



Design & décor at the DeckHouses

InsideOut showcases two neighbouring residences at the DeckHouses at The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman.

Although similar in size and location, each home has a different design style but equally stunning interiors.

Situated on the waterways overlooking Greg Norman's Blue Tip Golf Course, the DeckHouses enjoy privileged access to The Ritz-Carlton's amenities and facilities, offering an unparalleled lifestyle.

Read on for a glimpse into two of these sumptuous homes in the features 'Hints of South Beach' and 'To be beautiful'.



Hints of South Beach

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

Words: CATHERINE MACGILLIVRAY
Images: STEPHEN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY





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.

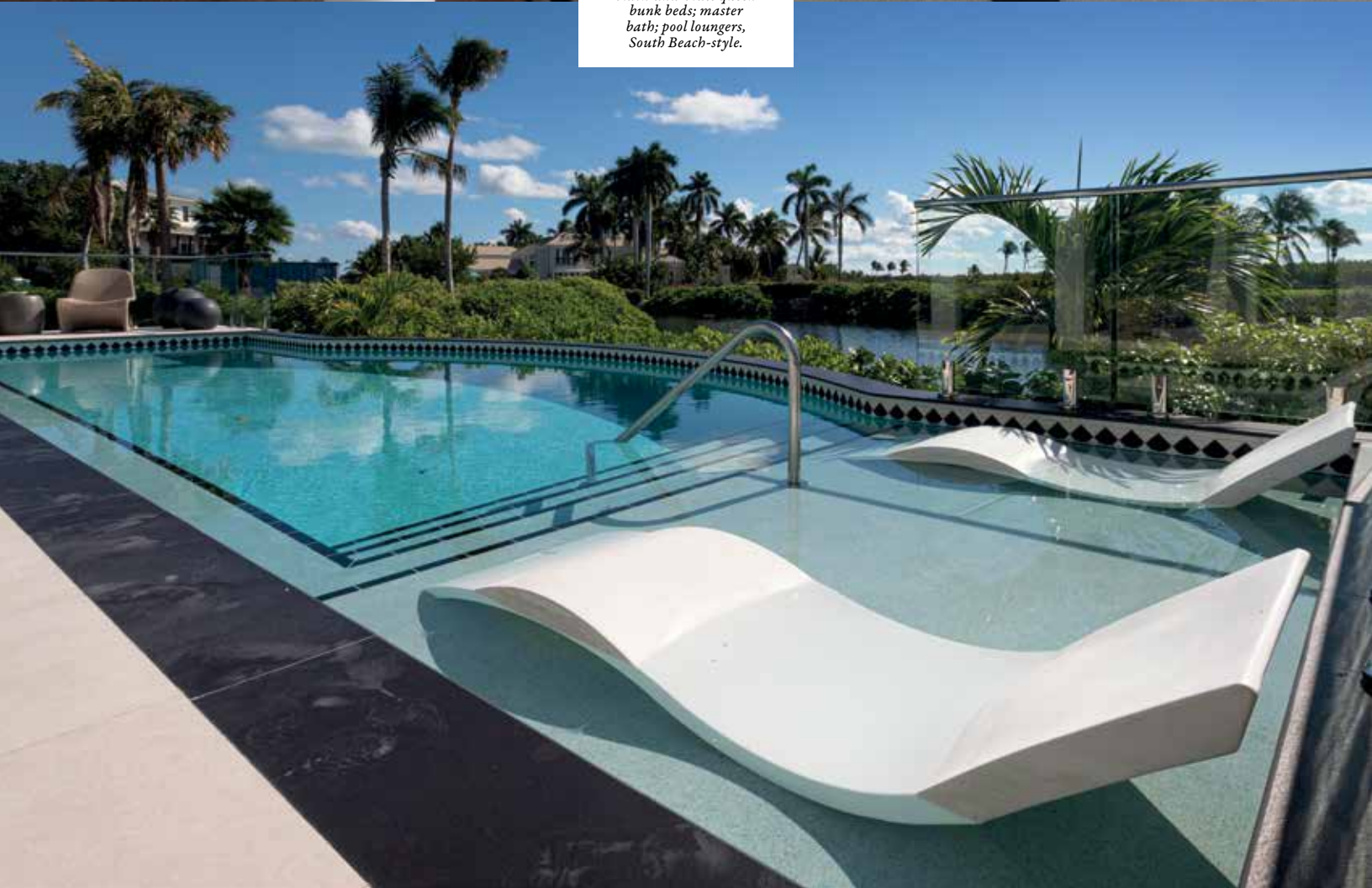
Her second-favourite bathroom is the powder room. “We had the tile custom made and the beautiful marble basin, oversized mirror and brass features work together to provide a beautiful space,” she says.



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).” ■

CONTRACTOR: ENCOMPASS LTD.

ELECTRICAL: MEGA SYSTEMS

INTERIOR DECOR: DECORATORS UNLIMITED

KITCHEN CABINETRY: POOLEY CABINETS

APPLIANCES: BON VIVANT

LANDSCAPING: VIGORO

POOL: AQUATIC POOLS

A/C: TEMP-TEC

PLUMBING: GLADS

• ALL COMPANIES FOR BOTH DECKHOUSES FEATURED.



Image: STEPHEN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY



Image: RON ROSENZWEIG

TO BE BEAUTIFUL

DeckHouse sparkles
with style.

Words: CATHERINE MACGILLIVRAY
Images: STEPHEN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY
AND RON ROSENZWEIG

BABAZEKA SUN IS THE NAME OF HEATHER AND STEVE REYNISH’S, new home, which is part of the DeckHouses development at The Ritz-Carlton, Grand Cayman.

