



Tropical Rooms



LOCATED IN
THE SANCTUARY

EASY BREEZY CUSTOM-MADE LIVING

BY LESLIE MCKERNS
PHOTOS BY ROBERT BRANTLEY

Residents of South Florida are used to tropical breezes and beautiful beaches, and many seek to bring this lifestyle into their homes. Mitch Kunik, owner of Affiniti Architects in Boca Raton, has seen this growing trend and implemented it into his architecture, creating dramatic custom homes for clients in-the-know. When a local financial wizard, whose home is pictured here, wanted to bring this easy-breezy style into his household in The Sanctuary, he sought out Affiniti, a firm sought out not through researching photographs, portfolios or Web sites, but through visiting the home in person.

This beautiful home offers the best of both worlds. Situated directly on the Intracoastal next to the marina, the owners, avid boaters, have access to their large yacht right outside but without it blocking or dominating their view, allowing them to enjoy the beautiful Florida landscape.

Curvy lines and carefully predicted sight lines are keys to preserving the waterway views. The undulating lines are repeated in the roof lines and at the edges of the pool and reflecting ponds while the straight lines in the stonework patio lead the eye outward to the view.



AA0002340

2 www.CitySmartMagazine.com

LOCATED IN THE ROYAL PALM
YACHT AND COUNTRY CLUB

The outdoor bar area in this tropical home sits beneath a rotunda, perfect for solo lounging or for entertaining guests. Sheltered by columns but still open, this outdoor room allows cooling tropical breezes to encircle the space—vital to year-round outdoor living. The overhead fan can be set to lazily stir the air on sultry evenings while a cooling mist rises from the pools and waterway. The space is the perfect place for dining al fresco or for serving up an impromptu tray of tempting colorful fruits and icy drinks.

The formal architecture is in the front of the house and a requirement for this home was to tie the architecture into the back of the house; another was to keep the home private while allowing transparency to the waterway.

There is a wonderful quality of light in the tropics and Florida's waterfront homes make fantastic use of the five senses: sight, sound, smell, touch and taste—they are evident everywhere; even the very landscape blossoms with ripe edible fruits. Water comes fully into play in tropical homes, both visually and in the actual cooling of the area.

"To blend the connection between indoor and outdoor space, we created a seamless line with the waterway behind the home, visually connecting it with a 25-foot high glass wall," said Kunik. "The client wanted the outdoors to be the star, and this home certainly does that."

A second tropical home, also by Affiniti Architects, is a house on the Intracoastal in Boca Raton's Royal Palm Yacht and Country Club.

Tropical architecture sometimes calls to mind a Polynesian ideal with thatched overhangs and simple unadorned natural spaces cooled only by tropical breezes. But, in Florida, there are additional realities—a need for weather protection and climate control. "Open" homes have to be balanced with the need for privacy and security.

The home is surrounded by water features and pools. One pool at the corner overlooks the waterway and connects visually into the living area. A sculptural pool wraps around the property and another functional swimming pool is tucked into a covered patio on the waterway.

The owners are former academics who took their company public and then sold it. They have created an authentic and diverse specimen plant collection that is pivotal to this waterfront home.

The house was designed to resemble the tropical destinations that the couple has been to and that they wanted to relive on a daily basis. The pool, pavement and the entrance to the Main House is reminiscent of the pavement at the Rock Resort on the British Virgin Islands. The home features indigenous materials such as coral stone, asymmetrical roof lines with heavy timber and walking trails throughout the property.

The couple had gone through three or four unsatisfactory landscape architects before Affiniti took over the lead role integrating the gardens complete with arboretum and the outdoors into the architecture. So dedicated to nature are the owners that the chimneys on this house were designed to attract nesting eagles.

The pool area features tropical punches of hot color from hibiscus and bougainvillea while lush foxtail palms wave in waterside breezes. The poolside ambience equals the four and five star resorts of the Caribbean, where visitors spend the hours dreaming and swinging in hammocks built for two. Out front, coconut palms laden with coconuts grace natural paths leading to soaring overhangs trimmed in natural wood timbers.

A third Affiniti designed tropical house is a unique British West Indies-themed residence also at Royal Palm Yacht and Country Club. An upscale home with a large front porch, this primary residence once again brings nature into their home.

The property uses front porch views and sunset views—along with heavily landscaped areas in front. Aesthetics of the British West Indies include metal roofs, wood siding, colonnades of classical columns and upscale finishes.

Do Affiniti's client's balk at the cost of a custom home? Not at all, said Kunik. He readily acknowledges that he does not have to educate his clients about the realities of budget; they understand that homes of this caliber are typically 11,000 square feet or larger and run from \$500-700 per square foot with the interiors potentially costing another \$100-150 per square foot. "Our clients typically are very knowledgeable about what they want and have built five or even eight previous custom homes," he added. ☐

Affiniti Architects is located at 6100 Broken Sound Parkway NW, Suite 8 in Boca Raton. 561.750.0445. www.affinitiarchitects.com.



LOCATED IN THE ROYAL PALM YACHT AND COUNTRY CLUB