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Rossi hangs out on her family's porch in Point Clear, Alabama, page 70.



the perfect  
key west  
hideaway

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ON OUR COVER



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JEAN ALLSOPP

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our  
BEST-EVER  
holiday recipes!

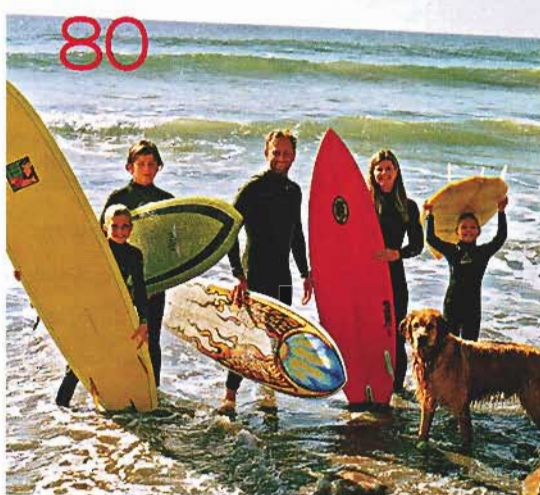
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Six generations (and counting) of family memories live on in an antebellum home on Mobile Bay.

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For this clan of avid surfers, Christmas means—what else? A trip to the beach!



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Just in time for holiday guests, we bring you a roundup of our best dishes.



# hang ten holiday

One beach-loving family can't get enough of surfing, even when it comes to celebrating Christmas.



visions of sugarplums have been replaced with dreams of the perfect wave at the Mattison home in Oceanside, California. On Christmas morning, the presents under the tree can wait. Stockings stuffed with goodies can hang out a little longer. Breakfast? Maybe later. This clan makes a fast break to the beach as soon as the sun comes up.

Did someone say beach?

"That's the magic word!" says dad Sean, surfboard already tucked under his arm. His three kids—Matthew, 15; Kasia, 13; and Savannah, 9—race for their gear. Mom Krissy heads to the backyard to get Skipper, the family pup. "It's not just a holiday tradition; we spend all our time by the water," she says.

Dad's stint as a professional surfer has much to do with

TEXT BY  
JACQUELYNE FROEBER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
FRAN GEALER

STYLING BY  
CHAR HATCH LANGOS



Sean no longer competes professionally, but he keeps a vast collection of long and short boards in the garage (right) and throughout the house.



## places to catch a winter wave

1. **Black's Beach,** San Diego, California
2. **Hanalei Bay,** North Shore of Kauai, Hawaii
3. **Oceanside Harbor,** Oceanside, California
4. **Rincon Bay,** Puerto Rico
5. **The Superbank on the Gold Coast,** Queensland, Australia

Learn more about these surfing hot spots at

[coastalliving.com](http://coastalliving.com)

"When I was a kid, everyone asked for Tonka trucks. I asked for a surfboard." —Sean Mattison, 2003 U.S. surfing champion

### make your own surfboard cookies

First, you'll need a surfboard cookie cutter; call 620/421-0654 or visit [coppergifts.com](http://coppergifts.com). Then print out our Surfboard Cookie Dough recipe at [coastalliving.com](http://coastalliving.com). You can also order the cookies (unfrosted or decorated) from Cyn's Cookies in Los Angeles; call 323/934-4672.

that. The 2003 U.S. surfing champion has been on a board since he learned to swim. Although retired from the profession, Sean hasn't left his favorite sport behind. He's now in business with legend Michael Hynson (from the 1960s cult classic *The Endless Summer*), producing both handmade replicas and high-performance boards. He was recently named assistant coach for the PacSun USA Surf Team, and also runs Surf Coach USA, an exclusive training camp for intermediate and advanced surfers.

All three Mattison kids excel at the sport—even the youngest, Savannah, tackles the sea with ease. "Dad, you're going to miss this one!" she calls, wading out for the approaching wave. Sean and Krissy say they never pushed their kids into surfing; they were drawn to it. "When I was a kid, everyone asked for Tonka trucks. I asked for a surfboard," Sean says. "This Christmas, it's all about new wet suits for them."

Having grown up in Southern California, Krissy met Sean, a Florida native, while surfing. Eventually the

two moved to Oceanside to raise their family. "It's a great location—only a minute from the water," Krissy says. The Mattisons spent four years renovating their home to accommodate their growing brood, knocking down walls and adding two rooms, including a wraparound back porch. "We had a lot of help from friends," Sean says. "[That's] the best thing about surfers: They trade labor for boards."

Not surprisingly, the Mattisons' home has a just-back-from-the-beach

vibe. In the kitchen, a vintage board suspends from the ceiling. Poster-size surfing photos hang on sea-foam-green walls.

Seven favorite surfboards lean against the wall in the master bedroom, and the garage showcases about 40 more. "We're a surfing family," Sean says. "Can you tell?"

During the holidays, surf culture and Christmas spirit come together. Bodacious surfboard cookies, decorated by the family, hang from the tree next to brightly colored bulbs and shells collected on the shore.

"Everything in our home holds a great memory," Sean says. A bottle of sand from Indonesia, leis from Hawaii, and wooden tiki surfing trophies are just a few mementos that document family adventures.

"Surfing is a lifestyle," Sean says. "We love it, we respect it, and—most importantly—we have fun." After their boards are tucked away, the Mattisons wish a merry surfing to all, and dream of big waves. 🌊

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