



REAL ESTATE BROKER JACK PEARSON (LEFT) WORKED WITH DESIGNER JOHN BJØRNER TO RENOVATE HIS ESPAÑOLA WAY LOW-RISE CONDOMINIUM INTO THE PERFECT WINTER GETAWAY, COMPLETE WITH BOHEMIAN INFLUENCES AND A COLOR STORY THAT REFLECTS HIS ART COLLECTION.

# CHARM

# ALARM

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
DLUXCREATIVE

TWO PROPERTY EXPERTS TRANSFORM A MIAMI BEACH CONDOMINIUM INTO AN **ART-FILLED** COASTAL RETREAT WITH A MID-CENTURY TWIST



**W**hile based in the Hamptons, Jack Pearson, a real estate broker with New York-based Compass, sought a seasonal escape from New York's harsh winter months. He turned his attention to Miami Beach, where friends had introduced him to The Marquesa, a 1935 schoolhouse that had been converted into low-rise condominiums on historic Española Way. When a unit became available, he made an offer.

"When I saw The Marquesa, I knew how special the building was," says Pearson, a real estate broker with New York-based Compass.

The Spanish-influenced, eight-room schoolhouse had been renovated years ago into a charming, mustard-colored stucco building with five condominiums surrounding a U-shaped central courtyard. Each unit now features a French door leading to a garden blooming with verdant plants and palms.

In the Hamptons, Pearson owns a 1920s

cottage. Seeking the same cozy feel in Miami Beach, he went about creating a coastal retreat with architectural detail and an aesthetic that embraces Bahamian influences and highlights his art collection. He enlisted the help of interior designer John Bjørner, who had worked with him on the Hamptons house, to give the 750-square-foot, one-bed, one-bath space a much-needed facelift. "The apartment was dated," says Bjørner. "We gave it a renovation with clean paint and wood beams."



### CARIBBEAN FEEL WITH MID-CENTURY FLAIR

For the walls and ceiling, the team ordered Maine shiplap—six-foot vertical wooden boards with a groove cut into the top and bottom to create a tight fit—that was treated to combat humidity. Pearson opted for bright white lacquer paint throughout the living spaces, bedroom, and bath with bursts of vibrant orange, yellow, and nautical blues inspired by his art collection. “I loved this idea for the interior design,” says Pearson. “It reminds me of a vanilla ice cream cone with colorful sprinkles on top.”

Pearson and Bjørnen sourced the furniture together. They agreed on custom pieces and a mix of 1930s to ’60s American, Italian, and French furnishings. “We liked the mid-century twist along with a fresh Caribbean feel and some vintage,” says Bjørnen, noting that Pearson culled design cues from his trips to the Bahamas. “The design has lots of

coastal flair.”

The living room, dining area, and kitchen are one dynamic, open space, making smart use of the limited square footage. The living room is dominated by a custom sleeper sofa and storage ottoman in Kravet indigo chenille atop a matching carpet with dog-friendly flat pile. The multicolored, patterned accent pillows, combined with an orange throw, reference tones in Pearson’s art.

Two mixed-media silkscreens, *Yellow Marilyn* and *Red Marilyn* by Jinx Penney, are showcased above the sectional. For these, the artist painted over black-and-white photos taken of Marilyn Monroe while she was a student at the Lee Strasberg Theatre and Film Institute in New York. Next to the pair is the whimsical, oil-on-wood *Botero as Dietician* by contemporary artist Judy Clifford.

The reed and bamboo, 1970s coffee table is expandable and echoes the shape of the spiral, 1980s chairs that are evocative of Lou-

is Durot. A mid-century walnut and brass campaign chest from Gustavo Olivieri and a 1960s French table lamp in opaline glass and brass share the space.

At the front door, an eclectic lamp made out of antique croquet balls greets guests. It sits atop a tripod table with oars, underscoring the coastal theme. A series of five colorful silkscreen prints on paper by Keith Haring, titled *Pop Shop V*, adorn the built-in area separating the living room from the kitchen. “They are nautical beach prints in orange, aqua, and brights, and I love

them,” says Pearson.

The Haring prints complement custom orange, faux-ostrich leather swivel stools on white bases with nickel footrests from Lee Industries. The stools are a perfect fit at the kitchen island—which is topped with Caesarstone in White Blizzard—since “they don’t obstruct the flow,” says Bjørnen.

Because Pearson’s Portuguese husband is a good cook, they enjoy hosting festive dinner parties that may start in the courtyard and eventually flow back inside. Bjørnen designed the dining

PEARSON’S MIAMI BEACH CONDO FEATURES POPS OF VIBRANT ORANGE, YELLOW, AND NAUTICAL BLUES INSPIRED BY HIS ART COLLECTION, WHILE THE MID-CENTURY MODERN CUSTOM FURNITURE BLENDS A MIX OF 1930S TO ’60S AMERICAN, ITALIAN, AND FRENCH STYLES.



banquette with Sunbrella flax linen with blue trim and nickel nailheads. This versatile and functional seating surrounds the 1950s, oval, reverse-painted, glass-top table from Gustavo Olivieri Antiques. Above the banquette is a conversation piece: a bronze anemone mirror from Mecox Gardens.

Pearson enjoys chilling in the art-filled dining space when he is unwinding at home alone. "This is one of my favorite places to sit in the corner and admire our home," says Pearson. "I'm starved for brightness, and I love the light."

The white hallway leading to the bedroom sanctuary is illuminated by a citrine-and-orange metal pendant from Rejuvenation. Immediately, the eye is drawn along the wall toward more art: *Vacuum Cleaner*, a gouache by Greg Drasler; *An American Portrait 1776-1976*, an original lithograph poster by Dutch painter Karel Appel; and *Jade Shell*, another gouache, by Minh Nguyen.

Seeking a way to infuse a little sexiness into the bedroom, Bjørnen selected Andy Warhol's *Flowers* silkscreen on paper. The room is dominated by a Restoration Hardware Marseilles bed with white parchment leather and brass nailheads. More than just a place for the couple to sleep, the bedroom also

includes a special space in which to read and lounge. "John designed a chaise in an ivory bouclé chenille fabric for a vignette near the window that is perfect for an escape," says Pearson.

The small bathroom is highly stylized with more shiplap wood, a squared-off toilet, and a vessel sink from Duravit above a floating cabinet with a customized drawer for storage. The limestone shower, which features a window to admit natural light, was refitted for efficiency.

Bjørnen maximized the bathroom by hanging a mirror that makes the space appear larger. A nautical nickel sconce and a mid-century porthole medicine cabinet further augment the coastal theme running through the condo, as does the etching *The Boat* by Steven Jennis.

With bold pops of color punctuating the home's fresh palette and mid-century furnishings updating the tropical ambience, Pearson's winter haven is now bright and inspiring. In a one-level condominium with an intimate courtyard to share with friends, Pearson and his husband are able to live and entertain as they desire. "John did a great job with the interior design," Pearson says. "The end result is adorable. We have our own little *Melrose Place* scenario." <<

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: A MARSEILLES BED WITH WHITE PARCHMENT LEATHER AND BRASS NAILHEADS IS A FOCAL POINT IN THE BEDROOM; SPLASHES OF GREEN LIVEN UP THE CRISP COLOR PALETTE; THE BATHROOM FEATURES ELEMENTS SUCH AS A HANGING MIRROR AND A NICKEL SCONCE THAT TOGETHER CREATE AN OPTICAL ILLUSION OF SPACE.

