



happy hour

Deborah Blue and George Adley stir up cocktails with style at their home by Tampa Bay.



most people in the fast-growing Tampa Bay area have never heard of Snead Island, and that's fine with Deborah Blue. This offbeat isle—located near the Gulf of Mexico, where the Manatee River flows into the bay—remains largely rural, with enough wildlife and lush foliage to evoke faded postcards of Old Florida. When Deborah and her husband, George Adley, bought property here, they found “true sanctuary,” she says.

The couple's move from bustling Siesta Key meant “a less frenetic social life,” says Deborah. “But we still love to entertain.” Preparing for today's party, she takes a tray of drinks out to the garden shed she turned into a tiki bar. Trimmed with palm thatching and nautical gear, it's more *Gilligan's Island* than Snead Island. And Deborah—whose relaxed manner and visual flair don't fit the stereotype of a trial lawyer—seems part Mary Ann, part Ginger.

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“George concocted the Bluetini in my honor after we moved here in 2004. Typically, martini night is Friday or Saturday, celebrating the end of the week with friends.” —Deborah Blue

Deborah’s favorite get-together, a cocktail party, goes well with her “martini modern” style, which blends mostly midcentury design and art with a splash of color, a dash of wit, and a twist of tropical hedonism. “These are all vintage things I’ve collected over many years,” she says of her furnishings. “The decor is eclectic and kind of unusual, but somehow it works, because it’s almost all from the ‘50s and ‘60s.”

The mix includes spare modern designs, spiked with more-sensual pieces. Under a gilded, starburst clock, a round cabinet displays sleek ceramics. Curved, crushed-velvet sofas circle a bronze coffee table beneath a crystal-inlaid chandelier—“a bit of Liberace, with a Moroccan influence that adds an exotic touch,” says Deborah.

A dining area focal point, the gleaming Art Deco bar once propped up elbows in a South Beach hotel. The couple removed the doors from a cedar-lined closet to create an alcove for the piece. Now, with friends and family members starting to arrive, “Mixmaster G” (as Deborah calls George, a mortgage banker by day) shakes a batch of Bluetinis. Inspired by Deborah’s surname and



colored by Hpnotiq liqueur, this libation suggests a South Seas lagoon, or liquid sky.

Guests gather in the living room and lounge in the tiki bar or on the deck, beneath a canopy of live oaks swagged with Spanish moss. Cocktail attire for this lively crowd is casual yet elegant—the men in breezy Tommy Bahama mode, the women dressier, down to their designer shoes. (They make it look easy to stride in heels across shell paths and St. Augustine grass, never missing a quip or spilling a drop.)

The lowering sun draws people down to the dock, where some go for a ride in *Stormy*, the couple’s 1972 wood runabout. During a contemplative lull, an osprey cries, which prompts talk of the many birds on the island. The wood ducks that flock to the pond in front of the house could use some company, and Deborah wonders, “Wouldn’t it be great to get a pair of flamingos?” She’s half-joking, but her friends know their hostess. At her next bash they may well find leggy pink birds stalking the shallows. And who knows? These fine specimens of Florida wildlife may inspire a blushing new cocktail. 🦩

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Deborah’s namesake drink, the Bluetini (opposite), looks as refreshing as a swimming pool on a hot day. Party guests include daughter Katherine Scott (above), who’s taking a break from law school in nearby St. Petersburg. Above, right: A “Sputnik” chandelier, mercury-glass lamp, and anodized-aluminum tumblers suit the streamlined bar. The living room (below) features retro 20th-century furnishings. The eclectic decor banishes modern austerity with curvaceous forms and eye-catching elements, such as the crystal-inlaid chandelier. Deborah and her sister, Charlise Shine (below, left), share a passion for vintage finds. Left: “Mixmaster G” shakes up a batch of Bluetinis.

