





JOINT VENTURE

WRITTEN BY SAXON HENRY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK BOROSCH

SOMETHING RATHER MAGICAL TRANSPIRES WHEN A DESIGN TEAM GETS TO KNOW A CLIENT THROUGH-AND-THROUGH. The intimacy results in interiors that are highly refined and particularly befitting the client's lifestyle. This was the case with the 11,000-square-foot residence that designer Douglas Johnson, of Fort Lauderdale-based Retro Interiors, brought to life for a couple with whom he's had a long-standing relationship. "This is the second house I've done for them," he explains. "I've known them for 14 years, and I have designed homes for the wife's mother, brother and both of her sisters." Architect Robert Tuthill, of Tuthill Architecture in Fort Lauderdale, also collaborated with the homeowners on a previous residence. "We carried the history of what we knew about them to the new home," he remarks. "They are fun and relaxed people, and are incredibly family oriented, so the new home was designed for entertaining their extended family with ease."

INTERIOR DESIGNER Douglas Johnson, Retro Interiors

ARCHITECT Robert Tuthill, Tuthill Architecture

HOME BUILDER Nathan Gates, Bomar Builders, Inc.

BEDROOMS 5 **BATHROOMS** 6 **SQUARE FEET** 11,000

EVERY ROOM HAS THE ABILITY TO SERVE
THE FAMILY'S NEEDS, **BUT THE TAILORED RICHNESS**
GOES FAR BEYOND MERE LIVABILITY



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The classic Colonial with a bit of Key West flavor suits the couple's traditional leanings, while satisfying Johnson and Tuthill's desires to add transitional touches that would bring the home a fresh youthfulness, and reflect the vitality of the thriving family living within it. "I designed the home to be detailed in a more casual way, although some spaces are quite tailored," says Tuthill. "We achieved a friendliness of attitude while maintaining the traditional vernacular they wanted." The project was a five-year odyssey that began with a sketch on a cocktail napkin.

PITCH PERFECT

Neoclassic knife boxes on the fireplace mantel flank a landscape painting that was inspired by the Hudson River School, while the Yamaha piano awaits its next apprentice.

**ASCENDING LUXURY**

Because the foyer and staircase are grandly proportioned, Johnson placed a generously sized mahogany table at the center of the space and surrounded it with arcing benches.



STYLE SELECTION

Ideal for additional seating, this nailhead-trim upholstered stool is raised on a solid-wood base with squared bun feet. *Tufted Hassock*, \$1,834; kohlerinteriors.com



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"This is the home they've dreamed of for many years," says Johnson. "I would say we worked on the floor plan for a year before we brought the architect in, cementing everything the wife wanted to accomplish—down to her china and linen storage, and the flow of the rooms for large gatherings."

The meticulous planning of taking one room at a time and finessing the details paid off, as the home's character enhances its charm. "With this particular couple, we concentrated as much on how they lived as we did on the home's appearance," explains Johnson, who stayed true to that initial sketch on the napkin. "The grand foyer, sweeping staircase and main hallway off of which every room spokes were there all along." The connection to the outdoors was also thoughtfully considered. "They had a beautiful piece of property with amazing views of the river, so we were



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determined to give them as many outdoor rooms as we could," says Tuthill. "Doug put extra effort into detailing these spaces with fireplaces, ceiling treatments and furnishings that make them feel seamlessly connected with the interior spaces."

One of these exterior rooms is an outdoor play space for the couple's three young children, whose bedrooms open onto an expansive balcony overlooking the pool. Beneath the balcony is a loggia with a dining area that seats eight and a sitting area with an outdoor fireplace. "This is a home meant for gathering together in during mealtime," says Johnson. "The breakfast room off of the kitchen also seats eight, and the dining room seats 14."

KITCHEN CREATION

Sage-colored granite on the kitchen countertops and backsplash contrasts the island's Calcutta Gold marble. A chocolaty glaze on the cabinets lends warmth to the space.



OUTDOOR ARIA

On the loggia, a cast-stone fireplace with a hint of Italianate flair dresses up the space. Teak furniture covered in Sunbrella fabric encourages relaxing and easy conversation.

**STYLE SELECTION**

A mid-20th-century piece from Papua New Guinea, this shell boasts a dark patina and shapely form. *Shell Trumpet*, price available upon request; chista.net



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In order to accommodate the wife's extensive porcelain collection, Johnson designed four statuesque china cabinets for the dining room. As in the library and music room, the millwork in the space is traditionally rich with just a hint of casual simplicity. "My favorite room is the library because it is sumptuous without being overly formal," says Johnson. "I wanted to provide this family with a showplace that would also be a home for them, so it is a mixture of both." Johnson, who regards himself as the gatekeeper on any given project, adds, "I basically put eyes to my clients' imaginations so that they can envision their dreams: That's how I see my responsibility." **L**