

ALFRESCO FLAIR

Designers Tom Diverio and Charlotte Dunagan make a case for indoor-outdoor living in a young family's Miami Beach home.

BY LUIS R. RIGUAL // PHOTOGRAPHED BY PAUL STOPPI

A view into the backyard and outdoor kitchen-dining room of the Prairie Avenue residence reveals lush vegetation designed by Christopher Crawley Landscape Architects to counterbalance the modern architecture of the house.



The dining room, which flows easily into the living area, features custom furniture and light pendants by Tom Dixon.



From left: A stairway flanked by glass (to add to the home's open layout) leads to the residence's upper level; a terrace overlooking the pool.



Restaurateur and developer Mathieu Massa's exacting standards have served him well in both life and business. At his restaurants and lounges under the Mr. Hospitality umbrella (Bàoli, Marion and El Tucán), no detail goes unnoticed. The same goes for the spec homes he's built and sold over the years. That's why in matters of real estate, he often relies on professionals such as Dunagan Diverio Design Group (dunagandiverio.com) and KZ Architecture, firms that get the job done to his precise specifications not just once but time and time again.

This was the case on his most recent collaboration with these two studios, a 5,500-square-foot house on Miami Beach's Prairie Avenue that took four years of hard work and which ended up being such a labor of love that he decided to make it his home.

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Massa, who resides in the home with his wife and young daughter, credits the design team for his decision to keep the property, and any other family man in his position would have been tempted to do the same.

"We wanted this modern residence to exude warmth yet embody timeless, understated elegance," says Charlotte Dunagan of the winning aesthetic approach. "It was designed for indoor-outdoor living and entertaining."

To accentuate the desired in-and-out feel, surfaces and colors were carefully considered. "We chose neutrals to create a warm, intimate environment," says Tom Diverio. "We blended the exterior materials into the interiors, creating myriad textures and various shades." Examples of this are in the entry hall's walls wrapped in silver travertine, as well as in the type of flooring downstairs (limestone) and upstairs (wood).



From top: Walnut cabinetry and travertine surfaces are found in the kitchen. The island is fronted by Bonaldo stools from ArcaVantè; one of the house's most popular rooms is the outdoor kitchen and dining room.



Further illustrating Dunagan and Diverio's objective of designing a house with gatherings in mind is KZ Architecture's open floor plan. The dining area and family room both flow into each other seamlessly and are enhanced by lighting from Apure and Tom Dixon, custom millwork by La Dolce Vita, flooring from Listone Giordano and furniture by Desiron and Anima Domus. Nearby, the minimal modern kitchen is an exercise in form and function: "Its crisp white walls are softened by the walnut cabinetry and dark Italian porcelain countertops," says Dunagan. "The waterfall is a type of kitchen island wherein the countertop edge flows to the side of the island's body. All these textures soften the overall ambiance of this room."

Equally considered were the design decisions outdoors. Massa tapped into landscape architect Christopher Cawley, whose main goal was to soften the house's modern lines by anchoring it with lush foliage, which has the added bonus of privacy. To that end, native thatch palms, flowering ginger and orchids that provide pops of color create a sense of peace and repose. Just steps from all this vegetation is an outdoor kitchen and dining room that solidify the effortless indoor-outdoor vibe the designers tried to hard to accomplish.

"This is one of my favorite recent projects," says Diverio. "The living flow that was achieved and the textures used by using exterior elements inside create the ultimate intimate [retreat]." ◊



In the principal bedroom, a mirror framed in walnut reflects the suite's furnishings.