



ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIOR DESIGN Stephanie Halfen, SDH Studios, Golden Beach, FL
BUILDER Rising Assets, Golden Beach, FL
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE Carolina Monteiro, Enea Garden Design, Inc., Miami, FL
TEXT Marina Brown
PHOTOGRAPHY Robin Hill, Miami Beach, FL

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Proving that straight lines can translate to poetry, the 5,800-square-foot contemporary residence by architect and designer Stephanie Halfen replaces a smaller home in the luxury enclave of Golden Beach, Fla. Positioned to capture a sweeping vista, the property now has the feel of an estate.

SPATIALLY ENLIGHTENED

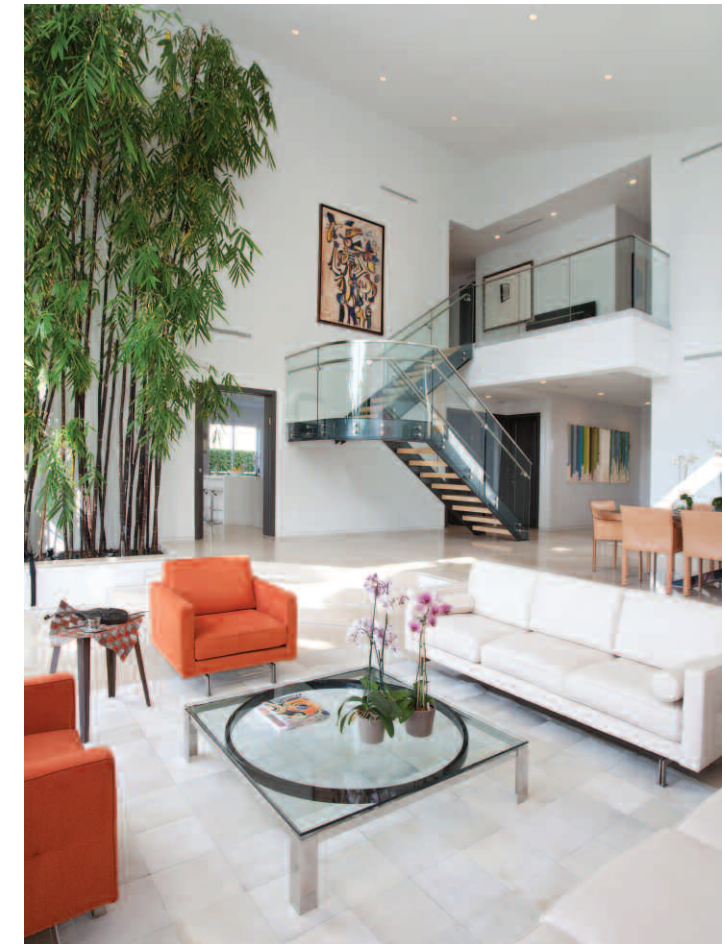
Softened By Luxurious Tropical Landscaping, The Soaring Lines Of White Stucco And Walls Of Glass Meld Into A Family Home, Where Not An Inch Of Space Is Undervalued, And Practicality And Comfort Seamlessly Blend

NESTLED IN GOLDEN BEACH, FLA., BETWEEN THE ATLANTIC Ocean and the Intracoastal Waterway, in a 5,800-square-foot residence created by Latin American architect and interior designer Stephanie Halfen, the luxury of space, and the warmth of natural light and expressive materials are combined. Add to that the need to bring Mother Nature inside as part of the family, and you have a brilliant contemporary and environmentally sensitive home perfect for three young children and two busy adults, and resilient enough to be altered as the homeowners' tastes change.

Not wishing simple glass and aluminum to interrupt the view, the entire back wall opens to an expansive entertainment “plaza.” Some of the exuberant use of color and the Latin homeowners’ love of artistic endeavors are on display in the living area, where sculptor Julio Maragall’s *Somersault* whimsically plays off of the colorful swirls in artist Anton Henning’s abstract.



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Halfen is no stranger to resiliency. Born in Caracas, Venezuela, she graduated summa cum laude from the Universidad Simón Bolívar in architecture and with honors in interior design from the Parsons School in New York. After managing several large architectural projects and working as a professor at her alma mater, she and her family relocated to South Florida. “I particularly love residential design and creating innovative ways to live in a tropical environment,” she says.

ABOVE: With four bedrooms upstairs and two plus a study, down, the central, soaring living space remains the core of the home. A wall of bamboo only adds to the feeling of volume and lack of boundaries, while the circular cocktail table from Artefacto seems to keep the room in movement.



IN THE DINING AREA, HALFEN PLAYS WITH THE SPARKLE OF FARREY'S "FLOS" CHANDELIER, WHILE A STEEL STAIRWAY BY AMBIANCE INTERIORS COUNTERS WITH ITS MASCULINE THRUST.

