



# Above Par

NATURAL TEXTURES AND RICH MATERIALS SOFTEN A DRAMATIC BLACK-AND-WHITE GOLF COTTAGE MAKING IT A HOLE IN ONE.

WRITTEN BY **JORGE S. ARANGO** / PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ERIC PIASECKI**



INTERIOR DESIGN AND INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE /  
**SUZANNE LOVELL, SUZANNE LOVELL INC.**  
 ARCHITECTURE / **CARLOS A. BONILLA,**  
**BONILLA TORREGROZA ARCHITECTURE, LLC**  
 HOME BUILDER / **WILBUR HOBGOOD AND**  
**EDWARD NAUGLE, HOBGOOD CONSTRUCTION INC.**  
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / **STEPHEN PARKER,**  
**PARKER-YANNETTE DESIGN GROUP, INC.**





When Lost Tree Village was developed in 1961, it prided itself on being one of the most beautiful gated golf communities in the country. Today, that allure still holds true, and attracted former fashion model Shauna Montgomery and her husband, international litigation lawyer C. Barry Montgomery, to purchase a cottage there. “We knew we were buying it for the property,” recalls Shauna, adding that the house needed some updating. “It was small and chopped up into little rooms.” The dwelling was also unusually situated on the lot, virtually turning its back on a magnificent 60-year-old banyan tree about 15 feet in diameter and the lush green course beyond. Having worked with Chicago-based interior designer Suzanne Lovell on six other projects, they turned to her for

her expertise. “I understood their desire for elegant, timeless architecture that expresses the mood of the location,” says Lovell. She also incorporated the chief hallmarks of modern luxury—natural light and a feeling of spaciousness. The new structure would have to feel graciously proportioned, a neat trick for the modestly-sized home. “Let’s look at our height restriction and bring it up to the limit,” she recalls telling her clients. “Then we’re going to use very tall windows to open it to the outdoors.” After conceptualizing the interior architecture and layout, Lovell worked with local architect Carlos A. Bonilla to design a site-appropriate structure to suit their needs. “The cottage is a contemporary reinterpretation of a Bermuda home—a modern-meets-traditional style—but in Florida,” Bonilla explains. The architect worked with Lovell on the simplified,

On the site of a Palm Beach residence reimagined by interior designer Suzanne Lovell, a banyan tree estimated to be 60 years old rises majestically from a bed of bicolor oyster plants. It can be admired from the home’s loggia, which continues the Petit Granit floors found in the interiors. At night, Urban Archaeology sconces and Cedric Hartman floor lamps illuminate the comfortable exterior space.



From the foyer, visitors enter the great room through a doorway flanked by Jonathan Kline’s woven Black Ash Towers from Ralph Pucci International, Ltd. Inside, the organic warmth of an antique English library table contrasts with a custom Lindsey Adelman chandelier of machined aluminum with a bronze finish, which was purchased from Roll & Hill in Brooklyn, New York.





Hot-rolled steel Hope's windows and French doors, from Window Man of South Florida, open up the great room to the outdoor views. The Suzanne Lovell-designed sectional and armchair are covered in a Perennials Blanca fabric, and the Rue de Seine coffee table is from Holly Hunt. Yellow Hermès pillows from Holly Hunt punctuate the room's black-and-white color scheme. Eggersmann Kitchens cabinetry topped with Absolute Black granite comprises the bar, adorned with Jeff Koons' Puppy Vase from Wright Auctions in Chicago, and, on the back wall, Donald Sultan works on paper.

**“I UNDERSTOOD  
THE HOMEOWNERS’  
DESIRE FOR  
ELEGANT, TIMELESS  
ARCHITECTURE  
THAT EXPRESSES  
THE MOOD OF  
THE LOCATION.”**

—SUZANNE LOVELL



Along one wall of the great room, a chef's kitchen features a Franke sink, a Wolf cooktop and a retractable Dornbracht faucet, which disappears into cabinetry. Directly above, an ink-jet print by Jimmy Robert, from Galerie Stigter van Doesburg in Amsterdam, converses with the adjacent Joby Baker artwork, *Man on a Beach*.



The clients' own English wall clock "is very important to ground the design in history," says Lovell of the dining area, while the black-lacquer table from Holly Hunt—flanked by the clients' own brown leather vintage armchairs—"is important to the modern message of the room." This vignette sits atop a geometric Moroccan rug found at Primitive in Chicago, which delineates the space from the larger great room.



