

# Tropic

FLORIDA LIVING & DESIGN

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# “Freshened” at Sixty

*A Harbor Beach co-op opts for the “full treatment”*

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Pale furnishings keep the home's den bright and airy.

AS MUCH OF SOUTH FLORIDA'S housing stock careens toward “antique” status, much of it is overdue for a good facelift. At the gorgeous, Mid-Century Modern Chateau Orleans, right on the sand in Fort Lauderdale's Harbor Beach, a dated apartment with million dollar views was recently purchased and renovated for its new occupants. The Canadian couple who bought the home are avid golfers who wanted a vacation home to escape the arctic cold three or four months out of the year. They chose RS3 Designs, a firm based in Miami's Design District, to carry out the design on what turned out to be a gut renovation of the ocean-front home. Faced with a warren of rooms and walls and solid doors that was common to 1950s construction, Shannon Scott and Raymond Jiminez saw great potential in the unit – a potential based on removing most of what was between the front and rear walls of the apartment. The final result is a soft, warm, open plan residence that works well inside a building with a Bermuda Modern exterior. We met with Raymond Jiminez to discuss the job.

*Tropic: Often times, owners of older apartments cannot see the forest for the trees – so to speak – and have a hard time visualizing just what*

*can be accomplished in an older unit. How did you show the owners of this 60-year old apartment what the scope of possibility actually was?*

RS3: Presentations and 3D photo-realistic renderings done in house. Also, after shopping with them the first few times, we were able to gauge these clients even more, which allowed us to tailor this apartment to their needs.

*One of the things that is almost universal in these older units is that, representing an earlier way of living, they are often very compartmentalized. Closed off dining room here, walled off kitchen there... Was this a challenge in the Orleans Chateau apartment and how did you resolve this for your final, open plan?*

Luckily, there was not a challenge in terms of construction, as there were no structural or load-bearing columns, with the exception of the one in the middle of the entire space. As this particular column was maybe a foot in diameter, we decided to make it a statement piece and enlarge it so that all the other elements and areas revolved around it; including the intricate ceiling and lighting design. There was also a little convincing we had to



*“The assorted shells mounted on the living room wall were one of the icings on the cake.... They really brought the outside in as three-dimensional art.”*

The living room is defined by a tray ceiling covered in the same grasscloth as covers the walls. The base colors used reflect the real focal point of the room – the wide, sandy beach beyond.





*"We wanted to make sure the kitchen was fully functional for cooking/prepping, more formal entertaining, as well as casual lunch or breakfast."*

**The "waterfall" style countertops on the island are frappuccino quartzite from Opustone, while the chandelier and linen-covered bar seating is from Jalan Jalan.**

do with the client, in that they were a little unsure whether or not they wanted an open kitchen. That thought of a traditional, enclosed kitchen was easily overcome as we explained a more closed-off kitchen would have taken away from their beautiful view.

*How would you describe the ceiling treatment with its lighting channels?*

Linear... It's minimal, clean-lined and sophisticated. The idea behind these was to create a way in which we could effectively divide each and every space in the common areas from above through modern ceilings treatments and lighting. The large X or cross merges at the center column allowing for the light channels to definitively outline the main entrance, living room, kitchen, and dining area.

We wanted the living areas to feel modern yet tranquil. Within the parameters of the living area we implemented a tray ceiling covered with the same grasscloth wall covering from Romo. This application on the ceiling really set a tone for itself and helps distinguish this area from the rest of the space.

The assorted shells mounted on the living room wall were one of the icings on the cake. As one of the final selections, they really brought the outside in, as three dimensional art. They're were found at Jalan-Jalan, located in the Miami Design District.

*In order to get lighting and wiring in the entertaining spaces, you had to drop the ceiling a bit, right?*

The exact drop was actually 5-3/4". The original ceiling height was about 8', and were lowered it to about 7'-6". We wanted to make sure to drop it the least amount possible as one of the owners is 6'+ tall. However, the couple did visit the site during framing & construction. The husband absolutely loved the lowered ceiling. He said it was "nice & cozy".

*There is an incredible warmth to this apartment, even in the tones of the stone used. Can you describe how you came up with this color palette?*

Simple, the client wanted a particular tone on tone look, with just a touch

of color. That color turned out to be burnt orange, but we didn't determine that until late in the project. The overall palette was definitely influenced by its surroundings; Sun, beach, sand, and water. The client was certain they wanted a beach home, but also certain it not be perceived as too casual. So we made sure we turned their residence into a more luxurious, pristine, and modernized version of a beach home. The stones and finishes were then easily selected after we were all fully committed to the look.

*Tell us a little about the bathroom renovation.*

The bathroom renovation was a complete gut, along with the rest of the unit. New plumbing fixtures, lighting, stone, etc. were fully implemented. The idea here was to replicate a 5-star hotel master suite bathroom.

It was directly influenced by the client as she stayed in one sometime during the renovation process.

To achieve this, we used materials that included Calacatta Gold marble, teak veneer, and a shell wall covering sourced from Romo.

*What was the idea behind the kitchen and breakfast bar area?*

We wanted to make sure the kitchen was fully functional for cooking/prepping, more formal entertaining, as well as casual lunch or breakfast. It needed to be aesthetically appropriate to the rest of the space. We chose a clean, white textured door panel and finished them with

wave-engraved square chrome handles. The white really brightened up the space. The counter-height seats were perfect as they integrated more earth-toned wood and a high-grade linen.

*Next to the kitchen, you used a capiz shell "wedding cake" chandelier over the dining table. Why that particular choice?*

Both Shannon and I thought that chandelier was the perfect choice. It was the lighting fixture that incorporated all the features we wanted to bring into this home. It brought warmth, luxury and the beach together in a fixture that throws just the right ambient light over the table with its tree trunk base.

For us, this piece was, like the shells, icing on the cake. ■



**Nine individual specimens of coral and shells, mounted as art.**

