



The great room, dining area and kitchen, are in an open plan.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEANNE CANTO

SUN, SHADE, *and* SOUL

A TROPICAL RESIDENCE IN BOCA RATON BLURS THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN INDOORS AND OUT THROUGH REFINED MATERIALS, AND LIGHT-FILLED SPACES DESIGNED FOR EVERYDAY LUXURY.

By NANCY A. RUHLING

DESIGN A MODERN HOUSE THAT CARRIES CHARACTER.

That was the directive the design-conscious owners of a vacant half-acre lot on Boca Raton's Intracoastal Waterway gave architect Jose Ludovino Sanchez, AIA, and his Miami-based team at Praxis Architecture.

"The owners have grown children who visit, so it's designed for two people," Sanchez says. "This is their primary house, their dream house. They want to enjoy every minute there."

Sanchez, whose work fuses Florida and Caribbean tropical modern architecture with formal abstraction, embraced the challenge, designing an 8,000-square-foot residence along with a 384-square-foot detached gym and spa. The structures meld indoor and outdoor spaces so seamlessly that it is often difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins.

That illusion begins with the materials. Local Keystone limestone and porcelain walls are accented by expanses of glass framed in aluminum with a wood-tone finish, while the roofs are edged with long horizontal eaves of white stucco.

"The concept was to have some solid elements and others that feel light and weightless, for contrast," Sanchez says, noting that all selections were chosen for durability in a waterfront environment.

At the front entrance, a water feature sets the stage, while an entry canopy punctuated with openings casts shifting shadows beneath its beams, creating what Sanchez describes as a moving sculpture. In the rear, a dramatic cantilevered structure supported by a twenty-foot concrete beam extends over the pool.

To help the home stand out in a neighborhood lined with large residences, Sanchez created a multilevel composition



Clockwise, The glass gym room, set at the end of the pool, looks like a jewel box.

The furnishings, in a neutral palette, are curvaceous and comfortable.

The main terrace has a barbecue grill and a summer kitchen.

At the front entrance, a canopy with a cutout creates shadows under the beams and the house features Keystone limestone.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE HENZ (TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT)

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEANNE CANTO (TOP RIGHT AND BOTTOM)



Clockwise from top left, The great room staircase is cantilevered, giving the illusion it's floating. In the kitchen, bifold windows bring the tropical courtyard inside.



Top to bottom, In the primary bedroom, a wall of poured concrete anchors the bed. Custom shelving, complete with a rolling component, was created for one of the two offices in the house.

of varied heights and volumes, allowing the house to appear restrained from the street while offering expansive living spaces within. The great room in the open-plan main living area rises two stories, while the adjoining kitchen and dining area reach a story and a half. Other spaces, including the terrace and carport, are single-story, and the garage rises one and three-quarter stories. "It gives the house an interesting profile as you move around it," Sanchez says. Because the Intracoastal serves as a thoroughfare for yachts, privacy was a key consideration in the design of the exterior spaces. Gardens planted with locally favored species—casually yet artfully arranged—are conceived as open-air courtyards visible through the home's glass walls, bathing the interiors in natural light.

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The soaking tub in the primary suite has a view and privacy.

Opposite page, The primary bath's shower is clad in stone.

This approach is evident in the kitchen, where built-in cabinetry is topped by a horizontal band of windows that illuminate the space while screening views from passing boats. In the great room, Sanchez notes, “As the sun moves, the light changes all the time, creating random patterns.”

The detached gym mirrors the architecture of the main house and reads as a glass jewel box set within the landscape. From inside, those working out enjoy unobstructed views of the swimming pool and spa, which visually extend toward the waterway beyond.

The main terrace—equipped with a barbecue grill, fire pit, and summer kitchen—is visible from the great room and overlooks both the pool and the Intracoastal, further blurring the boundary between interior and exterior living.

Inside, the furnishings are deliberately austere, rendered in a neutral palette that allows the lush tropical landscaping designed

by Land Design and L&ND to take center stage. Sofas and chairs are spare in form yet deeply comfortable, while rugs and select accents add subtle texture and warmth.

The first-floor living spaces feature poured concrete floors, a modern touch requested by the owners. “I would not have thought of doing this,” Sanchez says. “It’s different. It gives a sense of fluidity—and that’s a plus.”

On the second floor, where the bedrooms are located, the concrete gives way to white oak flooring, introducing warmth and a hint of softened traditionalism.

The primary bedroom suite features an unconventional focal point: a concrete tile wall behind the bed. It reflects the owner’s preferences and sets the tone for a room that is both simple and sophisticated. The wall’s starkness is softened by a textured rug, a pair of whimsical chairs, and a black-and-white artwork depicting a gorilla rendered in a style reminiscent of a schoolhouse chalkboard.

Custom elements throughout the home reinforce visual continuity. One of the two offices features a built-in bookcase and curio cabinet with a rolling, ladder-like display for art objects. The great room fireplace is clad in stone that references the exterior façade, while the kitchen’s walnut cabinetry complements the black granite countertop of the island.

Sanchez credits the project’s success to close collaboration among the design and construction teams, including builder Paterson Project Management. “They did a good job of putting everything together and executing the details of our design,” he says.

The result, he adds, is a home that exceeded expectations. “It came together very well. The owners are thrilled.” ♦

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