Ahead *of the* Curve

Rounded elements and a contemporary palette enhance a condo with distinct appeal.

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Interior Design: Monica Santayana and Ronald Alvarez, Moniomi Design


WIENER WERKSTÄTE
TURQUOISE COAST



Designers Monica Santayana and Ronald Alvarez arranged Gloster's Dune chaise and Ambient floor lamp along with West Elm side tables on the balcony of a South Florida condo. "We wanted the outdoor space to be fluid with the interior decor, so the colors and fabrics are similar," Santayana says. "We chose pieces that look residential."

Amid sleek high-rises, ocean vistas and white sandy shores, it was only natural a family envisioned a modern coastal look for their South Florida condo. The new-construction unit would serve as their summer getaway, and they turned to designers Monica Santayana and Ronald Alvarez to outfit the space. When the duo set foot in the residence, however, they couldn't help but notice subtle opportunities to increase circulation and efficiency. "Our task was to furnish the home and finish tidying up a few things, like lighting selections," Alvarez says. "But once we got in there, we decided to introduce some changes to the interior architecture."

From the outset, it was impossible to ignore the layout's sharp angles, which weren't conducive for a couple with two young children. Santayana and Alvarez, who worked with the firm's designers Sentrell Marsh, Filip Berdek and Gary Kritzer, knew rounding features where possible would create a softer and more open feel. "We curved the walls and the ceilings and added cove lighting," Santayana notes, pointing to the smoothed corners in the living and dining areas. "It was a minimal change, but the effect was drastic."

More dramatic transformations took place in the kitchen, where the team installed a mirrored backsplash and removed a floating hood to open the area and enhance the view of Sunny Isles Beach. "Once that disappeared," Santayana says, "we created a dynamic new form for the island." They swapped the rectangular original for a larger, more organically shaped version that accommodates seating for five. "It's a beautiful feature that takes dead space and makes it useful," Santayana says. "In a small unit, you don't have the luxury to add pieces of furniture like a buffet, so the island now supports all functions of the room."

With the adjusted framework set, the designers could then tackle the condo's furnishings and finishes. The clients desired a tropical style, to differ from their New York residence, yet the team stayed away from anything too literal. Instead, "we used textures to support that modern Miami look," Santayana explains. "It's elevated without being obvious." Coastal-inspired materials show up in contemporary pieces such as the kitchen's rattan-wrapped counter stools and the balcony's woven floor lamp and teak-framed sofa. Wallcoverings, too, add to the effect: The gray-toned lines in the living area echo the ocean on a cloudy day, and the painterly look of the primary bedroom's headboard wall mimics a sunset. The powder room is the only space where island style is on-the-nose, with a lush palm tree scene that adds oomph. The overall color palette, however, stays away from ocean tones, instead embracing a cozy range of warm whites and pastel pinks, with only the occasional blue.

In a similar vein, rounded silhouettes nod to an endemic quality while responding to the home's reimagined form. "We used a lot of soft shapes, like curved sofas," Alvarez notes. "It's indicative of Art Deco." The living area's sectional complements a nearby curved corner and joins accent chairs in a similar shape around a circular coffee table. Half-moon hardware decorates the powder room cabinetry, and cylindrical end tables abound. Even rectangular forms, like the primary bedroom's nightstands and console table, have rounded edges.

For a dose of glam, the designers selected statement lighting for every space. "Each fixture feels unique to its room," Alvarez says, "but they all work well together." The rod-like brass piece over the kitchen island, for instance, has a counterpoint fixture featuring a looping cord in the dining area. Yet the most attention-grabbing is the floor lamp of round gold pendants the team chose to elevate a living area corner. "The space needed a vertical, sculptural moment," Santayana observes. "The way we curved the walls called for something, and this is a fun, funky piece that also creates a beautiful glow at night."

The project's dreamy end result proved even more beautiful than the owners envisioned—so much so, they are embarking on their next endeavor with the designers. "They were so happy with the outcome of this unit," Alvarez says, "they now want us to make their home in New York feel just as comfortable."

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–MONICA SANTAYANA





Gubi's leather Beetle chairs from Design Within Reach gather around Bonaldo's Mellow dining table from Casa Italia in Naples. Luke Lamp Co.'s Tracer Bar II fixture adds a sculptural moment without obstructing the view of Sunny Isles Beach.





In the kitchen, the team added a mirrored backsplash, removed a hood and installed a larger island in an organic shape topped with Silestone's Desert Silver quartz from Cosentino. Serena & Lily's Balboa counter stools in Mist complement the Italkraft cabinetry. Luke Lamp Co.'s Leto suspension light and Bosch appliances complete the look.



Left: The powder room embraces a tropical vibe with Romo's Japura wallcovering in Flamingo and Made Goods' Serrat mirror. The designers outfitted the existing vanity with CB2 hardware and swapped a chrome faucet for Kohler's brushed brass Purist from Ferguson Bath, Kitchen & Lighting Gallery.

Opposite: Drop It Modern's Wavelength wallpaper establishes warm tones in the primary bedroom, which also displays an ivory Omexco wallcovering. The custom headboard is wrapped in Clarke & Clarke velvet; pillows are made of S. Harris and Robert Allen fabrics. A Flos pendant from YLighting hangs above a ModShop side table near CB2's Uva stalk.

