provide light control and are architecturally consistent with the home's exterior. *opposite* Ferrier is a fan of hides, not only for their durability but also the way their organic shapes play off of a room's linear planes. Here, one is used as a rug in the master bathroom. Wood branch sconces from Design Galleria Kitchen & Bath Studio illuminate metal-framed mirrors by Stonehenge.





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HAS MANAGED TO DESIGN AN  
INTERIOR THAT IS NOT JUST  
VISUALLY AND INTELLECTUALLY  
STIMULATING BUT—MORE  
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RELAXING, TOO.*