



TROPICAL PUNCH

A DESIGN DUO OUTFITS A FORT LAUDERDALE RESIDENCE WITH WHIMSICAL ISLAND FLAIR.

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INTERIOR DESIGN / IVONNE RONDEROS
AND ANAHI CARRILLO, DKOR INTERIORS

Palecek's Strings Attached lounge chairs and Orson side table from Judith Norman occupy the family area of a Fort Lauderdale home by designers Ivonne Ronderos and Anahi Carrillo. Coffee tables from Pure Project Home center the Odabashian rug. Expormim's Nautica swing chair from Clima Home and a Casa Dio sofa offer whimsical seating.



Tropical hues are common in South Florida residences, a palette Nicole Johnson Brown embraces, but she knows restraint is key. “I love color, but I wasn’t sure how to express my passion for vibrancy without it overwhelming the spaces,” she says about designing the Fort Lauderdale house she and her husband, Ian, renovated. Considering her effusiveness toward the palette of soft coral, warm teal and gray-tinged navy that now surrounds her, designers Ivonne Ronderos and Anahi Carrillo brilliantly succeeded in setting the right tone. “I often find myself being moved by the emotion of color and texture in the home as I travel from room to room,” Nicole says. “In each room, there is an undertone of serenity, even in the spaces that are bolder.”

That feeling is the result of the designers’ concept for the residence: “Tropical Festival of Life,” an approach that incorporates organic textures and prints as well as abstract island patterns. “The Browns were willing to trust us to create a unique home that reflects their distinctiveness,” Ronderos says. The clients’ directive for a look that embraces their individuality led to decisions such as noteworthy seating, like the family area’s hanging chair and curvy aqua velvet sofa as well as the foyer’s shell-shaped plywood chairs—pieces further influenced by the owners’ love of entertaining. “Just how much the Browns were intent on creating a whimsical and welcoming place



Dining area artwork from Pure Project Home pops against Phillip Jeffries' Side Stepped wallcovering in Navy Sail. Article's Zola chairs, which Grafton Furniture reupholstered with a Kravet textile, surround the owners' table atop an Odabashian rug. The bar's backsplash of Ann Sacks' Context Field tile in Jasper adds a bold presence.

for friends was cemented in our minds when they told us they had bought a pimped-out golf cart to drive to local restaurants," Carrillo says. "After that conversation, we knew it was important to consider the experiential at all times."

Following that lead, Ronderos and Carrillo approached the project in such a way that each space would invite discovery and tell a story. To define the living, family and dining areas, which are all connected and in view of each other, the designers relied on colors, unique pieces and accent moments. A fireplace with a Calacatta gold tile surround is the standout feature in the living area. The hanging chair and eclectic sofa make a statement in the family area. And in the dining area, the duo created a space within a space by outfitting a bar with a rich but playful blue-toned backsplash tile. "We decided that because we were going to go wild, we'd go with color," Ronderos says. "When you walk into the dining area, it's impactful because you see the rich blue on the wall. It was always about finding the perfect spots for color with rich texture."

Substantial work was done in the master bedroom, where Ronderos and Carrillo added wallpaper and wood tones to walls. Transforming the space's open-concept layout, they also created hidden doors that lead to the bathroom and closet. But because of the Browns' penchant for hosting, the guest room was so highly considered that it was given as much weight as their own bedroom. "I told Anahi, 'This is the project to go bold,'



In a guest bedroom, Phillip Jeffries' Arboretum wallcovering in Parakeet boasts a tropical vibe against RH Modern's Italia bed. Arturo Alvarez's Tempo Vivace pendants from Lumens hang above Anthropologie nightstands. Serena & Lily's rattan Palms chair and a custom end table round out the room, grounded by a Safavieh rug.

because not many people will let us take risks," Ronderos says. "I wanted to create meaningful spaces, because nothing about the Browns' story is run of the mill." Intended to feel like a tropical hotel boutique, the guest room boasts a palm-print wallcovering and a glowing neon pink sign that reads, "The Coconut House," the moniker the owners have named their home.

Near the end of the project, the clients made a last-minute decision to renovate one final room. "I had specific ideas for the way I wanted the kitchen to flow, function and look because I spend so much time there," Nicole says. She was hands-on in helping design the new Snaidero kitchen, particularly when it came to spatial planning. "Nicole spent time strategizing where appliances should be placed," Ronderos says. "For instance, she wanted the wine cooler to be more accessible to the outside, so we moved it to the left end of a particular cabinet."

At home in their tropical paradise, the Browns say they don't have a favorite room in the house. Instead, the overall feeling of escapism captivates them throughout the residence. "We asked Ivonne and Anahi to create a home in which people would feel the happiness of being away from it all, as they would during a perfect vacation," Nicole says. "It is a beautiful place in which to entertain, as it encourages what I call a barefoot nonchalance that gives us and our friends a place to slow down and take a breath." 



A covered seating area by the pool beckons with Gloster's teak-framed Kay lounge chairs from Clima Home and Paola Lenti's Wabi sofa from Luminale. "We wanted to have a seamless connection between the outdoors and the indoors," Ronderos says.