

ELEGANT COMFORT

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Ramon Pacheco & Associates, Ramon Pacheco, AIA, ARCHITECTURE
Robert Allen Homes, BUILDER / Rosana Fleming Interior Design, INTERIOR DESIGN
Orlando Comas Landscape Architect, ASLA, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The homeowners wanted an elegant, understated look for their new home but, above all, it had to be comfortable. Pairing elegant and comfortable in the same sentence may seem contradictory, but not with a design team like architect Ramon Pacheco and interior designer Rosana Fleming.

With their skill and talent, a large, elegant home took shape on a waterfront lot in Coral Gables. The house has the flair of an Italian villa and yet offers a welcoming interior for the homeowners and their three children.

“We wanted it to be a house where everyone was comfortable,”

says the wife, a talented cook who got the dream kitchen she had always wanted. “We use every room in the house; no room is off limits.”

After they bought the lot, the couple drove around the city looking at houses. Several of the houses they liked turned out to be Pacheco’s designs. Even so, they interviewed two other architects before they were convinced and engaged him.

Many of Pacheco’s homes are classical with galleries, columns and arches that make them timeless as well as functional. Usually he designs a round foyer, but for this house he chose





A baby grand piano separates the living room from the bar that is distinguished with fine millwork.

an oval shape for the grand two-story entrance. “An entrance foyer is critical because it gives you a first impression and a last impression,” the architect explains. “The problem with a two-story foyer is that you have to do something dramatic.”

The drama begins at the beautiful, sweeping staircase with its wrought iron railing that terminates at a “Pope’s balcony” on the second floor overlooking the living room and waterway beyond.

Strategically placed sconces along the staircase wall lead the eye up the stairs while tapestries and antique furniture create interest on the first floor.

To accentuate the oval ceiling, artist Claudia Polzer was engaged to paint an acanthus scroll leaf pattern from a William Morris tapestry in watercolors and acrylic. Because of the height of the

ceiling, Polzer painted from scaffolding during the several weeks required to complete the project.

From the foyer one steps into one of Pacheco’s signature galleries which organize the rooms on the first floor of the 10,000-square-foot home. The columns have capitals that are Pacheco’s design. “I have never used this design before,” he says.

From the gallery one steps into the living room, also two stories with a coffered ceiling and handsome Macedonia stone fireplace by Prestige Architectural Stone. Above the mantle is a large mirror – six feet tall and 36 inches wide with a carved wood frame.

“It took us a year to find it,” Fleming recalls. “We had to bring in a special crew to hang it and reinforce the wall behind it.”





In the formal dining room, Arcadio Cancio's "Women at Lunch" hangs above a built-in buffet that matches an antique china cabinet on the opposite wall.

Flanking the fireplace are colorful, contemporary paintings hanging above demilune chests. A pair of antique chairs and a sofa cluster around a beveled glass topped cocktail table. Silk draperies frame the arched French doors that overlook the pool and garden.

With its infinity edge spilling into a fountain below, the pool appears to merge with the large waterway at the back of the property.

A baby grand piano is positioned between the living room and a handsome bar that's framed in a carved wood arch, that was custom made.

Across the hall from the bar is the formal dining

room which has a cove ceiling and Venetian plaster walls setting the formal tone.

A painting titled "Women at Lunch" by Cuban artist Arcadio Cancio hangs above a built-in buffet, crafted to match the large antique china cabinet placed on the opposite wall.

Adjacent to the dining room is the butler's pantry which is larger than many residential kitchens. It contains warming drawers, a wine cooler and a dishwasher for fine china.

A few steps away is the actual kitchen which was designed by Ana Maria Bernal. "I wanted an amazing kitchen," says the wife who requested two



The family room is framed by multiple French doors from Ultimate Door of Palm Beach that overlook the terrace and pool. A large cocktail table contains storage for games and puzzles. The terraces are a favorite gathering spot for the family in cool weather.







The cozy library is an inviting place with its book-lined walls and comfortable seating.



islands, a large one for her to work at and one for the children for casual dining.

This avid cook also selected a six-burner Viking range with dual energy, gas on top, electric ovens below; warming ovens; two dishwashers; and two refrigerators, one with freezer drawers. The fabric at the windows and on the bar stools is a cheery fruit print that is repeated on the chairs in the adjacent breakfast room.

The well-used family room, adjacent to the breakfast room, has a generous view of the terraces and pool thanks to eight French doors on three sides. Taupe leather sofas flank a storage cocktail table with large drawers where the children keep on-going puzzles and games.

On the opposite side of the house is the library, designed as a retreat for the wife who is an avid





The infinity edge pool and checkerboard patio are the focal point at the rear of the house. Medjool date palms frame the arched verandas of the stately home.

reader. However, everyone in the family frequents it, lured by the cozy seating, the computer and the bookshelves filled with an antique book collection.

The home's five bedrooms include a guest suite opposite the library downstairs, with the master suite and the children's rooms on the second level. Besides a huge bath, the master suite includes a well-equipped gym.

With such an impressive house, the landscape design was also paramount. Landscape architect Orlando Comas established the stately aesthetic by specifying ten magnificent Medjool date palms, six in front and four framing the pool. Italian

cypresses were planted by the front door as a nod to the architecture. Natives, such as *Thrinax* palms, Pigeon Plum trees and Gumbo Limbo, join a White Geiger originally on the property.

Despite the formal design, the house maintains a warm, family-friendly atmosphere that will serve generations to come. ▲

RESOURCES

French Doors
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