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Summer 2007
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classical interpretation

*By Steven A. Kirsch and his team — photographs by William Stryker
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A ho-hum spec house is reinvented as a European-style villa, where life moves seamlessly between indoors and out.



The grand 300-square-foot loggia at the entrance to the house was the only addition to the house's footprint. With the French doors thrown open, the space blurs the line, partly with the pool, 20 feet away, and partly with the street, 20 feet away.



TTo begin with, it was all about the *Catons*. Not the kind of cat (sleep around area) they—the type that starts near the baseball field for the University of Florida. They gave Mycki Ratan the nod.

"The goal was to be able to not miss a play," says Mycki, who decided a new kitchen was in order for the Ratan's Miami home—a kitchen designed around one key question: Can the cook see the game on TV?

Architect Raymond Fowler and interior designer Jack Malt were tapped to tackle the kitchen renovation. Then, the plans spiraled. Talk expanded to renovating the house in the tradition of French and Italian villas, but with a relaxed, island vibe that would provide the character the 15-year-old builder's spec house was lacking.

"There was no minkling, no architectural detail inside," Mycki's husband, Stuart, says. "So next thing you



had Stuart—connections to the outdoors were a big part of the renovation. The property boasts five courtyards, including this one tucked behind the master suite above. There's no question the English-style media room is Stuart Ratan's domain. "It's the one room where I had veto power over everything," he says—including having his Hurricanes rather than wife Mycki's *Catons* on TV. His high-tech paradise features 18 speakers, walls insulated with 2 inches of padded foam, and a computerized "movie" setting that automatically closes the shades and dims the lights for showtime.





bring on the bling

The secret to giving Miami and Stuart Flanner's traditional style home a fresh, modern edge? Eclectic and informal design bring bling southwestern flair. The dining room, the photo, is draped in a daring choice of platinum paint. "It gives" designer Paul Rice says. "It takes the room from being just another pass-through space,"

crystal chandeliers. Most chandeliers feature for the dining room wall sconces and the hallway in the master bath. "It's bright and blingy against the dark wood and glass in old-timey bed," she says. The "jewelry" Army sconces dance at the base of the loggia columns and in the master bath.


metal walls. The master bedroom walls were painted metallic green, then sprayed with a clear, iridescent glaze.

crystal sconces. Crystal sconces the master suite, while a capiz-shell fixture glimmers above the dining table.

wood accents. Drupa entice with lush color and around the refrigerator. A striking pediment and crown molding top the media room's fireplace.







Old-world charm is on the menu in the kitchen, thanks to distressed cabinetry and a side-by-side refrigerator disguised as an arch-top armoire. The expansive pantry was custom-built by showman vintage 1990s. Dutch stained-glass chandelier.



know, we gutted the whole house, the yard, and refold the yard."

The straightforward kitchen redo evolved into a 28-month-long project to elevate the quality of the home to the level of its grand 11,200-square-footage, gardens filled with palm trees, and address in Coconut Grove, a neighborhood within shooting distance of Biscayne Bay.

"It became every detail, every corner," Stuart says. The house was torn down to its concrete walls and floor, and the unsightly walls and low-grade finishes quickly disappeared in a cloud of drywall dust.

Tackling the home's awkward layout was a top priority. The house is U-shaped, with the main entrance at one end and bedrooms at the other. So

Myra's kitchen is a chef's and sports fan's dream, thanks to dough-friendly marble countertops, professional-grade appliances, and excellent sight lines to three TVs so she doesn't miss a minute of the Galaxy's games (unless Stuart switches channels to see his beloved Hurricanes). Farmhouse sinks get a modern interpretation in stainless steel, while a coffee system and microwave stack into a corner with one of the all-important TVs.





"We achieved
a timeless, classical
feeling."

— architect Raymond Fowler



if the front doorbell rang while Myrick was in the master bedroom, she had to walk half the length of a football field to greet her guest. The solution was simple yet grand: Connect the two ends of the house by converting an existing roofed outdoor space into an enclosed loggia, essentially a fancy hallway flanked with French doors and anchored by Tuscan-style columns.

To bring proper scale (and loads of sunlight) to the 12-foot-tall rooms, all of the drumpy 8-foot-tall doors and windows were swapped for 10-foot French doors and extra-tall windows. Layers of architectural details were piled on: hefty moldings with historical profiles, wood floors with plank widths of 3, 5, and 7 inches, laid at random, and cypress ceilings in the loggia, dining room, and family room. "We achieved a timeless, classical feeling," Fowler says. "It feels like it's rooted in history."

The furnishings, however, are a different story. They remain a youthful, modern spirit that walks the "sniffy" tight line of traditional. That twist is exemplified by the dining room's contemporary, hot-pink wing chairs.

LEFT: A cozy corner of the master bedroom is the perfect place to show off a piece of the couple's art, which they've just started collecting. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Myrick, a self-described chandelier fanatic, bought this antique chandelier for a different room, but decided it was perfect for her soothing green master bedroom.







"They're sleek and young, and they have a real pop," Mile says.

The color palette—soft browns, greens, blues, and silvers—is what Mile calls "natural neutrals" and Mycki calls "no-color color." These subtle hues take a back seat, letting the eye rest instead on the home's architecture and Master Nature. "Almost every room opens to the outside," Mile says. "These colors relate to the garden."

"That's what this house is about—the outside-in, moving from indoors to outdoors," Stuart says. To that end, this couple who loves to entertain carefully planned the five outdoor courtyards. "We wanted each one to tie together, yet have a different feel," Mycki says. The courtyard at the front entrance is formal, for example, while the kids' courtyard with the tree house is playful, and the one off the master bedroom is Zen-like.

"This house is done exactly the way we want, down to every inch," Stuart says. "That's a great feeling. There are bigger houses and houses on the water. This house is not that grand, but it's great." ■

Architect: *Stuart & Stuart*

Home Designer: *Julie Hill*

For more information, visit us [online](#) at page 118.

concerns. "My bath is heaven," says Mycki, who sufficed this tranquil green-and-white room with a soaking tub and French-style chandelier. **SPACE 1201:** The Rutans are music lovers who used the gutting of the master bath as an opportunity to wire the recessed and subway-tile shower for sound. Mycki starts each day under the rain-head shower listening to satellite radio. **ENTRY ROOM:** The furniture-like master bath-cabinetry features a center unit that operates as the medicine cabinet. "It has pin-yang openings," says interior designer Jill Wade, as Stuart's door opens toward her and Mycki's toward her.