

Trash to Treasures: Homemade Garden Fountains

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Creamy Pies

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4 Recipes
For Healthy
Burgers

Easy Growing
Summer
Lilies





Open for Breezes

*Inspired by old Florida's Cracker-style architecture,
a new home and garden in South Miami
are a welcoming retreat.*

Miami is not like the rest of the South. And Natasha Gottlieb and Francisco Victoria's house is not like the rest of Miami. Their new home is more akin to Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's Cross Creek, Florida, than to Madonna's South Beach. But there it sits, amid pines and palms on a 1-acre lot in a suburban neighborhood of sixties ranchers and Spanish-style cottages.

A medley of the familiar forms of old Florida's Cracker-style architecture, the house is basically a raised masonry cube crowned with a gabled metal roof and wrapped with a wooden screened porch. Its design harkens to the region's agrarian roots and citrus packing plants with tin roofs and deep overhangs to shade the workers and their harvests.

Although the house is decidedly different from its neighbors, there's

nothing revolutionary about this simple structure. It's really an old-fashioned, common sense way of building that responds to the climate and available materials. But more important, the house is perfectly suited to the charming family of four that calls it home.

"Our lifestyle is simple," says Natasha. "We wanted a house designed for the way we live." It wasn't hard to find the right architects—the husband-and-wife team of Teofilo Victoria and Maria De La Guardia happen to be Francisco's brother and sister-in-law. (Trelles Architects also worked on the project.)

Christened "Florida," the house builds

(Above) The home's simple form recalls an approach to building that's served residents of the Sunshine State well for more than a hundred years. (Right) An intimate seating arrangement anchors a corner of the back porch.

BY LYNN NESMITH
PHOTOGRAPHY SYLVIA MARTIN





Outdoor dining is an everyday occurrence—all four seasons.

on and borrows from decades of time-tested techniques. But it's contemporary in its own way, and so captivating.

The charm of this home lies in its simplicity. Easy upkeep was critical with two active young boys, three dogs, a pair of vocal cockatoos, and several rabbits.

Music and laughter fill the house and gardens. Toys and diversions are the old-fashioned kind. A rope swing hangs in a litchi tree. Steel drums and bongos enliven the atmosphere. Not a television in sight or sound.

The house is also a celebration of living with nature instead of fighting it. Half porch, half house, the home's central core is concrete block covered with stucco and painted with a traditional lime-based paint in a warm salmon. A 12-foot-wide screened porch with exposed posts and beams surrounds this center cube. Details of the unpainted pine porch include simple post-and-beam construction with exposed ceiling trusses, lending an old-world charm.

A cluster of wicker furniture anchors



Refined and engaging, this house possesses grace without grandeur, intimacy without intricacy.

In the living room area, a cluster of simple wooden furniture is inviting.



The heart of the house is one long room containing the living room and kitchen. Eight-foot-wide doorways connect this with the front and rear porches. The ceiling rises to 12 feet to accentuate the sense of openness.

Casual furnishings and accessories reflect the family's joyful, unassuming attitude. Living room furniture is simple wood chairs and vivid pillows.

A cluster of coconuts from the garden is the most prominent adornment on the coffee table.

Refined and engaging, this house possesses grace without grandeur, intimacy without intricacy. The harmonious proportions, the massing and materials, and the rhythm of the pine posts that support the porch reflect an unpretentious architectural style—a type of honesty rarely found today. It's as refreshing and unexpected as summer breezes blowing through "Florida." ♦

(For sources turn to page 189.)