

**WAIT, THERE'S MORE! // OUR STAY IN MAY FESTIVAL EXTENDS SEASON'S JOYS**

# GulfshoreLife

FOR THE BEST OF PARADISE

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HOME + DESIGN

HOME OF THE MONTH

# TWO FACES OF COOL

British colonial in the front exterior and fully modern in the back, this Sanibel home manages a blend with striking results. BY MICHAEL KORB



## HIS AND HERS

When a couple find themselves locked in a debate over which style to build their new house, compromise is often suggested. And for this new Sanibel beach house, it couldn't have worked out more beautifully. Thanks to the back of the house being visible only from the Gulf of Mexico, the couple were able to have architect Joyce Owens create a British colonial front and a modern back without anyone questioning the transition.

### BEACHY KEEN

With light, bright open spaces, the 5,000-square-foot single-family home epitomizes island life. The family room (right), keeps things simple, allowing views of the pool and Gulf to speak volumes. Meanwhile, a three-sided screened outdoor living space replete with orchid wall (below) has become the family's favorite room.



**N**APLES IS NICE. Fort Myers is fun. But Sanibel is sensational.

If you've spent any time at all on the island, you know it's a different world from what the rest of us Southwest Floridians experience on a day-to-day basis. Judge Judy once told me it was the closest thing to the South Pacific as you could get in the continental United States. And we're not about to argue.

If you're lucky enough to find yourself with the opportunity to build a new house from the ground up on one of Sanibel's lush beaches, you'd be smart to emulate this 5,000-square-foot, four-bedroom (plus den), four-full- and two-half-bathroom, two-story single-family home designed by architect Joyce Owens.

What's fascinating about the property is that even an untrained eye will notice that the exterior of the home is completely schizophrenic. A British colonial look, replete with blue window shutters and patterned porch railings out front greet guests and passersby from the road, while clean lines and floor-to-ceiling glass is fully modern out back. Lush buffer vegetation on the ends makes the transition virtually seamless.

But why bother to go with two competing styles?

"Well, we couldn't agree. It's as simple as that," says the homeowner about himself and his wife, with a laugh. "And knowing Sanibel and beach houses as we do, you really don't see the other side. So she got her shutters and balconies and I get the glass. We thought it was a bit





### **WELL, WELL, WELL...**

Owens created a beautiful, warm-wood floating stairwell in the home's center that not only is gorgeous but also allows for a great deal of light to enter the middle of the home thanks to skylights and windows. A more traditional home, such as a total British colonial, wouldn't allow for that functionality.



of a gamble, but we've had a lot of people come through the place and no one really notices."

From the outside you can see only one side at a time, so it works out fine. And the inside tends to give off a cleaner, more modern vibe.

With both a family room and a living room, you'd think it might be tough for the homeowners to pick a favorite space to spend their time, but you'd be wrong—Owens designed a screened-in porch on the east end of the home. Three full sides are screened in and allow for beautiful island breezes at all times, not to mention stunning views of the pool and Gulf. "We live in that room," the homeowner says.

The room is off the home's expansive kitchen, which also has view of the Gulf, as well as a screened side balcony that features a beautiful

## WOODEN IT BE NICE

With warm, honey-hued wood flooring and a beachy, bleached greige-toned oak on the ceiling, the home's heart is the kitchen and family room area (which also connects to the home's three-sided screened porch).

With Gulf blue accents and stunning marble surfaces, the space feels comfortable, tropical and fresh all at once.





## SUITE DREAMS

The second-floor master suite is an expansive space that is all about the mesmerizing views of the Gulf of Mexico. Simple design elements don't distract from the display Mother Nature has created outside. In fact, Owens designed the space not to include doors, choosing partial walls that run perpendicular to the beach in order to maximize views and light.

## MODESTY ASIDE

The sectional master bath features swaths of marble and benefits from Owens' open-wall design. Tons of natural light floods the space, while allowing for spectacular views of the beach and water. Luckily, this stretch of beach is fairly secluded, so bath time needn't be a public performance.

orchid wall. It turns out the homeowners are some of the few people who can not only keep them alive, but make them thrive. One more reason to be jealous.

Inside, the home utilizes warm oak flooring throughout and bleached oak on the ceilings in the kitchen and den. Hints of aqua and mint keep the home feeling light and tropical. Nowhere is that more evident than the upstairs master suite. There are no doors in that section of the home, just partial walls that run perpendicular to the beach, allowing for gorgeous views through the floor-to-ceiling windows.

"The spaces are very modern (in) how they flow into one another," Owens says. "It was really all about the light and space and the simple transition between rooms without blocking them with doors. It's just very open and bright." Owens even added skylights above the home's floating wooden stairwell. "I tried really hard (to ensure that) even though the home is traditional from the front, there is still plenty of light coming into the middle of the house as well as from the Gulf side."

So whether you like the traditional elements of British Colonial or more modern aspects of design, the house has something for everyone—yet remains true to itself.

Sensational. 🌴

**ARCHITECT:** Joyce Owens  
**BUILDER:** The Wolter Group  
**INTERIOR DESIGNER:** Sanibel Home Furnishing

