



memory drive

A HOME MELTS MODERNITY WITH FAMILY-FRIENDLY EASE, AND DETAILS THAT REFERENCE THE OWNER'S HERITAGE.

WRITTEN BY **LEILANI MARIE LABONG** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MARK ROSKAMS**

Not too long ago, an abandoned parking lot located in Miami Beach commanded spectacular views of Miami's downtown skyline and Biscayne Bay, which struck developer Todd Michael Glaser as a rare find—an opportunity, if you will—rather than a waste of space. So convincing his client Cynthia Rodriguez to build her family home there wasn't a very hard sell. "He said if I didn't move forward, he was going to!" says Cynthia of Glaser's real estate ultimatum.

Under Glaser's guidance for the build, Cynthia commissioned designers Carola Pimentel and Andrea Maenz, and architect Ralph Choeff to give her the home of her dreams. Inspired initially by classic Mediterranean style, which triggered memories of rustic seaside dwellings in Greece where she spent childhood summers, the homeowner sought to recreate that nostalgic experience—this time with a contemporary West Coast spin—for her young daughters, Natasha and Ella.

"Cynthia wanted a modern residence, but not too modern," says Choeff, who was also guided by his client's fondness for what she describes as "the flawless feel of a California-modern home"—think crisp lines and lots of glass to capture sunlight—when he was drawing up blueprints for the waterfront property.

INTERIOR DESIGN Carola Pimentel and Andrea Maenz, Assure Inc.
ARCHITECTURE Ralph Choeff, Choeff+Levy PA
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE Nick Dietel and John C. Shields, Pacific Beach, Inc.
BEDROOMS 6 | BATHROOMS 8 | SQUARE FEET 7,000



A peek into the kitchen past the dining room's black lacquered bar—conceived by Assure and fabricated by Thomas Riley Artisans' Guild—discovers Harry Bertioia barstools from Design Within Reach and Tom Dixon pendants. Flooring in both rooms is from Cal & Son Carpet & Wood Floors.



From the kitchen—complete with sturdy, handsome fittings such as melamine cabinetry from Italkraft and appliances from Bell's Appliances—owner Cynthia Rodriguez can keep an eye on her daughters as they tackle homework, watch television or create art in the adjacent family room.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 297

White stucco walls and warm, contrasting dark window mullions, doorframes and roof tiles satisfy the Mediterranean aesthetic while expansive glass at the rear of the house not only capitalizes on the aforementioned vistas, but also fulfills Cynthia's requirements. To keep the architecture from reading too contemporary, the homeowner made a seemingly random request of Choeff. "I wanted him to design pitched roofs because, to me, they add traditional character and coziness," she says. Lush greenery, thanks to Nick Dietel and John C. Shields, helps too, as the landscape cradles the home in tropical warmth.

Inside, Pimentel and Maenz worked with Choeff to configure the spaces with the axioms of nesting in mind: functionality and comfort. "As a mother, these were her primary motives," says Pimentel. "Cynthia wanted the security of knowing that she wasn't far from the girls, no matter where they were in the house."



In the great room, chic pieces such as the white club chairs are from the owner's personal collection; they brighten the color palette and inspired new additions, including a Minotti sofa from Abitare and a geometric Kyle Bunting cowhide rug from David Sutherland.



One of New York artist Lindsey Adelman's articulated chandeliers crowns the dining room, creating an industrial counterpoint to the more glamorous black lacquered bar. An oak-and-goatskin dining table by Ekena adds a sumptuous layer to the diverse materials palette and centers slipcovered Artefacto chairs.



Far left: Two armchairs in the great room wear Kelly Wearstler's linen fabric for Groundworks, found at One of a Kind. Left: The owner's console forms a vignette of accessories in the great room. Below: The entry door by Bon Vivant Custom Woodworking provides *entrez-vous* into the residence; windows are from Secure Windows & Doors.



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When drawn, the Fabricut linen draperies in the master bedroom, fabricated by Window Decorations, reveal large glass windows and balconies. The neutral palette is elegantly manifested in the custom suede bed by Omni Upholstery, silk rug by Fort Street Studio and mesh club chair.



A Venetian mirror resembling a gigantic emerald-cut diamond adds sparkle to the powder room, illuminated by Waterworks sconces. The close quarters did not deter the designers from installing dark gray Portico Nori wallpaper by Romo or a custom black-glass vanity, cantilevered for dramatic effect.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 299

For instance, the family room—bedecked with a vibrantly kaleidoscopic double-pile rug, glass coffee table-turned-crafts depot for pint-sized artists, and an oversize sectional for maximum comfort while watching movies—shares a large space with the sleek kitchen, which exhibits a more grown-up, contemporary vibe with quartz countertops, melamine cabinets and a stove centrally positioned on the island. "The openness of my home truly gives me the ability to relax," says Cynthia. "I can cook, work, entertain and still keep an eye on the kids."



Another Kyle Bunting rug exhibits a classic Greek key pattern in the media room, a subtle homage to Cynthia's heritage. A graphic divider made by Thomas Riley Artisans' Guild nods to the rug motif. A white linen Minotti sofa balances the room's richness.



A bi-level poolside cabana provides relaxing spaces for sun worshippers and shade seekers alike. A full stainless steel canteen supplies the grub, while modern white lounges from Clima Outdoor furnish comfort. The pool, outfitted with a Pebble Technology finish, is by Calypso Pools.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 305

Togetherness is also an easy feat in the heart of the home, a double-height great room that radiates sophistication in part because of its simple black-and-white color palette, standout geometrical motifs and statement-making galvanized-steel fireplace, an architectural feature that doubles as a partial divider between the living and dining rooms. Additionally, the lofty space's south-facing wall of glass overlooks the pool area and takes advantage of Florida's abundant sunshine. In lieu of a traditional foyer, Cynthia's treasured white-lacquered grand piano acts as the unofficial welcoming committee, setting the tone for the cosmopolitan décor as soon as the front doors open.

Creating a truly individualized tableau with a client's personal pieces is in full effect here. Besides the piano, Pimentel and Maenz layered in the homeowner's existing furniture (the guest bedroom trappings, for example) and prized objects of the shiny, pretty variety (glass decanters and gemlike Venetian mirrors). "They add more depth to the design by alluding to Cynthia's heritage," says Maenz of a technique that at first characterized the architecture but now distinguishes the entire residence. "The house wants to be modern," says Pimentel. "But it feels much too personal." **L**