

Away from it all

Words: Joanna Lewis

Photos: Justin Uzzell

Rum Point is well known for its island charm and stunning homes.

It is also the address of choice for those seeking to live a more laid back lifestyle, away from the madding crowds.

It was for these exact reasons that Peter and Barbara chose to build their dream home along the picturesque shoreline of Rum Point, with the Caribbean Sea yawning out ahead as far as the eye can see.

"We first visited Rum Point 10 years ago and fell in love with the quiet natural beauty of the area and the friendliness of the people," Barbara says. "While we appreciate the Seven Mile Beach area, we wanted a home away from it all. On our very first trip, we thought that (Rum Point) was a special place; a place that we could one day call home."

Having spent much of their working life living in a very traditional formal house in the US, the couple wanted to reflect their new, laid-back Caribbean lifestyle and environment in their new home.

"After half a lifetime living and working in the northeastern part of the US, we wanted a vacation and retirement home where the pace and environment would be new, relaxing and exciting," Barbara explains. "The home we pictured was bright and airy with a focus on optimising the views."

With the help of architect John Doak and interior designer Lydia Uzzell of Designworks, Peter and Barbara have been able to achieve their dream.

"The house was designed to take advantage of the magnificent beauty and expansiveness of the sea," Barbara says. "John Doak worked with us to create a home that was contemporary, but still had a West Indian flavour, while Lydia Uzzell worked hard to achieve the interior look that we desired."

Floor-to-ceiling glass sliding doors feature throughout the house, offering an uninterrupted view of the Caribbean Sea, while louvered Bahama shutters offer a West Indian touch.





The house has been designed as a series of three, steeply-roofed interconnected pavilions. Each pavilion is designed as a separate living space, divided from one another by intimately-scaled courtyard gardens.

Set above the beach on a podium atop the storm ridge, the house faces northwards, so it can capture the cooling Caribbean Sea breezes which constantly blow along the shoreline, allowing the couple to open up the windows and enjoy an inside-outside lifestyle.

"The house has been designed so Peter and Barbara can open up the entire beach frontage and enjoy a seamless inside-out relationship between the interior of the house and the courtyard gardens, poolside verandahs and deck areas," Doak explains.

Indeed, one of the most important aspects for the couple was a home that seamlessly transitioned from the interior to the natural environment.

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"Everything has been designed to be very livable and easy to maintain," Lydia says. "The dark, contemporary furniture and sea blue textures offer interest and drama, which contrast perfectly with the light, airy feel of the house. It's a relaxed, comfortable, and informal environment, which blends well with its Caribbean setting."

The highlight of the house is the lookout - an observatory deck which soars above the roof top and offers stunning 360-degree views of the water, Rum Point, the mangroves, North Sound, and George Town. For the Peter and Barbara, it is an ideal retreat; a place to read, stargaze or simply to soak up the views.

"We knew the lookout would be an important and unique feature of the house architecturally, and it provides wonderful views of both the sea and across the island to North Sound," Barbara says. "It is a great place to read a book or unwind at the end of the day."

MAIN CONTRACTORS

Architect

John Doak Architecture

Construction Management

BCQS

Interior design

Designworks

Landscaping

Vigoro



One of Barbara's favourite spaces is the kitchen, which features clean lines, integrated appliances, a "floating" kitchen counter minimising the intrusion between the kitchen and the view, and stunning bamboo cabinetry by Kenny Wulffsborg of Mario & Son.

Peter says he will spend most of his time outside, tending to the many garden areas, as well as the Great Room which is the central indoor living space.

"The house offers such a variety of places to relax, garden and to just take in the natural beauty of the area," Barbara adds. "The house has clean lines, but is not devoid of interesting details, such as the meditation gardens, the lookout tower, and the integration of the pool with the patio and garden areas. We love the airiness and views from so many areas in the house, be it the Great Room, kitchen or bedrooms."

