



A CAPE COD-INSPIRED ESCAPE ON CEDAR CREEK LAKE

Dallas doctors turn to interior designer Erin Sander to create their family-friendly second home.

By Jessica Elliot | July 11, 2018 | 9:00 am

In Mollendo—an old-world Peruvian beach town where rocky cliffs cascade into the sapphire Pacific Ocean and ancient, primary-hued buildings line streets—young Pablo Zeballos would gather with his three brothers and the entirety of his large, extended family come summertime.

“I remember spending our summers running around, playing in the sand, jumping in the water, and having the freedom to explore,” the Dallas doctor remembers. “We would play soccer at night, and all the lights would be glowing.”

“The children love fishing, being on the lake, taking walks, and riding bicycles.”

—Laura Zeballos, Homeowner



Pär Bengtsson

These memories percolated for years until his wife, Laura Zeballos, also a doctor, suggested they build a second home that would be a weekend escape for their daughter, Elena, 12, and son, Patrick, 11. “We wanted a place where the kids could get away and decompress, fish, and swim and do something that they don’t normally get to do on a daily basis,” Laura says. “We also wanted a place the whole family could come to—a place for entertaining. It’s how I convinced Pablo. I said, ‘Think of your beach memories.’”

So begins the story of Alegria (Spanish for “happiness”), a Cape Cod-inspired two-story home nestled at the edge of Cedar Creek Lake in Long Cove, Texas. It has quintessential American lake house trademarks: a steep roof; shingle siding; floor-to-ceiling shiplap walls; and interiors popping with red, white, and blue. And despite the fireflies-fishing-long grasses-swaying-in-the-wind vibe, it is a quick hour-and-fifteen-minute drive from the Zeballos’ home in University Park.

The proximity is what lured the Zeballos family, who eschewed the idea of a beachside cottage due to limited travel time. In Long Cove, “we could build right off the shore,” Laura says. “We can take the golf cart to the community area with fireworks and have fun—and then drive back to the lake house and have quiet.”

Laura and Pablo had worked with builder Mark Molthan of Platinum Homes on their more traditional University Park home in 2012, and they approached him again in 2015 for their lake house. Early on, Molthan introduced the couple to Dallas-based interior designer Erin Sander of Erin Sander Design. Sander specializes in giving new-construction homes a deliberately honed, uplifting appeal. “Laura has a great eye for scale and color, so we were able to jump right in and be in sync as far as the design aesthetic,” Sander says. “We wanted an Americana feel—to create a family place that is classic and timeless but with youthful colors and durable fabrics.”

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A console from 1st Dibs and baskets from Crate & Barrel create a cozy welcome for family and friends. Sander suggested painting the door blue.

With their extended family expected to visit, Laura and Pablo prioritized sleeping arrangements, integrating lofts in three of the 5,000-square-foot home’s five bedrooms. The children love to read, and Sander designed niches in the den punctuated with art commissioned from Karen Blair. The designer also had two porch swing daybeds custom built for the upstairs patios off the kids’ bedrooms. “They are special spots that are their scale,” Sander says.

But the most magical moments often happen outdoors. “The children love fishing, being on the lake, taking walks, and riding bicycles,” Laura says. The family frequently convenes at their private dock to hop on their pontoon boat for water skiing and tubing, with their two Italian greyhounds on watch from the shoreline when they anchor for the evening.

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Laura is pictured in her light and bright kitchen. The Rejuvenation pendants hang above the waterfall island, and Bungalow 5 barstools allow for family seating.

"This past weekend, we had three families with us, and the kids were on the swing, were on the Bandwagon on the water, and then went exploring and found bones from a deer," Pablo says. "One night, at 10 p.m., all of the children came down and started playing board games with the parents. There were no video games or anyone asking to watch TV."

And there it was. Pablo recognized the same reflection from his childhood summers—the dimmed glow of the house at night on the water.