And as Golden Beach's architectural aesthetic changes from Mediterranean style to the sleek, pared-down lines of contemporary design, Halfen's solutions to design integration become apparent. Wishing to maximize room for outdoor activities and view, the house is positioned as far forward as lot setback lines allow. The result is a stunning rear space that easily accommodates a pool and an exterior deck that in fact expands the main living areas into the backyard. "The family loves that deck ... outdoor entertaining is a very important part of the design," she says. "Children can be easily seen in the pool; guests sitting at the outdoor bar can be included in the conversation; and it has the best view of the house."

Yet it is inside the living area — the core and heart of the home with its 27-foot-high ceilings — that space becomes tangible. As much as a painting or a piece of furniture is design and décor, space itself plays a part in



Both practical and sculptural, "CoCo" chairs wrapped in stretched leather center a sumptuous Cattelan Italy table in the dining area. Here, individual boxes seem to unite as a serving credenza from Minotti that floats beneath artist Clive Smith's arresting painting that draws the eye into the void.

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the structural aesthetic. "Space is the essence of the design," Halfen says. "Here, it opens towards the water bringing the exterior landscape inside the home."

With a sense of daring that may come from an internal Latin beat, the designer chose brilliant orange textured chairs by Musa Italia that seem about ready to dance to the swirling painting by Anton Henning that hangs above a white leather sofa. The cowhide area rug in a checkerboard grid tops limestone flooring to keep the context from waxing too sophisticated.

And with an eye for the sheer drama provided by multileveled spaces, Halfen divided the central living area into two levels — a kind of theatrical dais set beneath a proscenium of windows. With the primary seating arrangement at ground level, she set an angular elevation of three steps that places the dining area in what feels like another room. Building on that 'stepped-up' theme, the second floor landing introduces a third perspective from a vast expanse of wall.

RIGHT: White Caesarstone quartz tops the Mia Cucina cabinetry in the kitchen that boasts flooring in a checkerboard pattern crafted with squares of limestone, porcelain and white glass.



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To set the mood: just add color. Keeping the palette subdued allows the homeowners to add art or artifact with its own vibrancy.

SUBLIMINAL BEST DESCRIBES THE QUIET INTRODUCTION OF ORGANIC COMPONENTS INTO THE MASTER SUITE. HERE, THE COWHIDE AREA RUG ATOP WARM OAK FLOORING PAIRS WITH THE SUBLIME VIEW TO QUIETLY, BUT POWERFULLY, EXPRESS THE DESIGNER'S APPRECIATION OF THE NATURAL WORLD.



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LEFT: No need for modesty in the dramatic master bath. Black sandstone floors the expanse that extends like a runway past Mia Cucina's marble-topped cabinetry custom designed by Halfen. MTI Whirlpool vessels sit vase-like above cleverly designed caches for linen and towels.

Without hesitation, Halfen designed a stairway that is at once spectacular ... and safe. Burnished stainless steel and elegantly turned glass shape the balustrade. Venezuelan artist Oswaldo Vagas' work captures the eye at the landing, while even the narrow air conditioning vents make artistic statements with slit-like vents that spill chilled air without a hint of intrusion. But it is the small forest that gets attention. "The thought of having a large-scale plant inside the home is fantastic — it strengthens the idea of bringing the outside in," Halfen says. "Bamboo seemed like it would grow to the perfect size." In the end, after much nurturing, some breathtaking leaf-drops, and an apparent steely will to survive, the bamboo has thrived and now covers the wall in an interior landscape of verdant drama in the living and dining areas.

Nearby, the kitchen is logical and fun. Designed in three stations, the Mia Cucina cabinetry topped in Caesarstone quartz serves as workspace that accommodates a lot of people doing many different things. With a controlled palette and a checkerboard flooring, the kitchen can vary from whimsical to sleek depending on whether its morning cereal or a fine cabernet being served.



Upstairs, the master bedroom is purposefully minimalist. "A Zen-like approach allows it to be all about the view," Halfen says. With a sparse Molteni bed in nubby gray fabric and delicate side tables for anchors, the only patterning is seen in the idiosyncratic display of paintings by Fernando Gonzalez that dots the wall and the unique Calvin Klein area rug fashioned with strips of cowhide that grounds the room.

But even as the sleeping space is intimate and serene, the master bath expands in monochromatic drama with Aquabraxx' body-embracing tub, Carrara marble-topped cabinetry and an art-piece wall clad in natural river rock. And above the tub is one of Halfen's favorite devices: a skylight.

Various design strategies are used in Halfen's quest for natural illumination. The home is oriented to gather as much light as possible. Capturing it from high clerestory windows and walls of glass that funnel light into the living areas, Halfen directs it and distributes it along walls, into corners and allows it to flood the home with a kind of illuminated joy. "Light is a powerful tool of design that fills a home with life," she says.

Trapezoids, oblique triangles, rectangles and squares — Halfen employs a potpourri of geometry in the dazzling rear wall that folds into itself to capture the ever-present ocean breeze.

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"Every inch of space should be made to count," Halfen says. The juxtaposition of that maxim and her own quest for an organic aesthetic has made for a unique blend — spacious, open, yet allowing space to serve a purpose inside ... and outside, where Skyline Design chaise lounges from Addison House recline poolside.



