

INTERIOR DESIGN BEATRICE PILA GONZALEZ, B PILA DESIGN STUDIO, MIAMI, FL
ARCHITECTURE DEBORAH S. DE LEON, VILLAGE ARCHITECTS OF KEY BISCAYNE, INC., MIAMI, FL
BUILDER ALEX TRENCH AND JORDAN GRUBER, KROME CONSTRUCTION, MIAMI, FL
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE LANCESCAPE MIAMI, MIAMI BEACH, FL
TEXT PAIGE BOWERS
PHOTOGRAPHY SANDY DEWITT, HOMESTEAD, FL

TRAVELER'S REST

A COSMOPOLITAN COUPLE FINDS THE PERFECT PLACE
TO SETTLE DOWN AMONGST THEIR WORLDLY TREASURES

LEFT: The homeowner wanted the larger of two temple doors to be used at the home's main entrance, in order to create an experience that includes lush landscaping and discreetly placed speakers that pipe out jungle sounds.

RIGHT: At night, the entrance to the wife's art studio is beautifully lit with color-changing lights, and flanked by fountains with suspended fire bowls. "It is one thing to design a fire bowl," says architect Deborah De Leon, who turned to Krome Construction for help with this endeavor. "But it is something else to design a stone circle that both the fire and the water come out of. It took hours and hours of work to figure out how to make that happen."

The overhang to the main entrance offers visitors a resort feel, as if they can drive their car up, hand over their keys, and leave their troubles behind.

BEFORE THEY SETTLED IN THE MIAMI AREA, the couple sailed the South Pacific, exploring remote places and purchasing pieces from artisans they encountered along the way. There was the 30-foot canoe they bought from a guy in New Guinea, the striking temple door they found in Sumatra, the one-ton stone tub from Bali. Before they knew it, they had a 40-foot container of exotic finds, but they just weren't sure what to do with them.

That changed when they found a 10,000-square foot waterfront home in a family-friendly community across the bay from downtown Miami.

The couple liked the lush, tropical surroundings and the residence's overall exterior, but they wanted to gut the interior and reconfigure it so that it had the peaceful and sophisticated feel of





The homeowners brought some of their existing furniture with them to Miami, including a glass dining room table with sculptural base and surrounding green and turquoise chairs. Beatrice Pila-Gonzalez created a white circular couch to encourage conversation. De Leon crafted custom millwork that spans the ceiling and flows down the wall at the opposite side of the room.



an Aman Resort hotel. The homeowners hired Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc. to tackle the redesign, B. Pila Design to mix their Asian pieces with new and existing furniture, and Krome Construction for some imaginative engineering feats that most contractors would just as soon avoid.

“The wildness of this project took me completely out of my comfort zone,” says Deborah De Leon, president of Village Architects. “But it was exciting for me to figure out how to accomplish the homeowners’ detailed vision.”

One of the first things De Leon did was address the bottom floor’s choppy layout, which she cleaned up to provide more flow. Her reconfiguration allowed for a larger kitchen with an aquarium, a larger family room, a great room with a custom-designed bar area, an art studio, a brand new media room and an office within the original footprint. Removing one of the home’s original two staircases created more space for the media room, but it also allowed De Leon to create a

ABOVE: Pila-Gonzalez strategically placed the homeowner’s collected pieces throughout the house, noting that these special finds often elevate a space, especially in areas like this hallway.



bigger women's closet upstairs in a larger master suite. Throughout the rest of the second floor, she redistributed space, raised ceiling heights, and added wallpaper and new finishes.

With the rooms complete, Beatrice Pila-Gonzalez of B. Pila Design came in to place the family's existing furniture and Asian treasures, before deciding what kinds of custom pieces to create. In the master bedroom, she added a red-lacquered modern canopy bed and bespoke storage concealed by panels. The storage contains things like children's books that the couple can read to their young son at night, a sweet touch for a home that is every bit as personal as it is chic. Pila-Gonzalez even added a Shoji-style clubhouse to the son's room to give him a stylish place to play.

LEFT: In the outdoor eating area, one of the homeowners' teak pieces was turned into a dining table and benches, while their canoe from New Guinea got a second life when De Leon converted it into the lighting fixture that hangs overhead.

ABOVE: Pila-Gonzalez created a user-friendly family room that is "relaxed and very family-friendly." White slipcovers can be removed from the sofa and washed, while white leather chairs provide durable seating. Pila-Gonzalez then infused the space with Brazilian pieces ("It works well with Balinese style because it's warm, but modern," she says), tropical woods, and orange hues that were pulled from the nearby kitchen.



