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Spring 2014

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## INTERIOR *Motives*

*Congress Hall's Interior Designer, Colleen Bashaw shares ways to bring their look into your home.*

By Kate Chadwick

When most people set about with plans to redecorate a bedroom, the first idea to pop into their heads may not be “I would really like it to look like a hotel room.” But if we’re talking about Congress Hall, you probably can’t do better than taking your cues from their décor.

If you know Cape May, you know Congress Hall, easily one of the most iconic buildings in a town that’s full of them. When it was time to spruce up the place, the decision to use New York-based interior designer Colleen Bashaw, owner Curtis Bashaw’s

sister, may have seemed like nepotism on its face; but all you have to do is enter the building to understand that this match, made in designer-building heaven, was a no-brainer.

The sense of style that Colleen brings to every corner of the structure is compelling. There always seems to be some new and quirky detail that you somehow didn't notice the last time you were there, each embellishment bringing the elements of the building's beauty and history front and center. "The Congress Hall redo was and is very close to my heart," Colleen says. "I absolutely love the building and the property. And I love the fact that I work with my brother, and that we are carrying on the family heritage. Both of our grandfathers had a part in Congress Hall history."

The guest rooms at Congress Hall are bright, airy and charmingly cheerful, with an understated, yet unmistakable element of fun. The design sense

manages to feel both fresh and modern, but always respectful of the vintage building's architecture, environment and history.

To get some ideas on how to pull together the design elements of a Congress Hall guest room when redecorating bedrooms in your own home, we went straight to the source.

Just how would Colleen describe the general vibe of a Congress Hall guest room? "Happy classic," is her response. Here are some of Colleen's tips for creating your own happy place.

**Paint your walls** with Benjamin Moore "Delano Waters" (#766) in eggshell finish. Paint is the easiest, most dramatic and cost-effective way to change the look of a room, and this bright sky-blue hue ups the cheer factor of the guest rooms substantially. "I love Benjamin Moore paints," Colleen tells us. "They don't fade quickly, and the colors are great."

**Paint your trim** with Benjamin Moore



Carnival Stripe Carpet

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“White Dove” (OC-17) in high gloss. Painting trim in a gloss finish really makes it pop. And the higher the gloss, the higher the pop. This shade of white is both soft and luminous.

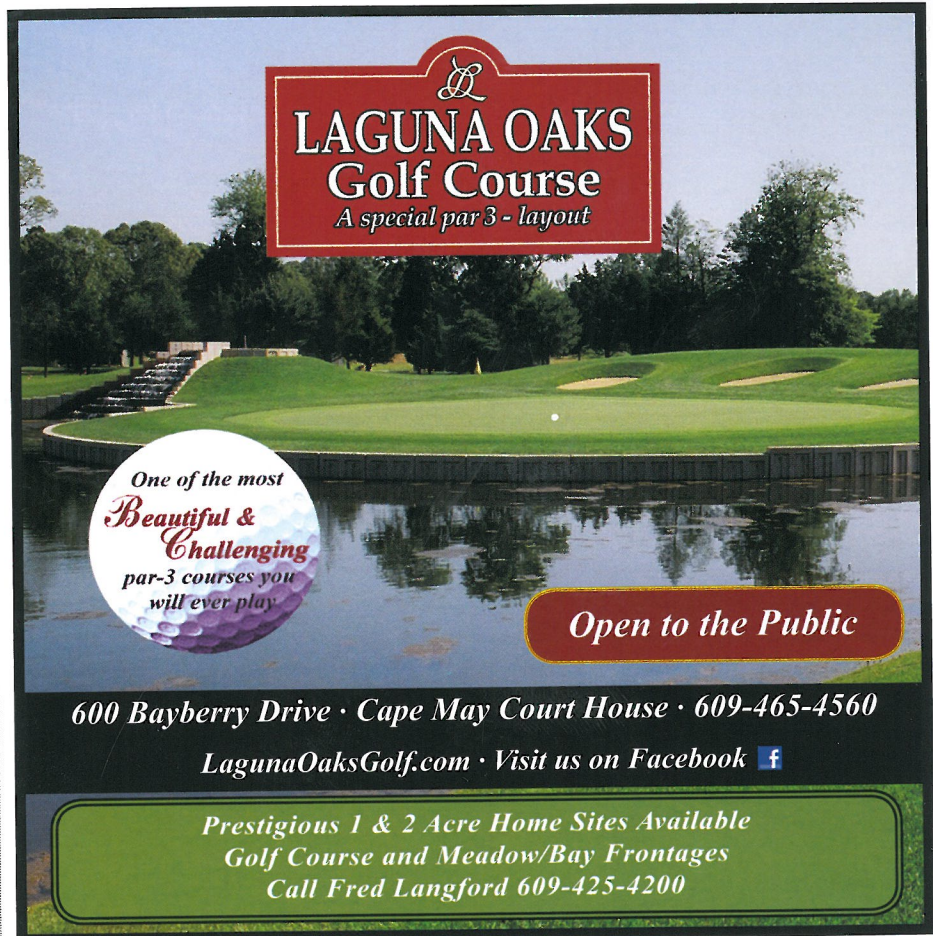
**Buy a striped rug** like the Carnival Stripe Carpet that Colleen designed. “I wanted a fun, durable carpet, and way back when, there had been a striped carpet in the guest rooms, so I thought a fun twist on that would be great,” Colleen says. “It’s made out of a durable nylon, but it’s very soft underfoot because of the weave. It’s great for kids, and it’s easy to clean!” The Carnival Stripe Carpet is available in the Home Store at Congress Hall.

**Colleen uses the Sassy Ceramic Table Lamp** from shadesoflight.com for either side of your bed. “They have classic lines and beautiful colors!” Classic lines in something as simple as a bedside lamp can be key in keeping a room from feeling too stuffy.

**Splurge on a bed coverlet with your monogram.** What is it about white linens that makes them so very appealing? “They’re just so fresh and clean,” Colleen says. “And classic white with linen embroidery is always beautiful. The Matouk ‘Lanai’ from Horchow (Horchow.com) is a sure bet.” And while we’re talking linens, don’t forget that the higher the sheet thread-count, the softer the sheets and the happier the sleeper. “We use 400 thread-count sheets at Congress Hall, and it makes for a dreamy night.”

What is Colleen’s favorite thing about Congress Hall, since she knows every inch of it? Is it the guest rooms, the Brown Room, the lobby...? “I can’t really pick a favorite spot,” she told us, “although it might be the front porch rockers.”

If you want to keep up with more new, fun items Colleen is designing and purchasing for the hotels, follow her on Instagram @colleenbashaw. ❄️



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