



SPECIAL EFFECTS Guillermo Orozco turned a tiny space behind a 100-year-old house into an expanded kitchen; an outdoor dining room, seen above through the kitchen window; a patio with pool and a master bedroom and bath with outdoor shower. His sketch is below.

NO. 1, TOO SMALL BACK YARD

BY SAXON HENRY

Given the tight proportions of the postage-stamp sized properties he designs in Key West, Guillermo Orozco qualifies for the nickname "the Key West Houdini." Orozco, who has a penchant for indoor and outdoor spaces that have a tight relationship to each other, is a master at giving his clients more than they dreamed that their dainty lots could hold.

Some of his notable sleights of hand include kitchen windows that slide away to create the feeling that the outdoors has come indoors; adding structural stature to porches to create true outdoor rooms, and designing pools that wrap around the corners of houses to appear bigger than they are. It's all about scale, said Orozco, a Colombian-born connoisseur of constraint.

He designed this addition to a turn-of-the-century house in Old Town in Key West to include a kitchen, outdoor living and dining areas and a master bedroom and bath, plus a landscaped yard, all tucked into a mere 800 square feet of space.

Because he often works within space constraints, Orozco works hard to create volume. "The illusion of space in many of my projects, just as it is with this one, is achieved with cathedral ceilings that have

exposed rafters, and large door and window openings," he said. "The kitchen is opened to the porch when a six-by-six-foot folding window is pulled aside. The enlarged counter area that results serves as a pass-through during mealtime and a bar when the homeowners entertain."

On small plots, Orozco has learned that every inch counts, so everything plays an integral role in achieving a sense of unity. "I chose the freeform shape of the pool to contrast with the structured lines of the architecture and the location to take advantage of the afternoon sun," he said. "The lounging areas and the landscaping around the pool were designed to create depth."

French doors from the master bedroom are generously sized to make the room seem larger and make it feel one with the outdoors. A bathroom paved with river stone includes a no-sill indoor shower that opens to an outdoor shower, tucked along the side. "Extending the inside shower to an outdoor shower was another way to make the indoor/outdoor spaces mesh," Orozco said. "The suspended vanity and the seamless shower also make the bathroom feel spacious."

In the Key West vernacular, spacious is a masterful word.

