

# Hints of South Beach

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Family home at the DeckHouses has mid-century modern and art deco influences.

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Above: Neutral tones. Right: The kitchen.

THE ISBISTER FAMILY ENJOYED MANY STAYCATIONS AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, GRAND CAYMAN, making the most of the beach, pools and sporting options.

So, when searching for a place to call home, they were delighted to find a house lot at the resort's DeckHouses development.

"To find a stand-alone block with access to such facilities, along with the other hotel amenities, location and security, we felt that we had found the best of both worlds," says Kirsty Isbister.

The lot was perfect to build a house for Kirsty, husband Hayden, and their three sons Tommy, Charlie, Harrison, and two dogs.

They teamed up with Eric and Tracey Kline from Encompass to design and construct their dream home. Unfortunately, they were hit by COVID restrictions, when Cayman's borders closed on the very day that construction was due to begin. However, work resumed as soon as it was permitted, and the family moved into their house in May of last year.





Clockwise: Pretty accents; inspirations from Miami Beach; Victorian-era tile; lounge chair.



The master bathroom.

THE HOME HAS INFLUENCES FROM MID-CENTURY MODERN DESIGN AND THE BEAUTIFUL ART DECO HOTELS OF SOUTH BEACH, IN PARTICULAR THE NEARBY RALEIGH HOTEL.

“We wanted to build a beautiful, yet liveable home to suit our busy family with an inside/outside feel,” says Kirsty. “Our home was to feel inviting and able to host small-to-large groups of friends while taking advantage of the breezes off North Sound and optimal natural light using many large windows.”

It was also important that the house worked with current family dynamics but accommodate the three boys as they grow older, bringing friends to stay and play.

Kirsty had a very clear vision for the house, having spent years researching and dreaming, and was long drawn to the timeless appeal of black, white and wood, which is the palette she chose.

“I would scour the internet and home/design magazines, note-taking and capturing images of the rooms, colours and designs which would suit our taste and needs,” she says. “Timeless hours were spent doing this and, in turn, I had collected pages of design/furnishing ideas specific to each room.”



Left: Powder room with custom-made tile. Above: Elegant entranceway.

### DESIGN INFLUENCES

Kirsty and team worked with an interior designer from Palm Beach, Florida, who helped to pull her looks and ideas together for each room.

“Throughout the years of planning and designing the house before breaking ground, I was pleased to note that my taste had not changed and that my ideas and designs were still current,” says Kirsty.

“I discovered some wonderful custom furniture and tile businesses where I could add my own style to specific rooms in the house as a focal point. If I came across accessories, light fixtures etc. in the time leading up to the build, I would buy and stockpile the items in preparation, to avoid disappointment in missing out on a product when it was needed.”

As a result, the home has influences from mid-century modern design and the beautiful art deco hotels of South Beach, in particular the nearby Raleigh Hotel.

“Between the designer and I, we found the specific pieces of furniture for each room,” says Kirsty.

For example, she wanted the entryway to feel special while utilising the natural light from the two-and-a-half storey ceiling above.

“I had found a Lucite entry table that you could see through to the black-and-white floor, while not detracting from the pieces around it,” she says. “A custom green velvet bench was made to sit under a vintage mirror, paying homage to the mid-century modern and art deco design.”

She worked with the boys to design their bedrooms, all of which have different but complementary colour palettes. Each room reflects their personalities, and they were involved in the selection of paint colours and furnishings.

“The custom built-in black-and-brass queen bunks are beautiful – I had the brass ladder and railings custom made in Canada to complete the look, along with the awesome hanging egg chair; a kid’s dream,” says Kirsty.

And she points out that even in an open-plan home, each space has a purpose, referring to the use of large sofas and ottomans around the TV in the living area, playroom and patio, to the super-soft leather in the sitting room for coffee or cocktails.

Kirsty also loves the privacy of the primary suite. “Our master bedroom and bath are like a sanctuary, specifically designed to provide a tranquil environment to retreat to at the end of the day,” she says.

