

# LUXE

INTERIORS + DESIGN



# Stylish & Serene

BLENDING ORGANIC FORMS WITH MODERN DESIGN,  
A SOPHISTICATED RETREAT CONVEYS A CHARISMATIC SPIRIT.

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Interior Design: Colette van den Thillart, Colette van den Thillart Interior Design Home Builder: Jerry Rowland, Handcraft Construction



Moody hues welcome guests into the foyer of a Bal Harbour residence. Unsigned vintage art, sourced by designer Colette van den Thillart, hangs above an Angelo Mangiarotti Eros console from Suite NY. The Armani/Casa wallcovering juxtaposes the marble flooring.

**Previous page:** Ocean views framed by Coraggio sheers take center stage in the living area, where Handcraft Construction implemented the fluted plaster walls. A 1950s chandelier crowns the space, home to a Blend Roma side table and a custom cabinet near Marc Phillips' Satinwood rug.

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aves of possibilities crashed through Colette van den Thillart's mind when she first glimpsed the newly built apartment her longtime clients imagined as their South Florida getaway. What

the designer saw was essentially a bare-bones white box, but so strong was her sense of *what might be* that she convinced the owners to swap their stories-high unit for a lower-level space—one van den Thillart believed would feel more connected with the adjacent expanse of beach and boardwalk without compromising the enviable sea views. They took her advice. And from there, she worked her magic on every last inch.

Although there were some parameters of the Bal Harbour condo the designer opted not to alter, others were natural opportunities for customization. Right from the get-go, she recognized the open living, dining and kitchen areas “had to become one seamless envelope if the space was going to look elevated,” van den Thillart says. To achieve this cohesive design, she created a fluted white plaster finish for the walls, which bend gently toward a vaulted ceiling—a nod to the historic arched ceilings of Rome, a city the owners adore and where they maintain a residence. The curves and organic nature of the plaster, paired with the ceiling's swoops, are a pleasing counterpoint to the boxy layout and act as an art element—particularly as the sun scatters shadows along the lines and arcs. “This home essentially becomes an immersive James Turrell installation at different times of the day, which is really moving,” the designer muses.

Those fluted walls are more than just a beautiful backdrop: A subtle gap between the plaster paneling and ceiling serves as the air conditioning vent, a clever solution implemented by general contractor Jerry Rowland. He also engineered a pocketing flush door for the den off the main living space—when shut, the entry is essentially invisible—and a similar seamless door that closes

off the clients' bedroom. “Most homes aren't done up to the nines in every corner, but this one is,” Rowland observes. “No surface was left untouched.”

The treatments become more adventurous in the apartment's smaller spaces, from a geometric patchwork of wood paneling that cocoons the den to the striking Arabescato marble that clads so much of the primary bathroom, it reads as a celebration of the material itself. Then there are moments like the foyer's moody mix of marble and the primary bedroom's pairing of verre églomisé mirror with walnut for the headboard wall. The latter felt like a risk, the designer admits, but it paid off richly, drawing in the broad expanse of the Atlantic and the sky with just the right amount of glamour.

Notably, and perhaps unexpectedly for a Miami residence, bold artwork isn't the thrust of the unit's design scheme. “These clients are coming here for escapism, and the wife specifically told me, ‘I don't want powerful art; I just want serenity and the ocean,’” van den Thillart recalls. So as elegantly appointed as the interior architecture treatments are, they're still subservient to the panoramic ocean vistas, framed by floor-to-ceiling swaths of glass. “The beauty is in the materials and their execution,” the designer says. “It had to be a little couture.” Bespoke furnishings also stand in as art pieces, she explains, pointing out the dining table's sculptural base, beset with playful cutouts that pay homage to the city's beloved midcentury modernist architecture style.

Despite the vibrancy of the neighborhood, there was an effort to create a relaxing home that references the locale in a subtler fashion. The result has “enough of a cool factor that it feels right in Miami, with none of the clichés,” van den Thillart remarks. “I'd like to think I captured the essence of the location and some sort of free zone between the past and future.” In the end, she—and her discerning clients—are incredibly pleased with the results, the designer affirms. “I think we did something here that is contemporary but also gentle, soulful, even poetic,” she says. ■

A.C. Jeré wall sculpture backs the living area's Holly Hunt sofa, which sports a Perennials fabric and is bookended by Danny Kaplan Studio's Cicero lamps. The marble coffee table joins Ottiu's Charisse stool and A. Rudin's No 761 chair.



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For the dining area, van den Thillart paired a table base from RT Facts with a parchment top. Chairs upholstered in velvet from Télio and a Studio Van den Akker chandelier add interest. The owners' artwork presides over a console from Sold Gallery.

Bianco Elegante marble on the countertops and backsplash elevates white lacquer cabinetry in the clean-lined kitchen, with vintage Lucite-and-brass stools. A Waterworks faucet and Gaggenau appliances round out the scene.





**Above:** Inspired by English "snug" rooms, the cozy den is enveloped by geometric tambour panels. Visual Comfort & Co. sconces illuminate the sectional wearing a Weitzner fabric. A leather ottoman and a Y&Co rug contribute to the mix of materials.

**Opposite:** General contractor Jerry Rowland crafted a pocketing flush door for the den, which is located right off the kitchen. When shut, the door's fluted plaster and baseboard paneling perfectly align with the walls for a seamless finish.





Verre églomisé mirror and walnut crisscross the primary bedroom's headboard wall. The bed displays a textile from Télió with Kravet trim; the bench exhibits Scalamandré cotton. Coraggio draperies and a Holly Hunt armchair complement the Marc Phillips rug.





**Above:** Statement Arabescato marble flows across multiple surfaces of the owners' bathroom—including the surround of a Waterworks tub—playing off Ann Sacks' Terrazzo Renata flooring. Echoing the vintage artwork, the accent chair is a find from Michel Contessa Antiques.

**Opposite:** In the same immersive space, a stool covered in a pearl-gray C&C Milano velvet neatly tucks under the vanity, which features Matthew Studios' Langston Edge pulls. Jamie Harris Studio's Rock pendant suspends over a Waterworks faucet.