



RALPH
CHOEFF

AS SEEN IN
FLORIDA DESIGN'S
MIAMI
HOME & DECOR

I draw my inspiration from Mid-century modern architecture, as well as the surroundings of the projects. Blurring the lines between inside and outside connects us to nature and our environment.



This tropical modern style home was completed with materials such as stone, stucco and Ipe wood. Homeowner Mathieu Massa wanted to blur the lines between inside and outdoors, which is also part of architect Ralph Choeff's vision.

INSPIRED BY THE TROPICS

WORKING CLOSELY WITH HIS DESIGN TEAM, THIS OWNER-BUILDER CREATED HIS MIAMI BEACH DREAM HOME WITH A SOFTENED MODERNISM SUITED TO THE ENVIRONMENT

INTERIOR DESIGN BY CHARLOTTE DUNAGAN AND THOMAS DIVERIO,
DUNAGAN DIVERIO DESIGN GROUP, CORAL GABLES, FL
ARCHITECTURE BY RALPH CHOEFF, CHOEFF LEVY FISCHMAN, MIAMI, FL
BUILDER MATHIEU MASSA, MASSA CONSTRUCTION GROUP, MIAMI, FL
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When homeowner Mathieu Massa began to build his dream home, he wanted to integrate the structure into the natural landscape. Since the property is located directly on a wide canal in Miami Beach with western exposure and beautiful sunsets, he made sure the residence would have open views of both the water and natural Florida greenery.

He hired architect Ralph Choeff, and designers Charlotte Dunagan and Thomas Diverio to create the 6,875-square-foot interior because he admired their modernist work. "I picked this team because of their attention to detail and modern vision," says Massa, who is newly

ABOVE: The stairway receives abundant natural light from an abundance of tall, framed windows. Nearby, a sitting alcove is arranged with a two-tone, gray-linen armchair from Anima Domus and highlighted by palm tree wall art. A side table with a round metal base echoes the stairway's stainless steel handrail.



DUNAGAN
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DESIGN GROUP

We strongly believe in designing structures that are timeless and creating a sophisticated background. Dunagan Diverio Design creates enduring interiors that emanate understated elegance and warmth.

married and co-owns restaurants in Miami. "I wanted to differentiate from other homes and I needed to create a warm feeling which is a challenge with modern architecture."

Up to the challenge, Choeff accepted Massa's invitation to design his home, which would be his primary residence. The builder-owner spends his summers in the South of France where he was raised. "We experienced some frustration because this is a two-property site used as one and we needed to do a tear-down," Choeff says. "The lot for this house was narrow, making it more difficult to design an interesting home."

But Choeff and the designers know the genius of good architecture and design is to identify the dreams of the client and then to bring them to reality. This was achieved through open communication and experience. "Mathieu is hands on yet he gave us a good reign," Choeff says. "I created his home like a Caribbean hotel where it is designed under one roof but partially outside."

Massa also worked closely with the designers Dunagan and Diverio to select the furnishings throughout. The designers used neutral tones like taupe, pale gray, cream and off white along with light

RIGHT: The living area is accessible through a double mahogany front door. Inside, a pair of cocktail tables are framed in walnut and topped with Calacatta gold Italian marble. A double oval, black glass-topped occasional table with a walnut base displays a collection of Ralph Lauren barware.

"OWNER MATHIEU MASSA HAS EXQUISITE TASTE," SAYS ARCHITECT RALPH CHOEFF, WHO DESIGNED MASSA'S HOME IN TROPICAL MODERN STYLE. "THIS HOUSE IS UNUSUAL BECAUSE YOU WALK INTO A BEAUTIFULLY LANDSCAPED COURTYARD BEFORE ENTERING," HE SAYS.



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THE KITCHEN'S BREAKFAST BAR IS EDGED BY BROWN, LEATHER-CLAD BARSTOOLS THAT OFFER THE PERFECT VIEW OF THE OUTDOORS THROUGH SLIDING GLASS DOORS. WHEN THE DOORS OPEN, "THE INDOOR AND OUTDOORS BECOME LIKE ONE GIANT SPACE," INTERIOR DESIGNER THOMAS DIVERIO SAYS.



Italian porcelain flooring that resembles limestone. Innovative Apure halogen lighting from Porsche Design Studio was selected for its clean and streamlined look. "Together, the home's clean lines, stone, wood and louvered panels create a tropical modern style," Dunagan says. The designers brought in layers of texture with grasscloth wall covering and other neutral tones, and let the furnishings and accessories, mostly all from Anima Domus, provide the pops of color. "It is always fascinating working with Charlotte and seeing how she can convert the vision of each unique client into a beautiful reality," says Marconi Naziazeni, President and co-founder of Anima Domus with his wife Silvia.

In the exterior entry, a large window lends a view of the living room fashioned with a custom rift cut oak media center. Inside, a contemporary stairway with brushed stainless steel railings and matching oak handrails is elegant yet practical. Close by, a quaint sitting alcove is perfect for reading or listening to music.

Beyond, in the living area, a large white sofa from Anima Domus accessorized with neutral accent pillows lends a great view of the garden

LEFT: Casual dining takes center stage in the breakfast area, where family and friends gather around Cattelan Italia's round porcelain-topped table that rests on a brushed stainless steel base. The pop of red flowers brings the outdoor tableau inside.

courtyard through expansive floor-to-ceiling windows. Above, silver trough lighting is unique and functional. Just steps into the dining area, is a versatile glass-topped table that rests on a sculptural powder-coated metal base. "This table can be used either for dining or as a space to display flowers," Diverio says.

The kitchen area is a favorite of Massa's because he loves to cook and entertain. In the breakfast area, swivel chairs wrapped in linen and finished with walnut circle a porcelain-topped table. The kitchen's breakfast bar, comprised of wood slab oak, mirrors the look of the other furnishings, while leather-clad barstools with a dark-chocolate frame match the color of the window frames. "We like the consistent look and feel of the flooring, furnishings and millwork," Diverio says. "We try not to use the same materials but we do repeat the tone."

Since the owner entertains as many as 100 guests per month, he wanted a kitchen extension that would spill outside. Through glass sliding doors, a dining ensemble and a tranquil seating vignette arranged with loveseats and chaise lounges overlook the pool and tropical vegetation. "This winter kitchen is a large extension of the indoor living area which Mathieu uses a great deal," Diverio says.

The architect and design team agree that Massa's dream home is not over the top. Modern but not cold, the design is cozy, elegant and built for entertaining. "They are a young couple who want a space that is warm, welcoming and simple, yet tastefully designed," Dunagan says. **M**

RIGHT: The lanai's wood overhang helps protect family and friends from the South Florida heat. An outdoor dining table in a ceramic gray hue is edged with blue chairs in a durable woven raffia. Lounge chairs and chaises take in the lush landscaping.