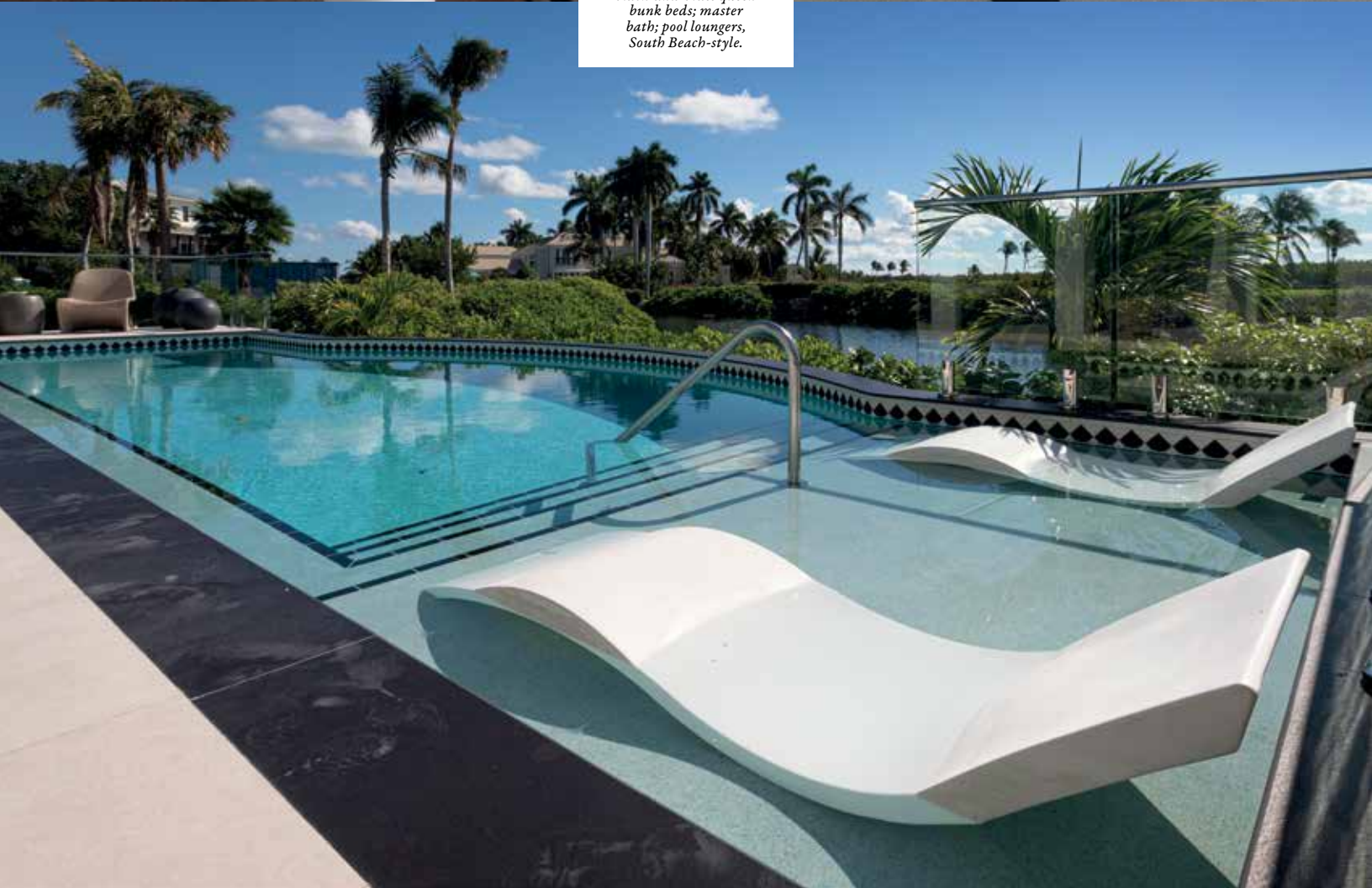
Her second-favourite bathroom is the powder room. “We had the tile custom made and the beautiful marble basin, oversized mirror and brass features work together to provide a beautiful space,” she says.



*Large sofas and ottomans make for comfy living.*



*Clockwise: A touch of greenery; custom built-in black-and-brass queen bunk beds; master bath; pool loungers, South Beach-style.*



*Wide verandas lend themselves to outdoor living.*

**OUTDOOR AESTHETICS**

Outside, a lot of time went into designing the outdoor shower, barbeque area and pool waterline tile, to reflect the classic Victorian-era black-and-white tile design and finish them with brass fittings from Morocco. “I love the finished product both in functionality and aesthetics,” says Kirsty.

Being from Australia originally, the use of wide verandas, indoor/ outdoor living, and orientation to take advantage of the morning sun and sea breezes are traits the Isbisters sought to replicate to suit the warm Caribbean climate.

“Watching the sun rise over the canal and golf course is something special with a cup of coffee in the mornings,” says Kirsty. “After years of dreaming, designing, building and accessorising, our home is complete (for now).” ■

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