

A SYMPHONY OF STYLE

WALLS OF GLASS AND RICH WALNUT WOOD COMBINE TO CREATE HARMONY IN THIS WARM CONTEMPORARY HOME WITH AN OPEN FLOOR PLAN IN GOLDEN BEACH

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Furnishings mostly from Addison House shape the living area, where forms are streamlined; the fabrics, classic with lots of buttery leathers and tufted velvets; and the materials vary, from wood to stone. Chrome accents abound to add luxury and shine, while a walnut wood climbs the wall to warm the space.



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Framed glass windows line the wall in the dining area to fill the crisp white space with colors of nature. A chrome and glass chandelier casts a spectrum of life above a glass-topped table that easily seats a party of 12.

Sometimes things go as planned, sometimes things get better. When this Golden Beach resident first hired designer Rene Mansito to remodel the 1980's Mediterranean-style house he had purchased for his wife and four children, his intent was simply to add on a couple more bedrooms and baths for the kids. To this effect, the 5,280-square-foot house became a 5,800-square-foot home, with the additional en suite bedrooms created on the upper floor. But the story of the redesign did not end there.

"I found it impossible to say 'no' to such a beautiful rendering," says the homeowner referring to the architectural drawing that drew him into a far bigger renovation than he had anticipated. "It reminded me of one of those high-rises on the beach — all open glass from top-to-bottom, nothing blocking the view and lots of light."

Chosen for its prime locale in Golden Beach, Fla., the northernmost beach city in Miami Dade County, this outdated house was dark and compartmentalized, with a huge kitchen in the back. "Open floor plans give light and spaciousness, so I gutted the whole thing to create a large space that draws the eye all the way through the house," Mansito says. As the walls came down and doors were removed, a once closed-in foyer transformed into the open entry that flows into the living area, where a two-story-high sheet of glass divided into clerestory windows and sliding doors brings the outside in.

RIGHT: Casual seating takes prominence in the family room, where the porcelain flooring, the fabrics and even the materials lend a contemporary feel. Beyond, walnut wood wraps the kitchen in warmth. "This was important because we didn't want a cold minimalist house, but a warm contemporary one," designer Rene Mansito says.



A GLASS WALL OFFERS A PICTURESQUE SETTING IN THE BREAKFAST AREA. "THE GLASS MAKES OUR HOME FEEL SO MUCH LARGER," THE OWNER SAYS. "I DON'T HAVE WATER VISTAS, BUT I WANTED STUNNING VIEWS OF THE BEAUTIFUL LANDSCAPING AND SWIMMING POOL."

The home's elegance comes from its appointed selection of contemporary, yet timeless, Italian furnishings. "I wanted the space to transition with the furnishings' colors — the crisp whites, warm grays and pale mauves," says Mansito of the palette inspired by the porcelain tile flooring and its underlying hues. "It travels from the front, which is white and clean, to the warmer woods and hues that transcend through the dining area to the family room and kitchen."

Another important renovation was to reduce the footprint of the kitchen and relocate its' position from the back to the center of the home. Not only did this allow for a bigger family room, but it also gave Mansito the opportunity to custom design a contemporary kitchen. Here, seamless rift walnut wood cabinetry, sleek white quartz countertops and a textural crushed-marble backsplash play off against all the smooth elements elsewhere, including the main floor's polished porcelain tiles. The



PLANKED WALNUT WOOD FLOORING FLOWS THROUGH THE MASTER BEDROOM AND CLIMBS THE WALL TO DRAW THE EYES UP AND AROUND THE SPACE. THE BED WRAPPED IN TUFTED LINEN POOPS AGAINST THE WARM WALNUT WOOD, WHILE METALLIC HUES SHIMMER IN A COZY SITTING AREA NEARBY.

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honey-hued walnut continues into other social and private areas, including on the interior glass balcony as a silhouetting detail; up the stairway leading to the second floor; and into the walnut wood-clad master bedroom and bath.

Not surprisingly, Mansito is a perfectionist when it comes to lighting. Inside and out, a system of carefully coordinated LED lights serve as either task or flood lighting. Task lighting is often in soffits, including the walnut wood-wrapped soffit in the kitchen area. "Light is very important in creating the atmosphere and psychology of a space," Mansito says. "My lighting is like a pearl necklace on a woman. If she is in a beautiful dress, but doesn't have right accessories, her outfit doesn't feel complete. The lighting, like the jewelry, adds that final touch of elegance."

RIGHT: Travertine stone lines the walls and porcelain tile flooring grounds the master bath. The shower enclosed with laminated glass panels exudes all the serenity of a private retreat, where the Jacuzzi tub seems ready to envelop and renew.





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The rear of the house was blown out with an entire wall of sliding glass doors that open onto the new travertine-decked patio complete with a newly enlarged pool and hot tub. Lush landscaping adds to the poolside setting.

The interior palette carries outdoors to the home's exterior, where Mansito painted the beige stucco walls white and the orange roof tiles gray. Travertine stone is the chosen material for the home's square columns and the patio's pavers that surround the newly enlarged pool.

"This project is one of my biggest achievements because the house is completely different from what it was," Mansito says. "Like a conductor, my job is to pull all the elements together — the materials, the colors, the furnishings — and make them harmonize, creating a symphony of style." **M**