

TRUE COLORS

BOLD HUES AND STRONG GEOMETRICS TRANSFORM A
FORT LAUDERDALE HOME INTO A CHEERFUL RETREAT.

WRITTEN BY **ABIGAIL STONE** / PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KRIS TAMBURELLO**



INTERIOR DESIGN / **ANTHONY BARATTA**, ANTHONY BARATTA LLC
ARCHITECTURE / **DON CANTILLO**, DONALD CANTILLO ARCHITECT PLLC
HOME BUILDER / **JIMMY LEE**, LEE DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION

When it comes to his newly reimagined Fort Lauderdale ranch-style home, the first word owner Alan Falcone uses to describe it is happy. “I hate leaving the house every day, I really do,” he says. But that wasn’t always the case. An abundance of interior walls and a low roofline meant little sunlight entered the home, yet he dreamed of an open, modern and light-filled space. “The primary goal was to get the outside in,” says designer Anthony Baratta. The home also needed to support the client’s love of cooking and entertaining. “I know how to do that,” says Baratta, who’s built a career forging welcoming spaces through his innovative use of adventurous color and scale.

The first step was to remove spaces unnecessary to the owner, such as a small den next to the living room, to form one large main living area. The back wall of glass doors offers views of the lush exterior from the entrance. “When you walk in the door, you immediately want to go toward the backyard,” says Baratta, who worked extensively with creative director Erick Espinoza on the project. Architect Don Cantillo and general contractor Jimmy Lee raised the room’s ceiling “to create more drama and allow for a more spacious feeling,” Cantillo says, while a courtyard and a large round porthole window, cut into the kitchen wall, coax in even more light. Outside in the lanai, the team erected an outdoor kitchen, where Lee installed custom stainless-steel cabinets and a wall covered in a playful mosaic designed by Baratta. The changes, for which Gerald Belgrave of Gerald Belgrave Designs served as architect of record, evoke a loft-like feeling, that Lee reinforced throughout the home with large slab porcelain-tile flooring that simulates the look of concrete.

Once the renovations were accomplished, Baratta set about completing his vision of a joyful house, harnessing

his well-known use of strong, geometric shapes and crisp, clean lines to present playful hues. “I’m obviously into color,” he says, “but I’m also into the transformative: how color transforms not only a space but also your perspective and how we live in a home.” Grounding the main room is a vibrant custom round rug with a pattern of angular lines of every shade in the home’s color scheme: red, blues, aqua and beiges. “With most of the rooms that we do, we start out with the rug,” the designer explains. “When you walk in the door, the palette is unveiled, and you automatically know the style direction we’re going in.”

With the living area rug in place, the furniture easily slid into position. Vintage and modern pieces pair with reproductions and bespoke furnishings, such as Dune’s Paris sofa, a reproduction Vladimir Kagan sofa and the client’s Saarinen Womb chair, upholstered in a vibrant red. “It has to be a mix of things,” Baratta says of the furnishings plan. “Otherwise, when you have all reproduction or midcentury furniture, the space has no life.” Baratta also incorporated custom items of his own design, including a cerused-oak bar cabinet and a tall checkerboard chest.

Near the living area, the kitchen holds Baratta’s favorite finds: vintage Saporiti Italia chairs, re-covered in a teal racing stripe, that cluster around DDC’s Blanco table. And in the master bedroom, the designer included another personal touch in the form of a louvered screen he created for the headboard wall. It washes the room with a decidedly masculine edge and nods to the subtle nautical thread that runs throughout the residence.

Art also plays a vital role in the home’s personality. A collector with a growing gallery, the homeowner joined Baratta in attending Art Basel to find the right works for the house, including the dominant photograph above the bar cabinet in the living area and Scandinavian pictures that decorate the master bedroom. “I’ve always wanted to be a designer,” Alan explains, “but instead I did that through collecting art.” He also accompanied Baratta on buying trips to the Miami Design District and to Manhattan, helping select furniture and materials that fit his lifestyle—such as durable fabrics like linen, brushed cottons and leather that allow his dog, JoJo, to roam freely.

The colorful modern home packs a punch of youth and appeal, the result of a trusting relationship between designer and client. “I gave him free rein, because I knew his talent,” Alan says of Baratta. “The end result was nothing what I expected originally, but I couldn’t be happier.” And that was the designer’s objective. “There’s a lot of joy in this,” Baratta says. “As a designer, one of my goals is for you to enter and think, ‘This is a lively place to live.’ I think we got that here.”

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—ANTHONY BARATTA

Designer Anthony Baratta used colorful cement tiles by Anchor Ceramics in Australia for the entryway of his client’s exuberant Fort Lauderdale residence, while the dark-wood fence underlines the home’s sleek, simple lines.





The living room features a Ji Zhou art piece above the white Paris sofa from Dune in New York, the client's own Knoll Womb chair re-covered in a vibrant red Romo fabric, a Milo Baughman-inspired leather chair from Jalan Jalan, and a vintage Cini Boeri cocktail table from Kerson 20th Century Design in New York. The modern enameled torchiere standing lamp and trio of LED ring lights above are from Luxe Cable + Light.

Inspired by a Brazilian-style garden, the lanai is one of the homeowner's favorite spaces to entertain. With its custom steel cabinetry, streamlined kitchen and playful mosaic tiles from Solar Antique Tiles in New York, the area offers a second space for cooking and relaxing with guests.



Above: Curvaceous in shape, the pool is original to the house and the recliners are the client's own.

Left: Pale blue Mia Cucina cabinetry adorns the kitchen walls, while walnut Cherner barstools with cerulean upholstery flank the Caesarstone island countertop and white "spinning" lights from Comerford collection in Bridgehampton, New York, hang above. Vintage Saporiti Italia chairs, covered in a striking teal racing stripe, cluster around the Blanco table from DDC in New York.



The lanai's living area touts modern white outdoor leather chairs from Gloster's Dansk collection and a sofa from its Grid Collection, dotted with custom pillows. The setting floats over a blue-and-white outdoor rug from Williams-Sonoma.

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Above: A quartet of Bertioia-style white diamond lounge chairs from YLIVING cluster around Starfire's round gas fire pit. The blue planters mirror the home's interior colors.

Right: The guest room's gray-and-white houndstooth wallpaper is by Wolf-Gordon and the custom AB LLC sidetables are made by David Osborne. The linens are Matouk from Harris Levy in New York and the colorful Wildcat Territory throw pillows are made of Romo and Kravet fabrics.



Designed for privacy, the louvered bass wood screen that covers the headboard wall unifies the master bedroom's windows and creates a bold masculine statement without sacrificing color and pattern. The custom AB LLC rug is from Country Braid House in Tilton, New Hampshire, the metal bedside tables are by Doug Meyer found at the Brimfield Antique Show in Connecticut, and the hanging bedside lights are antique Louis Poulsen pendants from Baratta's shop in New York.

