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LIGHT BREEZE

SUBTLE TEXTURES AND UNDERSTATED HUES ALLOW TROPICAL VIEWS TO SHINE IN A BRIGHT, AIRY HOME ON THE WATER.

WRITTEN BY **KIMBERLY OLSON** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **MARK ROSKAMS**

When a vibrant couple with three young children decided to build their dream house on the Coral Gables Waterway, there was no question who would design it: They turned to their trusted friend Cesar A. Molina to plan the architecture and enlisted designers Carola Pimentel and Andrea Maenz-Roggiero for the interiors. “I’ve known the husband since the seventh grade,” says Molina. “Their life revolves around their children, close friends and family, so they wanted a large yard for the kids and big open terraces to entertain guests.”

The owners also wanted to make a fresh break from the style of their previous residence, a ranch house with dark interiors. So Molina designed a home with a decidedly West Indies flavor, sporting columns, a covered terrace, and large windows to capture the tropical views and allow natural light to flood inside. “As you enter, the house features a simple gallery space acting as a spine that connects from one room to the other,” Molina explains. “The doors and windows are centered, so you have natural cross-views and cross-ventilation.”

INTERIOR DESIGN Carola Pimentel and Andrea Maenz-Roggiero, Assure Inc.

ARCHITECTURE Cesar A. Molina, CMA Design Studio Inc.

HOME BUILDER Jim Hinds and Chino Cosculluela, Contemporary Builders

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE Raymond Jungles, Raymond Jungles, Inc.,

and David J. Odishoo, David O., Inc.

BEDROOMS 6 | **BATHROOMS** 7 | **SQUARE FEET** 10,800



The house evokes a West Indies plantation home, with large windows, covered verandas, columns, and lush tropical landscaping. Natural oolite shell stone was quarried from the site and used as decorative cladding on the house. Madera split tiles on the roof mimic wood shingles.

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To further enhance the home's indoor-outdoor feel, the family room, kitchen and bedrooms are all oriented toward the outside. "There are large terraces off the family room and living areas, so they can entertain and watch the kids as they play in the pool," Molina says. "We also added a bar in the living room to activate that space; they wanted to create an atmosphere where they can have drinks with their friends, and then spill over to the terrace and be outside."

Pimentel and Maenz-Roggiero complemented the home's effortless room-to-room flow using serene hues throughout to tie the spaces together. "The floors on the downstairs level are Sabbia limestone—a light material—and most of the walls are white or have understated textural wallcoverings," says Maenz-Roggiero. "We used a neutral palette, with pops



Many of the home's furnishings were custom-made, including the living room sofas, made by Omni Upholstery with Great Plains fabric by Holly Hunt. They're joined by Bolier chairs from Laure de Mazieres and an Artefacto coffee table, all on a rug from Niba Rug Collections. The side table is from Nest and the JNL sofa table is from Laure de Mazieres.



A streamlined gray stone for the backsplash and countertops offers a soft contrast to the sleek cabinetry by M Tec Custom Cabinets. Modern barstools pull up to the island beneath nautical pendants by Restoration Hardware. The Wolf cooktop is from Florida Builder Appliances.

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of color in the decorative details, and kept it simple with beautiful, natural materials and high-end pieces, yet nothing too loud—they don't scream, but they say a lot in a quiet way." That subtle foundation is punctuated with the couple's own art and personal belongings. "They travel a great deal as a family," Pimentel adds. "So they have many accessories and family pictures around the house from their travels that tell their story."

Of course, the outdoor areas were every bit as important as the indoors. "The terrace is amazing, with a living area and a dining area for having lunch on a Sunday," Pimentel says. "There's enough space outside to be comfortable, so the kids can run around without worrying about breaking anything." Here, natural oolite—a stone formed from calcite and seashells that was quarried from the site during the basement excavation—was repurposed on the home's facade. "The masons saw-cut, chiseled and hand-fitted the material as a decorative cladding on the house," says builder Jim Hinds, who oversaw construction with Chino Cosculluela.

The natural look of the oolite provides the perfect backdrop for the home's tropical landscaping, which was a collaboration of Raymond Jungles, who conceived the schematic design, and David J. Odishoo, who served as the landscape architect of record. "We used native trees," says Odishoo. "Some of them are fragrant, some attract butterflies, some attract birds, and some provide fruit in the spring, so it gives the garden a multilayered effect."

In addition, the family now has plenty of grassy areas for all that running around, thanks to a fresh renovation. "The husband is an avid boatman, and there was an existing boat slip that cut into a covered cliff projecting into the property," says Hinds. "We removed the old roof and built a new concrete structure 2 feet below grade." A green roof was then built over the boathouse to conceal it, which almost doubled the lawn area in the back of the house.



The owners wanted a terrace that would act as an extended living room. The area was outfitted with natural furnishings, including a Restoration Hardware sofa and lounge chair, and a coffee table and rattan dining chairs from Victoria's Armoire. The pool is by Tuttle's Pool Company, and Bamboo Hammock Nursery provided the landscape materials and construction.



The light, ethereal bathroom features an Atlantis Whirlpools tub from Decorator's Plumbing, as well as a Calacatta gold marble tub surround. To maximize the tropical views, a small over-sink mirror was placed over one of the room's many windows. The vanity is by M Tec Custom Cabinets.



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To create a buffer between the homeowners and their neighbors, plantings of various sizes were used—from towering palm trees, to medium-size trees, to understory trees and shrubs—creating a yard that would grow into itself naturally. “We also improved the circulation of how to get around the home,” adds Jungles. “There was no way to get from the front porch back to the pool area, so we conceived a catwalk by suspending a boardwalk around that side of the house.”

Throughout the project, Hinds notes that the homeowners' excitement set the tone. “The husband's enthusiasm was infectious. Everybody just rose to the occasion, and it was a lot of fun,” he says. The designers felt it, too. “When you enter this house, it feels happy and full of light, and there are views from everywhere,” Maenz-Roggiero says. For Molina, that sense of fun also conjures a sense of nostalgia. “I actually work out with the owner three days a week at the house,” he says. “It's a delight to see your friends living in a home that you designed.” **L**

The serene master bedroom features a bed and bedside tables that were custom-made by Assure Inc. A Madeline Weinrib rug from ABC Carpet & Home grounds the space with contemporary flair, and a linen wallcovering by Wolf-Gordon wraps the room in a neutral tone. Robert Abbey wall lamps from YLighting provide light for nighttime reading.