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INTERIOR DESIGN / SUSAN LACHANCE, SUSAN LACHANCE INTERIOR DESIGN  
ARCHITECTURE / STUART BRENNER, BRENNER ARCHITECTURE GROUP  
HOME BUILDER / ALDO J. KOSUCH, AK BUILDING & DESIGN, INC.  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / KRENT WIELAND, KRENT WIELAND DESIGN, INC.

# NEW TRADITION

CLEAN-LINED FURNISHINGS AND  
CONTEMPORARY MATERIALS  
MODERNIZE A MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE  
HOME WHOSE NEUTRAL PALETTE IS  
INFUSED WITH CAREFULLY CURATED  
SHADES OF BLUE.

WRITTEN BY ANNA KASABIAN / PHOTOGRAPHY BY TRIA GIOVAN

Sometimes what seems a minor detour in the day's plans becomes a life-changing event. This was certainly the case when Steven Newman was on his way to the mall one afternoon with his sister and decided to look at an available property instead. Within minutes of seeing the lakefront site in Delray Beach, he was calling his partner, Steve Johnson, to fly in from New York for a look. They bought the land without hesitation, and before long their vacation retreat was set into the landscape.

The original plan was to build a Mediterranean-style house inside and out, much like the owners' vacation home they would leave behind in Boca Raton. But their interior designer, Susan Lachance, had another idea: The house would be Mediterranean on the outside, yes, but in striking contrast, clean and contemporary for the interiors. It was a concept that didn't take much of a leap of faith for the couple. "We love the juxtaposition," Steven says. "It reminds us of our trips to Italy, where we saw homes that were hundreds of years old but then the insides were totally modernized."





The couple's design team, which also included architect Stuart Brenner, builder Aldo J. Kosuch and landscape architect Krent Wieland, went to work for 18 months to begin bringing the concept to life. "We were going to build this residence similar to their previous home, but they decided to make changes in the style, and everything became grander in scale," says Kosuch, who worked with superintendent Robert "Bud" Monz on the build. Brenner, who joined Lachance in designing the couple's previous retreat, concurs. "Some of the architectural elements of the Boca Raton home were integrated here, but the scale and volume changed. We took this to another level," he says, noting that though the larger space works well for entertaining and having houseguests, the challenge was also to create space that was comfortable and cozy when the couple is there alone.

Once the refreshed architecture was in place, Lachance then put a twist on the Mediterranean design components of traditional arched halls, stone surfaces and high-ceilinged

rooms. "I wanted to give them a metropolitan look, combining the light-colored traditional architectural envelope with clean, contemporary furnishings," says the designer, who incorporated classic finishes and materials like wood and marble in refreshing ways.

To this end, in the two-story living room, with its spectacular view of the infinity pool that seems to flow right into the lake, Lachance specified a massive paneled wall to bring the vertical space onto one elevation, employing wenge wood, stainless-steel bands and porcelain tile to house a linear fireplace that adds warmth to the voluminous room and reduces the vertical pull. The rich wood contrasting with the cream porcelain ties the space back to the wood-and-marble flooring in the nearby entry and hallway. "This gives balance to my concept of having a common thread throughout my work," Lachance says. "I always bring you back to the same material or motif. I believe you need to reinforce design to have good design."

**Above:** In the living room, Thayer Coggin sofas and chairs sit atop a rug from Mastour Galleries in New York. The Bolier tables blend with the neutral scheme, along with a tripod lamp from Carriage House. Interior designer Susan Lachance conceived of the fireplace wall, fabricated by Artistry Masters of Woodcraft.

**Opposite:** A Celestial chandelier by Fine Art Lamps dangles like a glittering jewel in the dramatic stairway off the foyer, featuring a railing by Avion Metal Works of Florida. Stationary Romo sheers, fabricated by Drapery Castle, frame the view.