De Leon constructed a model of the all-marble kitchen island to make sure the slabs fit together correctly before she assembled the larger piece. "They had to bleed and blend together on all sides," she says. Dark blue hues provide an elegant contrast to the marble centerpiece and the orange range, while a custom aquarium honors the surrounding seascape.

Although De Leon added a covered terrace and a cooking cabana to the water-facing side of the home. She also extended the pool (which has Indonesian tiles), added a Bali bed to it, and incorporated a back garden on the terrace to soften the architecture.



Krome Construction reinforced the floor of the master bathroom so it could hold the heavy stone tub the couple brought back from their travels. It also reinforced the walls with steel and hurricane glass so that they could keep backlit stone panels in place. Based on DeLeon's design Krome created a floating koi pond outside that can be seen from the master bath or the outdoor bar below.



“It’s rare that you get the chance to create at this level with the client cheering you on and giving you the financial backup and input to create great design,” Pila-Gonzalez says. “It’s also a challenge to create something this colorful, personal and whimsical and have the end result be as sophisticated as this project was.”

Because the homeowners were involved in every step of the process, the end result was no surprise. But they said it is the perfect house for their needs.

“I can honestly say this is the most complex build I’ve ever been a part of,” says Jordan Gruber of Krome Construction. “It was a cool experience, and the owner enjoyed the process and appreciated the passion all of us have for what we do.”

LEFT: The couple’s son has a peaceful retreat full of neutral hues, along with a sturdy swing and an expansive view of the water.

SOURCES

FRONT ENTRY

Firepits custom designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by Carved Creations Inc., Kaukauna, WI

DINING AND LIVING AREA

Dining table and chairs – Owner’s Collection
Ceiling and wall treatment designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by Byblos Group Inc., Miami, FL
Modular sofa custom designed by B. Pila Design Studio, Miami, FL
Fabricated by White Furniture, Miami, FL
Purple chairs – Adriana Hoyos Furniture, Miami, FL
Area rug – Kyle Bunting, Austin, TX

HALLWAY

Chandeliers – La Murrina Murano, Venice, Italy
Ceiling inlay designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by Byblos Group Inc., Miami, FL

FAMILY ROOM

Sofa – Lee Industries, Jalan Jalan, Miami, FL
Pillows – V Rugs & Home, Miami, FL
Orange ottoman design by B. Pila Design Studio, Miami, FL
Fabricated by Tomlinson Companies, Thomasville, NC
Round table – Armazem.design, Dania Beach, FL

Tiered table and side table – Armazem.design, Dania Beach, FL
Area rug – Art Resources, Boca Raton, FL

LOGGIA

Oblong table and bench designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by Krome Construction, Miami, FL and Flower Child, Miami, FL
Canoe lighting fixture designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by Restoration Arts & Lighting, Miami Gardens, FL

KITCHEN

Kitchen and island designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by RETC, Miami, FL
Cabinetry – Byblos Group Inc., Miami, FL
Appliances – Avanti International, North Miami, FL and Coral Gables Kitchen + Bath, Coral Gables, FL
Ceiling lighting designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by Byblos Group Inc., Miami, FL
Aquarium designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by Reef Aquaria Design Inc., Coconut Creek, FL
Flooring – RETC, Miami, FL

BEDROOM

Bed – Modloft Miami, North Miami, FL
Bedside table – Arteriors, Dallas, TX
Swing – Kettal, Coral Gables, FL
Ceiling light – Arteriors, Dallas, TX

MASTER BATH

Floating cabinetry and vanities designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Manufactured Byblos Group Inc., Miami, FL
Ceiling and wall treatment designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Fabricated by RETC, Miami, FL

BACK EXTERIOR

Lounge chairs – Holly Hunt Miami, Miami, FL
Umbrella – Tuuci, Hialeah, FL
Pool designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL and Aquadynamics Design Group, Miami, FL
Fabricated by Reef Tropical Pools, Key Largo, FL
Floating koi pond designed by Village Architects of Key Biscayne, Inc., Miami, FL
Deck – RETC, Miami, FL
THROUGHOUT
Builder – Krome Construction, Miami, FL
Landscape architecture – Lancescape Miami, Miami Beach, FL
Interior and exterior stonework – RETC, Miami, FL
Flooring – RETC, Miami, FL