

THE THRILL OF DISCOVERY

WANDERING THROUGH THIS SPRAWLING, YET
UNCONVENTIONAL PINECREST HOME IS AN
ADVENTURE FOR THE SENSES.

BY ROBIN HODES

The home features contemporary architecture that is warm and carries horizontal lines with a ranch twist, with a tropical feel through indoor/outdoor integration, lots of covered terraces, much natural light, floor to ceiling windows, open spaces and an open floor plan. The proportion is much more window than wall.



The concept of indoor/outdoor living is arguably South Florida's biggest draw. The couple and their four children, who reside in this 6-bedroom, 5,000-square-foot home with 2,000 square feet in exterior terraces, wanted to capitalize on this concept, and with a full acre of land to work with, endless possibilities existed. As so many are nowadays, they were drawn to contemporary architecture, but wanted to add the twist of a ranch style, which is noted for its elongated profile. That, combined with lofty ceilings soaring to 22 feet contributes to the residence's uniqueness. Upon seeing her website, the homeowners turned to architect Stephanie Halfen of SDH Studio, an award-winning architecture and design firm based in North Miami Beach. "The owners are a lovely, down to earth family," says Halfen. "They wanted a home to enjoy with their kids, which was livable, cozy, and allowed for frequent entertaining." Instantly grasping the desired aesthetic, Halfen set out to create a structure where indoor/outdoor integration would be made effortlessly. Intending to take advantage of every ounce of natural light, she used floor-to-ceiling windows in abundance. "When you consider

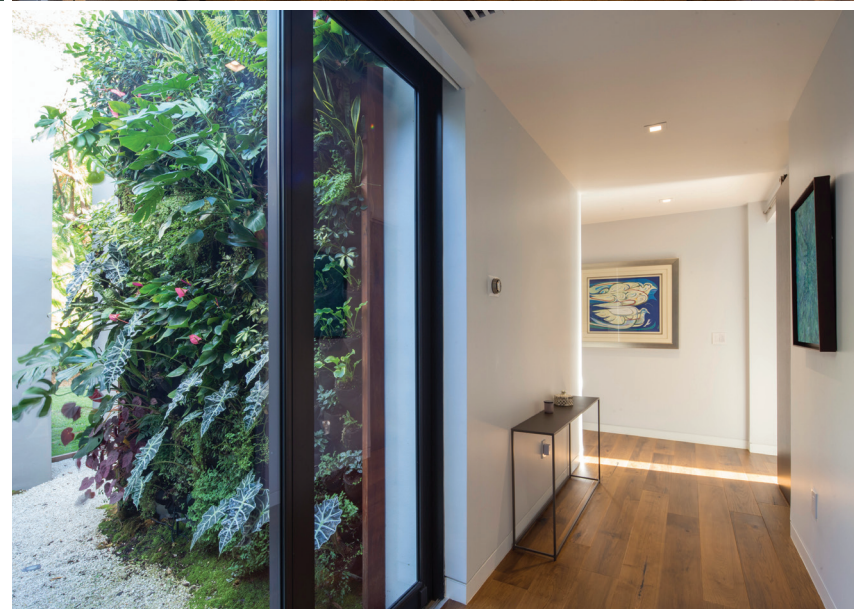
the proportion of the home, it is much more window than wall," explains Halfen. This was an especially refreshing change for the owners who had previously resided in a house that was by comparison darker and more traditional. The assimilation of nature into the design was a fundamental aspect of Halfen's vision, and when it came to specifying finishes, she heavily considered her selections which included Brazilian Ipe wood and Carrara marble. Courtyards and gardens are present throughout to perpetuate the theme. You never quite know where one will pop up, but it always brings a pleasant surprise, as do other elements placed around that serve as captivating focal points. Halfen's comfort level with the style of the home—contemporary being one of her favorites to work in—combined with the sheer size of the property, allowed her to spread her wings and let her creative mind run free. "There are many tendencies within contemporary architecture, but when you have the rare opportunity to work on an acre lot in Miami, you can really explore movement and volume," she says.



- ◀ LEFT ABOVE. Small scale pieces of art adorn the soaring walls, some up to 22 feet, allowing in lots of natural light. The front door is built from mahogany for richness. The focal wall in the living room is treated with a textural wallpaper. It is a central element that enhances the importance of the windows by creating contrast.
- ▲ ABOVE. Mia Cucina natural wood cabinets to integrate with the other material selections throughout. "Although they are functional, you just want to touch them," says Halfen.
- ◀ RIGHT. The dining area is situated to be inclusive of the main living space, and it is only the set of high-back chairs and ribbon-like wood light fixture suspended above the table that visually allocates it as a separate "room." In actuality, there is no physical boundary, which only serves to escalate the feeling of openness and flow. Consistent with the rest of the home, lofty windows here allow for spectacular views.



- ▲ ABOVE LEFT: The idea was to create a natural indoor/outdoor feel, so this was heavily considered when choosing the materials. The downspout to drain gutters is customized chain link.
- ▲ ABOVE RIGHT: A facet of true luxury, the master bedroom opens out onto the loggia and splendid backyard. The tonal hardwood flooring underfoot seems to lead the way. A contemporary custom bed with channeled leather headboard, flanked on either side by simple nightstands, are appropriately unfussy so that the architecture can do most of the talking.
- ▶ RIGHT: The vertical garden is a focal point even from the interior, becoming part of the interior experience. A corridor with wood floors leads to the bedroom wing. The floor-to-ceiling windows enable you to view the vertical garden.
- ▼ BELOW RIGHT: Behind the tub in the master bath, you can see the exterior showers, which are accessible from the inside shower. Carrara marble used in different configurations cover the walls, bathtub and shower.



Perhaps the most engaging aspects of the home are its layout and flow. Paying close attention to the family's way of life, Halfen crafted spaces that allowed for personal privacy, such as an intimate wing of bedrooms where the members of the family each have their own place to retreat, and an additional wing with ample social areas where everyone can convene. To that point, there are not just one, but two family rooms! "Everyone has their own personal space, but also, many places they can enjoy together," comments Halfen. The separate wings are joined together by a corridor which creates a functional bridge allowing for transition from one end of the home to another, while simultaneously offering a significant glimpse at the wonders of nature, such as a vertical living garden. Yet a third wing houses a private cabana suited for the kids' recreation or as guest quarters. Undeniably, the most enviable aspect as well as the most necessary to fulfill the homeowners' desires, is how the entire home wraps around the backyard, thus allowing it to be easily viewed from virtually every interior location. "This is truly the most beautiful feature," confirms Halfen. "When your own backyard becomes is like a painting, it becomes the most beloved piece in your art collection." 🌿



Fall 2018

Contents



DESIGN+ARCHITECTURE
64

On the Cover
SDH Studio explores movement and volume in this contemporary home in South Florida.