A Vol de Cristal chandelier by Fine Art Lamps hangs above the dining room's Costantini Pietro table and chairs. A Kala Looms rug serves as a wash of color, as do the draperies made from Zinc Textile fabric, again fashioned by Drapery Castle. French doors from Coastal Supply Company open onto a garden.



The dining room features a custom-built floating sideboard that is topped in stone, banded in a dark walnut stain and faced with four large bevel-paneled doors. Fabricated by Artistry Masters of Woodcraft, it's a pleasing art form itself below a painting from the owners' collection.







A Thayer Coggin sofa, chair and coffee table gather atop a sisal rug in the casual family room; a Forma floor lamp by Cerno allows for a reading niche. Sliding doors open to create an indoor-outdoor living space with the adjacent loggia, which houses Janus et Cie furnishings and a light fixture by Murray's Iron Works from J Nelson.



Artistica's dark walnut Bento table from Judith Norman centers side chairs by Bernhardt in the breakfast room. The sculptural centerpieces add dashes of blue, the owners' exception to the rule when it comes to their penchant for neutrals. Wood flooring from Absolute Hardwood Flooring sustains the contemporary feel.



Faceted, etched-glass fixtures by Hinkley Lighting, from Capitol Lighting, hover over the kitchen island, where wenge-wood barstools sport polished-chrome bases. Appliances from Ferguson settle into the sea of white cabinetry by Kitchen & Bath Studios and a backsplash installed by Tile & Marble by Valentin.



“WE INTEGRATED ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS OF THEIR PREVIOUS HOME, BUT TOOK IT TO ANOTHER LEVEL.”

-STUART BRENNER



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An area rug from Wendy Clark Designs sets the tone for the master bedroom, where calming shades of blue provide a tranquil retreat for the owners, seen in the Robert Allen fabric that fashions the draperies. A photograph by EJ Camp adds to the serenity next to a custom mirror from Majestic Mirror & Frame.



“I WANTED TO GIVE THEM A METROPOLITAN LOOK WITH CLEAN, CONTEMPORARY FURNISHINGS.”

-SUSAN LACHANCE

Instead of the expected stucco-and-dark-wood interior, Lachance created a bright, airy scheme using brushed-driftwood flooring for a less formal effect and white as her primary color. The neutral palette of light walls and furnishings allows the architectural details and dreamy garden and water views to take center stage, with the archways and expansive windows helping frame the outdoor scene. Conversational areas feature sculpted sofas and club chairs covered in warm white and taupe that enable the pieces to sit quietly in their respective rooms.

The near-monochromatic theme throughout the home reflects the couple’s preference—seen in the living room, the nearby breakfast room, and the kitchen and adjacent family room, which overlooks a loggia and promotes indoor-outdoor living through its doors that slide open

completely and disappear. The exceptions to the rule are the gradating shades of blue in the dining room and master suite. “We are color averse—we love things that are neutral. When Susan said we needed to put in some color, well, we put one red book in the family room,” Steven muses.

For the outside landscape plan, the couple wanted to replicate elements of the Chianti countryside as a nod to their beloved travels in Italy. Set on 3 acres, the property was primed for Wieland and project manager Aaron Mastin to create such an aesthetic through plantings and water features. “When we were discussing likes and dislikes with Krent, we all decided to make the garden like a villa in Italy with the reflecting pools and fountains,” Steven recalls. “The back of the house has a sitting garden and other rest areas that take in views of the water or the entire length of the property.” In contrast, the front of the home was designed with privacy in mind. “The plantings here were given a more peekaboo treatment,” Wieland says. “It creates a little mystique.”

Ultimately, the design achieved everything the owners wanted—a tranquil yet fashionable escape from the hustle and bustle of their everyday lives in Manhattan. “The views are amazing,” Steven says. “They’re relaxing and comforting. Whenever we come here, we just hate to leave.” ■



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A striking dark wood center table punctuates the elegant master bathroom, wrapped in marble from Marble of the World that was installed by Tile & Marble by Valentin. The round nickel light fixture above, whose shade recalls the table’s curvature, is by Visual Comfort & Co.