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INTERIOR DESIGN / JANIS EVANS, JANIS EVANS INTERIOR DESIGN
ARCHITECTURE / GEORGE PASTOR, MERRILL,
PASTOR & COLGAN ARCHITECTS
HOME BUILDER / PHIL BARTH, BARTH CONSTRUCTION
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / SAM COMER,
HAYSLIP LANDSCAPE



Blue Ribbon AMBIENCE

A FAMILY'S LOVE OF HORSES AND TRAVEL INSPIRES A
DESIGN TEAM TO CREATE A RELAXING TROPICAL RETREAT.

WRITTEN BY TATE GUNNERSON / PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRANTLEY PHOTOGRAPHY



Travel is nothing if not inspirational, so it's no surprise that touring the *estancias*—or cattle ranches—of Argentina motivated a polo player with a love of horses to recreate the same ambience for himself and his family on a scenic lot overlooking a barn and paddocks in a posh Vero Beach development. "It's a winter retreat where he can play Polo year-round," says the wife. "It is truly heaven on earth."

The family turned to interior designer Janis Evans and architect George Pastor to bring their vision to life. Together, they outfitted the one-story abode's windows and doorways with old-fashioned shutters that belie its true age. "There is a farm-like quality to the structures," says Pastor. "And when you come through the front door and see the beautiful courtyard, it is quite charming." Inside the front entrance, in addition to the courtyard, there is a standalone garage and a detached guesthouse. The exterior space creates a sense of seclusion from the neighbors while offering curated views from every room of the house. "Building an interior courtyard, reminiscent of a lot of homes in Argentina, adds a level of privacy while still being outdoors," explains Evans.

Opposite: Interior designer Janis Evans installed hand-forged iron-and-antique glass light sconces from Holly Hunt to illuminate the foyer of her clients' Vero Beach home. A pair of matching demilunes by David Iatesta from Ainsworth-Noah in Atlanta, mirrors from Dmitriy & Co., and blue-and-white vintage pottery from Umbrella in Hopewell, New Jersey, all flank the entrance to the main living areas. The antique Persian rugs are from J&D Oriental Rugs in New York.

Below: A flamed limestone fireplace mantel from Francois & Co. creates a living room focal point for a pair of sofas covered in natural Belgian linen from Cisco Brothers and armchairs from Henry Beguelin purchased in Italy. The banded kilim rug is from Galerie Shabab in New York, the linen curtains are by Kerry Joyce from Holland & Sherry and the artwork above the mantle is by Michelle Williams purchased from Interior Crafts.



Objets d'art, including a horse blanket draped over a vintage wooden saddle stand (below, left) and a pair of leather riding boots (below, right), add to the home's Argentinian aesthetic. "We tried to keep that vibe going, but we wanted it to be authentic, not kitschy," says Evans.



"The home features generous ceilings," remarks architect George Pastor of the stained beams from Chambers Truss in Fort Pierce. A pair of pillows covered with French metallic applied linen from Melissa Levinson Antiques in Los Angeles balances the living room's more rustic elements, including a coffee table by Charles Pollock from Martin Nash in Atlanta. The custom bookcase is by Premier Millwork & Cabinets.



Moving from the courtyard into the home, the Argentinian influence continues throughout the interiors. In the great room, for example, exposed wood beams highlight the lofted ceilings, while juxtaposing the light walls and Egyptian limestone flooring. Great care was taken to not damage the floors during the project, explains builder Phil Barth. "We put plywood over it, so nothing would chip or damage the concrete, and then we polished it at the end of the job," says the builder.

In the same space, Barth and his crew also installed the large limestone fireplace mantel, which makes a striking focal point for the sitting area with matching sofas covered in ivory linen, and a pair of occasional chairs made of hair on hide with leather straps. "It has a gaucho feeling that is rustic and simple, yet luxurious," Evans explains. In the open dining area, a simple bronze-finish, iron candelabra illuminates a wooden table surrounded

by a mix of upholstered and leather chairs. "We were going for that organic feeling," says the interior designer.

Indeed, in the adjacent kitchen, a dark-wood island with an open base contrasts with the light-gray custom cabinetry. Both are accented by marble countertops and a complementary backsplash laid in a herringbone pattern. Although the wife enjoys cooking, she splurged on top-notch appliances in large part for her son-in-law who is a professional chef in Manhattan. "I wanted to make sure that when he visited, he'd be happy to cook here," says the wife.

The gray hue in the kitchen is carried into the master bedroom, where it's used on the walls to create a serene backdrop for the custom wool-covered headboard and French-pleated box springs on a walnut base. In the corner, a plush chaise lounge faces the paddock and barn. "I love the antiques, but I also love that the interior feels fresh and contemporary," Evans explains.

Opposite: A custom bronze-finish iron light fixture from Rose Tarlow Melrose House in New York defines the open dining area, which is furnished with a custom trestle table by Charles Pollock from Martin Nash, linen-covered chairs by Verellen from Michael Dawkins Home and leather-covered chairs from Paul Ferrante.

Below: "All the cabinetry was designed to fit in with the millwork throughout the living and family room," says builder Phil Barth. The painted custom cabinetry with inset doors by Premier Millwork & Cabinets and a custom walnut island with a steel stretcher carry the serene color palette into the kitchen, which also includes a limestone hood and marble backsplash from Francois & Co. The aged leather-covered stools are from Beau Studio in Atlanta and the iron hardware is by Barz.





The designer let her hair down a bit, figuratively speaking, in the bathrooms. In the master bath, a black-and-white checkerboard tile floor creates a classic backdrop for a distressed wood vanity with a stone top, and a sleek tub with a metal surround. There's another black-and-white floor in the powder room, where the walls are clad with a bold wallpaper with a large palm pattern. "Since this house is not typical of the area, we needed a splash of Florida," says Evans.

It's also a nod to the courtyard, where landscape designer Sam Comer created an allee of tall, skinny Alexander palms that flanks the central sidewalk. African Iris, Dwarf Confederate Jasmine and other low plants add lushness and texture. "The allee is intended to give the space definition, while keeping it open and airy," Comer says. "Because the architecture was so strong, the landscape followed its lead, and that made it pretty easy."

For the back of the home, Comer kept things even more subdued, screening the area from neighbors using a stucco wall planted with tall white birds-of-paradise plants, and positioning four large date palms to frame the picturesque views of the swimming pool, barn and a small pond in the distance. "We had a beautiful vista, and we didn't want to block that," Comer explains.

"It was such a great team—that's why it was so successful," explains the wife, who enjoys hosting family and friends during the winter—a retreat from their primary home in New Jersey, where they have a countryside farmhouse. "We come in, plop down on the sofas and relax," says the wife, noting that her and her husband's grown children enjoy visiting and often bring their dogs along with them. "We didn't want it to feel like a museum, and it doesn't," says the wife. "It's so comfortable." ■

In the corner of the master bedroom, Evans paired a chaise lounge covered in linen by Libeco Linen from Bobo Intriguing Objects in Atlanta with a black iron floor lamp with white gold-leaf accents by Reborn Antiques and Reproductions from John Rosselli & Associates. The walnut ottoman with French mattress stitching is by Dmitry & Co. and the curtains are by Schumacher.



Walls painted Pavilion Gray by Farrow & Ball and an antique Tabriz rug from Fred Moeban Gallery in New York create a serene backdrop for the master bedroom. The walnut base and French mattress stitching bed frame is by Dmitry & Co., the stone lamps with linen shades are by Gregorius Pineo from Holly Hunt and the hanging chandelier was purchased at Ainsworth-Noah.

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