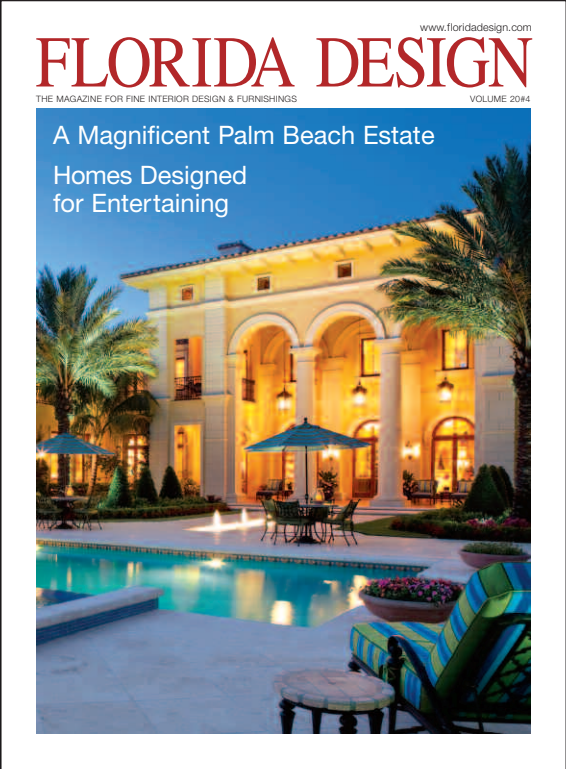
SOURCES
Rear [Exterior](#)
Pool - Custom designed by SDH Studio,
Golden Beach, FL
Fabricated by Forever Pools, Miami, FL
Flooring - Keystone Works Precast, Inc., Miami, FL
Chaises, dining chairs and barstools - Skyline
Design, Addison House, Aventura, FL
Dining table - NES Mosaics, Caracas, Venezuela
Grill - Lynx, Ferguson, North Miami Beach, FL

Armchairs - Musa Italia, Altamura, Italy
Planter - Enea Garden Design, Miami, FL
Fans under balcony - Modern Fan Company,
Farrey's, Miami, FL
Sconces - SLV Lighting, Farrey's, North Miami, FL
Balcony railing - Ambiance Interiors
Manufacturing Corp., Miami, FL
[Living Area](#)
Sofas and armchairs - Musa Italia, Altamura, Italy
Cocktail table - Artefacto, Aventura, FL

Sculptural table by lounge chair - Galeria
Pollock, Caracas, Venezuela
Figurine - Galería Freites, Caracas, Venezuela
Dog sculpture - Now Contemporary Art,
Miami, FL
Artwork above sofa - Phillips, New York, NY
Area rug - [www.onekingslane.com](#)
Flooring - Coverings Etc, Miami, FL
[Stairway](#)
Stairway and railing fabricated by Ambiance
Interiors Manufacturing Corp.,
Miami, FL
Artwork in foyer - KaBe
Contemporary, Miami, FL
Artwork on landing - Galería de Arte
Ascaso, Miami, FL
[Dining Area](#)
Dining table - Cattelan Italia, Zady
Trading, Miami, FL
Chairs - Addison House, Aventura, FL
Floating credenza - Minotti,
Miami, FL
Chandelier - Flos, Farrey's,
North Miami, FL
Artwork - Marlborough Gallery,
New York, NY
Flooring - Coverings Etc, Miami, FL
[Kitchen](#)
Cabinetry, island and bar - Mia
Cucina, Aventura, FL
Countertops - Caesarstone, Miami, FL
Stools - [www.onekingslane.com](#)
Ventilation hood - Faber, Bell's
Appliances, Miami, FL
Cooktop, microwave and oven - Wolf,
Bell's Appliances, Miami, FL
Breakfast table and chairs - Design
Within Reach, Miami, FL
[Master Bath](#)
Tub - Aquabrass, Farrey's,
North Miami Beach, FL
Vanities and countertop - Mia
Cucina, Aventura, FL
Sink vessels - MTI Whirlpool,
Farrey's, North Miami Beach, FL
Faucets - Hansgrohe, Farrey's,
North Miami Beach, FL
Mirrors - M & J Mirrors and Glass,
Miami, FL
Wall covering and flooring - Hom'expo
Design, Bay Harbor, FL
[Master Bedroom](#)
Bed - Molteni, Miami, FL
Bed covering - Hotel Collection,
Bloomingdales, Aventura, FL
Bedside chests and bench - Mia
Cucina, Aventura, FL
Photos - Owners' Collection
Area rug - Calvin Klein, Amber
ITC Area Rugs & Accents,
Hallandale Beach, FL
Flooring - Natural Wood Floors &
Design, Miami, FL
[Throughout](#)
Art lighting - Tech Lighting, Light
Bulbs Unlimited, Miami, FL
Recessed lighting - Elco Lighting,
Light Bulbs Unlimited, Miami, FL
Windows and doors - Unity
Windows, Miami, FL ♦

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