



With exceptional curb appeal, the West Indies-inspired residence sets the perfect tone along Rum Row thanks to hardscaping by Koby Kirwin.

HOME OF THE MONTH: STYLISH (BUT NOT TOO EDGY) IN PORT ROYAL

CLEAN LINES CREATE A WARM, CONTEMPORARY SPACE OUT OF A WEST INDIES FOUNDATION

BY MICHAEL WOOD

Inviting. Elegant. Stylish.

Take your pick of enamoring adjectives to describe this gorgeous Rum Row home in Port Royal owned by Katie and Gary Murray of Ontario, Canada. The Stofft Cooney-designed residence was started by a previous homeowner, who then sold to the Murrays halfway through the building process. It was a lucky break for them, though a unique challenge for John Cooney, as the original plans called for the structure to be more contemporary, while the Murrays like things a bit less edgy.

The finished product is a masterwork in subtleties, as Cooney removed detailing to clean some lines while modifying others in order to warm interior spaces.

"It was a complicated process, but the end result was that the house turned out phenomenal," Cooney says. "This is a really unique project and a lot of fun from my standpoint. Typically, with a British West Indies home, you're going to see a lot of heavy timber beams, wood ceilings, etc., so we kept the beam structures but put a contemporary twist on them. The result was floating beams with backlighting that were painted and not stained, and grass cloth ceilings (in the kitchen), which really make the beams pop."

The grass cloth was the inspiration of interior designer Lisa Kahn. Another cool collaboration in the home's kitchen, among Cooney, Kahn and landscape designer Koby Kirwin, is a focal point water feature created just outside the kitchen window. The window overlooks the side yard, and because it had no view, Kirwin decided to create one.

"I think this home was designed in a way that makes it incredibly personal for the Murrays," Kahn says. "It does not fit into one particular style.... You can't look at it and say, 'Well, this house is contemporary.' Or 'This house is traditional.' Or 'This house is modern.' This house is the Murrays."

And that means the home is a welcoming space for friends and family. In fact, the Murrays welcomed 20 adult guests and four children down for Canadian Thanksgiving.

Kahn really wanted to create some wonderful spaces for the Murrays to cook and hang out in, so the kitchen itself is large enough for multiple cooks.

"The house is designed to live in, and it's a vacation home for us," Katie Murray says. "So it's a place where everybody is relaxed and has fun and is out by the pool with a cold beer or playing games in the game area, or in the kitchen. We have two islands in the kitchen and we call the island with all of the chairs around it 'Slacker Island.' You know the people who want to be in the kitchen when you're getting ready but you need them out of the way?"

Soft palettes, straight lines and the occasional Balinese influence keep the house on-point



When it comes time for family and friends to gather in the kitchen, there are few homes that can compete with this two-island beauty. With three sinks and an enormous amount of quartzite surface area, there are no excuses for people not to help. However, the homeowners have designated the second island to "slackers" who would prefer just to watch. Oyster shell pendants and a visible outdoor water feature keep the coast close to mind.



While the front is gorgeous, it's hard to beat the waterfront views out back.



Warm woods are always in view and help create an organic and comforting feel, even when juxtaposed with the modern approach of glass. A custom-designed Bocci chandelier of illuminated glass orbs adds a soft light to the two-story stairwell.



With captivating views of the outdoor living area and wide Port Royal canal, you can be forgiven if your eyes miss the detail work of grass cloth and beam work on the ceiling. A tranquil green/blue hue on the walls (Sherwin Williams' "Rainwashed") and complementary area rug recall the calm waters of the Gulf.



European oak floors throughout contrast perfectly with crisp white baseboards as well as the white limestone fireplace surround in the living room, which overlooks the pool and waterway.

Photographer: Lori Hamilton

Architect: Stofft Cooney Architects

Interior designer: Lisa Kahn Designs

Builder: SBC Construction

Landscape designer: Koby Kirwin