“We have lived as expatriates in a number of locations around the world including Africa,” says Heather. “Babazeka is a Zulu word meaning ‘to be beautiful’. We thought it was appropriate for this project; it is fun to pronounce and also adds a little bit of mystery.”

Left: The foyer featuring a Sharon Marston chandelier and Ruby Marr artwork. Above: Babazeka Sun.



Above: Step-down TV lounge with modern stainless steel circular elevator and concrete stairs to first floor; Right: Square dining table for eight, back-lit wine cabinet and unique art pieces.

The couple bought the house lot in 2018 after considering other locations as far afield as Southeast Asia, Central America and the Mediterranean. They decided Grand Cayman was by far the best place, initially for a vacation home but with a view to eventually settling on the island.

“With our children growing up and moving away, we had been looking for a warm place to start the next chapter of our lives for some time,” says Heather. “The combination of the weather, direct air links, language, law and order, and health facilities is difficult to beat from our perspective. The Ritz-Carlton connection adds an extra dimension.”

Heather and Steve then contracted design-and-construction firm Encompass, run by husband-and-wife team Eric and Tracey Kline, and began building mid-2019, with interior design provided by Decorators Unlimited of South Florida.

“We wanted a two-storey, four-bedroom family house, approximately 6,500 square feet in size,” says Heather. “While we wanted something unique, it needed to meet the high standards of the Ritz DeckHouses development and ‘fit’ the style of the island.”



Image: STEPHEN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY



Clockwise: Upstairs landing; master bedroom 1; pedestrian access to front door.



Fully equipped and built-in kitchen area, including butler's pantry.

“BABAZEKA IS A ZULU WORD MEANING ‘TO BE BEAUTIFUL’. ... IT IS FUN TO PRONOUNCE AND ALSO ADDS A LITTLE BIT OF MYSTERY.”

— HEATHER REYNISH

At that point, they planned to be overseas for a good amount of time during construction, but the sudden lockdown of the COVID pandemic, magnified the situation.

“This project could not have happened when it did without using email, WhatsApp, text, Dropbox, and Zoom meetings,” says Heather. “More importantly, the commitment by the Encompass team to keep us up-to-date and in the loop made all come together smoothly. At no point did we feel out of touch or blindsided.”

Importantly, Heather and Steve wanted a sense of space with large open-designed rooms and high ceilings and lots of light. They also asked for elevation-changes to create separate ‘conversation spaces’, without too many separate rooms, to facilitate family- and friend-interactions in a communal area.



Image: STEPHEN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY

The elevator is a centrepiece of glass and stainless steel.



Image: STEPHEN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY

Entrance foyer and Sharon Marston chandelier.



Image: RON ROSENZWEIG



Image: RON ROSENZWEIG

Clockwise: Alfresco entertainment area beside pool; 'Time Tunnel' mirrors above his and hers sinks in master bedroom 2; large double bedroom; office nook off kitchen.



Image: RON ROSENZWEIG



Image: STEPHEN CLARKE PHOTOGRAPHY



Image: RON ROSENZWEIG

Master bedroom 2 with access to upstairs deck.

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‘WOW’ ITEMS

The couple also desired a number of attention-grabbing ‘wow’ items such as the stair/elevator, chandeliers and artwork, to provide interest and conversation-starters.

The elevator is a mix of modern and industrial materials, creating a centrepiece of glass and stainless steel. A spiral staircase wraps around the elevator, with treads custom-made in concrete.

“We are delighted with the way it has turned out,” says Heather.

“Given the variety of ceiling heights, we wanted to create a ‘wow’ with some of the lighting features. It was Tracey that identified Sharon Marston as a suitable supplier. Sharon’s unique designs are well known in the high-end hotel business for her ability to build a centrepiece that makes a loud statement.”

Bold art is found throughout the house, including an arresting triptych in the foyer by Ruby Marr, renowned locally for her ocean-inspired paintings. Other island artists include David Bridgeman and Carolyn Whitney, whose pieces have lots of colour and local flavour. Heather and Steve also have works from artist friends, as well as up-and-coming Royal Academy artists, and photographs that have personal meaning to the couple.



Image: RON ROSENZWEIG

Master bedroom 2's tiled bath and shower area.



Image: RON ROSENZWEIG

Upstairs deck with direct access from master bedroom 2, and sunset sky to the south west.

STYLE CHOICES

Tracey and Heather took the lead on the furnishings and fixtures using Encompass’s established contacts in the United States.

“We discovered very quickly that they had a similar sense of style,” says Heather. “Having built two homes previously, we (Heather and Steve) have a well-developed sense of what we like and don’t like, and we are able to make decisions quite quickly.”

One particularly important design detail was to have high countertops. “Our family is relatively tall, and we do not like to stoop,” Heather explains. The couple also plan to spend a lot of time outdoors, which the house’s location allows them to do.

“At the property we have a variety of outside entertainment areas such as the garden, the pool area patio and the upstairs deck,” says Heather. “We have quick golf cart access to Seven Mile Beach to the west, and direct boat access to the North Sound to the east of us. We have access to the Ritz-Carlton amenities, including the golf course.”

After a many months of following progress remotely, she and Steve were finally able to visit the property in November 2021 and both were delighted with their completed home.

“We are very excited to be able entertain and create family memories on Grand Cayman and we hope that this property will become a family legacy for many years to come,” says Heather. “What is not to like?” ■