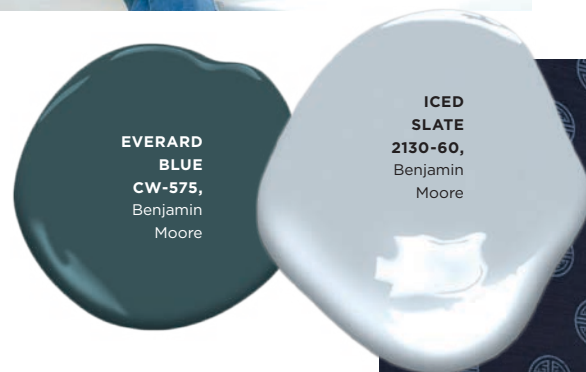




# Barclay Butera

This California-based designer makes the summertime blues beautiful. **TEXT** KARL LOHNES



Since 1994, Barclay Butera has been the creative force behind his prestigious design firm and showroom in Newport Beach, Calif. His success there prompted Barclay to establish showrooms throughout his home state. Renowned for his passion for decorating with the colour blue and his signature look of approachable elegance, Barclay also designs products that capture his chic-meets-coastal style. We caught up with him to discuss his thoughts on blue – his favourite hue and an all-time summer classic.

**KL:** You use a lot of blue in your design work. Is that because of your proximity to the ocean and the big California skies?

**BB:** You nailed it! I grew up in California and coastal living is in my DNA. Seeing big blue skies, the ocean, sand and cliffs has certainly engrained that colour palette in my work. Also, I consider blue to be the perfect palette for any style – traditional, transitional and contemporary alike.

**KL:** Do you have a favourite contrasting colour when decorating with blue and white? What about a favourite neutral to accompany the pair?



Barclay Butera's Empire **WALLPAPER**, MDC Interior Solutions, [mdcwall.com](http://mdcwall.com).



**BB:** Lately, I've been using a lot of sophisticated neutrals with beautiful textures. The environments we create are glamorous, but also very inviting, and the use of neutrals provides a great canvas for colour. Sand, driftwood and rich bark shades really make blue and white pop.

**KL:** How can those of us living in places with four seasons decorate with blue and white without making our rooms look like a summer vacation home?

**BB:** I find combining blue and white with dark wood and the on-trend gold accents in lighting and hardware turns a room from coastal to classic. And I would advise you to reach for deeper, more heritage shades like Benjamin Moore's Everard Blue. I used this hue in a stately office/library setting and it is definitely not nautical!

**KL:** How can I use blue to create big impact in a room? Is there a particular blue that you consider a classic or neutral?

**BB:** Big impact for me is [making] a major commitment to blue walls with glossy white trim, shiplap, wainscot, and tongue and groove. I consider soft sky blue a total neutral: it works well with almost any other palette and sets a perfect background for any room in

the home. Another fabulous way to combine blue with neutrals is to use wallcovering – I like geometric patterns to give a modern edge and grasscloth to add texture.

**KL:** Can warm and cool blues be mixed in the same home or should we stick with all cool or all warm tones?

**BB:** I typically don't mix cool and warm. I think flow from room to room in a home is very important. One of my favourite go-to shades is Benjamin Moore's Iced Slate; it's a soft grey blue that is very sophisticated and can be used throughout an entire home as a neutral. It also goes with so many other colours – it's always a winner!

**KL:** You've designed furniture, fabrics and books. What's next for Barclay Butera? Is blue still a colour that will be included in future projects?

**BB:** Oh, without question! My next furniture collection for Lexington Home Brands' Laguna has strong blue influences, beautiful natural woods, cane and warm hardware. It's cottage-meets-sophisticated charm with casual tones of denim blue and soft neutrals. It will absolutely resonate with my clients, but also with American and Canadian homeowners who don't live on the coasts.



Barclay Butera's Marble Cove **LAMP**, Bradburn Lighting, [bradburnhome.com](http://bradburnhome.com).  
Barclay Butera's Nantucket **CHAIR**, Lexington Home Brands, [lexington.com](http://lexington.com).



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