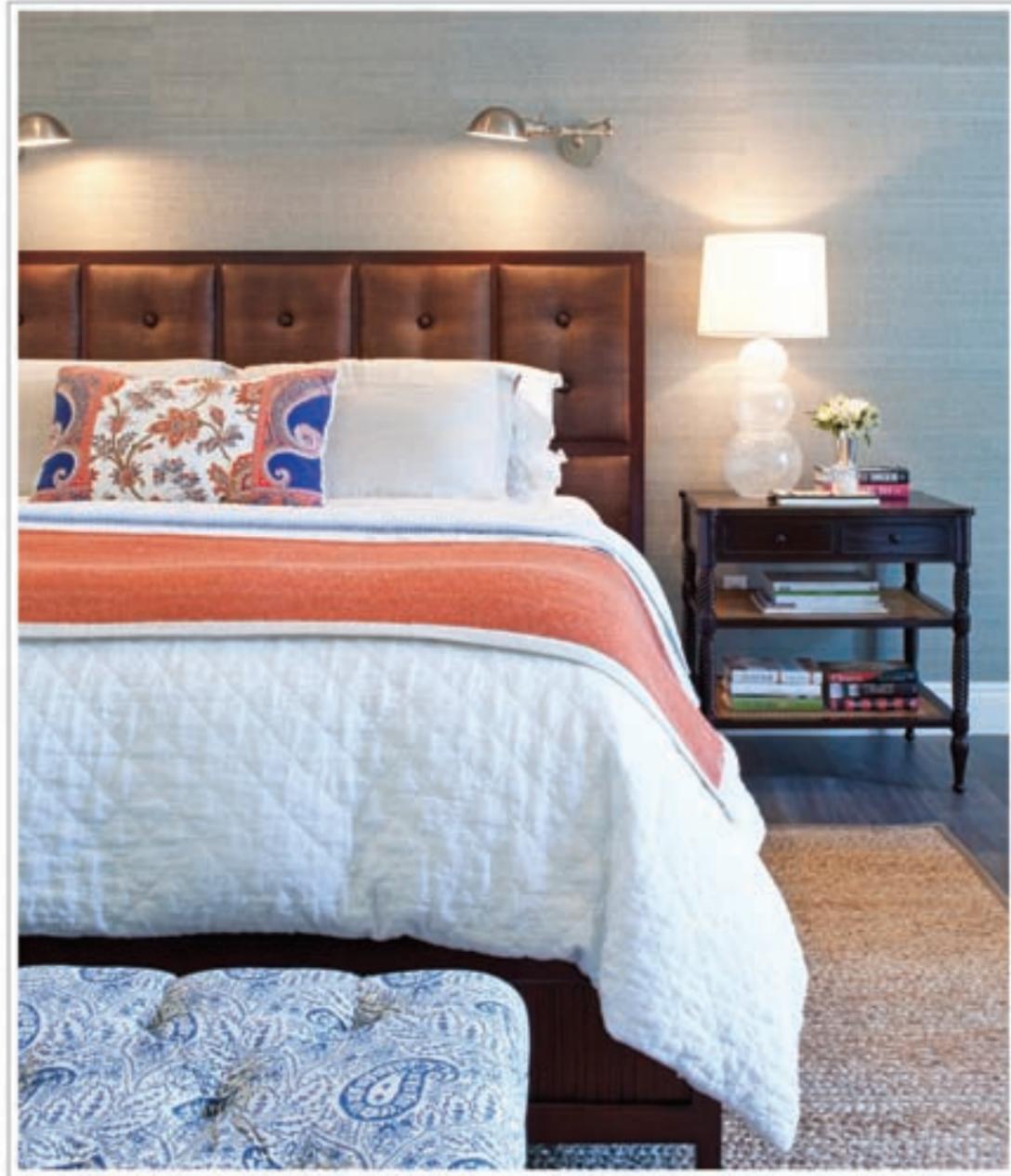
Downstairs the accommodation comprises the living areas and guest bedroom. Upstairs includes the master bedroom, which features a huge, full-width balcony, with sweeping views up and down the shoreline, a walk-in wardrobe and sumptuous master bathroom.

The couple have also displayed a number of paintings they love by Mikael and Renate Seffer from White Dog Art Studio in Breakers.

Outside, the negative-edge swimming pool appears to almost blend in with the sea, while much of the native landscaping, has been retained, offering a soft, natural environment. The plant Scaevola has been kept along the shoreline, while the roadside woodland obscures the house from passers-by.

"Craig Stewart at Vigoro understood that it was important for us to maintain much of the native and existing trees and vegetation while incorporating a landscaping plan with ornamental palms and flowering plants," Barbara says.

Peter and Barbara now look forward to a slower pace of life in their Cayman home, enjoying the island's weather. In fact, they plan to do the same as the name they have given the house: Walk in the Sun. 



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