**Opposite:** The master bath enveloped in Glassos large-scale wall tiles showcases custom white-lacquer cabinetry fabricated by Planning & Building, Dornbracht polished-chrome plumbing fixtures, a Duravit sink and a Kaldewei enamel soaking tub. The Petit Granit floors create consistency with the rest of the cottage and offer easy maintenance. A work by fashion photographer Victor Skrebneski hangs on the room’s far wall.

**Below:** Gretchen Bellinger fabric covers the custom-designed channel bed in the master bedroom, which is dressed in Signoria Firenze linens and sits upon a hide rug from Keleen Leathers. Liaigre’s Barbuda armchair is positioned in the corner; across from the custom bedside tables is Peri Schwartz’s Studio III charcoal on paper. Drapes made of Perennials fabric from David Sutherland swathe the bedroom window and French doors.



steel-framed windows and doors, which, he adds, “had a narrow, sleek profile, with more contemporary lines than the typically thicker framed windows you usually see in this part of the country.”

In addition to creating a new layout, the design team also reoriented the rooms. Formerly, only a kitchen, dining room and one of the bedrooms had views of the picturesque golf course, so the team proposed building a great room with a vaulted ceiling peaking at 17 feet. This space eventually leads through 10-foot steel-framed doors to a loggia overlooking the banyan tree and an 18-hole golf course. A perpendicular wall of windows looks northward onto the hedge of a tall green ficus, contributing to the sense of openness. “There had to be a transition to the outside and the landscape,” says Lovell. “Otherwise, you’d feel constrained.”

Meanwhile, builder Edward Naugle deftly concealed necessary but unsightly structural details in the great room and throughout the spaces. “The beauty of the great room,” says Naugle, “lies in the little nuances you don’t see.” It

would take a keen eye, for instance, to discern the inch-and-a-half-wide air-conditioning vent encompassing the space where the walls and ceiling meet. And unless they are needed, one would never expect bug screens and hurricane shutters to roll down from narrow slotted tracks in the loggia. But the true masterpiece is a fully functional kitchen that resides virtually undetected along one wall. “In a cottage like this, every fraction of an inch counts,” says Naugle. “All appliances are housed behind cabinets, and a cutting board fits over the sink, which has a retractable faucet that lowers into the sink well.”

Further enhancing the home’s expansive feeling is the light, airy scheme. “I’m really happy living in an all-white palette,” says Shauna. “But that could be really stark, which is why we needed texture.” Lovell incorporated this with a beadboard ceiling, while the fireplace and floors were outfitted with a honed Belgian Petit Granit limestone to establish warm shadow lines breaking up the sea of white. But the designer didn’t stop there. Materials with rich wooden hues—such as a dramatically sculptural piece of





The loggia is accessed through 10-foot-tall French doors and furnished with Sutherland's Mariner seating and dining furniture. The cushions are upholstered in Perennials' Canvas Weave, while the pillows combine the company's News Print and citrus-colored Sail Cloth designs; a Bernd Haussmann painting hangs behind the sofa. Overhead, a Haiku fan from Big Ass Solutions moves the tropical air.

driftwood on a plinth in the entryway, nailhead-trimmed leather chairs flanking the dining table and wide-plank oak floors in the bedrooms—soften the potential black-and-white starkness.

For the grounds, landscape architect Stephen Parker continued the modern feel found inside. "The landscaping reflects this home's contemporary space with a limited plant palette that is simple, layered and clean," says Parker. For instance, adding a ficus hedge to the south part of the lot created symmetry with a similar existing hedge to the north and also made the property feel more private. Rather than filling in these borders with florid and colorful plantings, boxwood topiaries add an elemental geometry to the scene. As for the impressive banyan (Shauna likens it to a meditation tree and adds that it's the biggest piece of art they have), Parker says, "We didn't want to disturb the root system, so we added low-maintenance ground cover around it."

During its construction, the home's feeling of luxury was derived more from the exclusivity of the development in which it was situated rather than its size. But the various gambits executed by the design team—heighting the ceiling, opening up the floor plan, simplifying the interior and exterior palette, and developing the landscape as an extension of the interior space—cleverly solidify the home's proportions and sense of sophistication. Now that's real luxury. ■





Configured by architect Carlos A. Bonilla, the exterior of the home references the plantation style common to the area, but streamlines it to make it feel more contemporary. The outdoor vistas, designed by landscape architect Stephen Parker, showcase neatly manicured grounds and provide a clean, modern backdrop for the architecture.