

# Villa. Capri

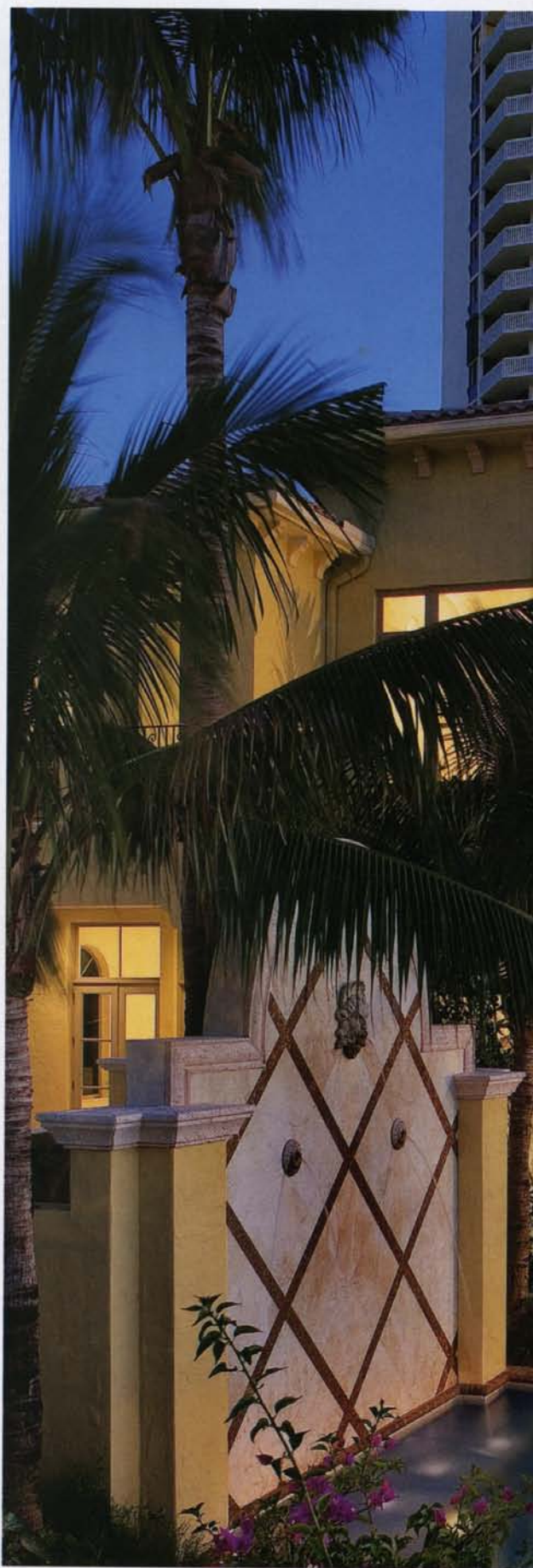
*Nestled on what's known as the Florida Riviera, this Williams Island home is a slice of European craftsmanship that's fully loaded with top-notch automation systems and technology.*

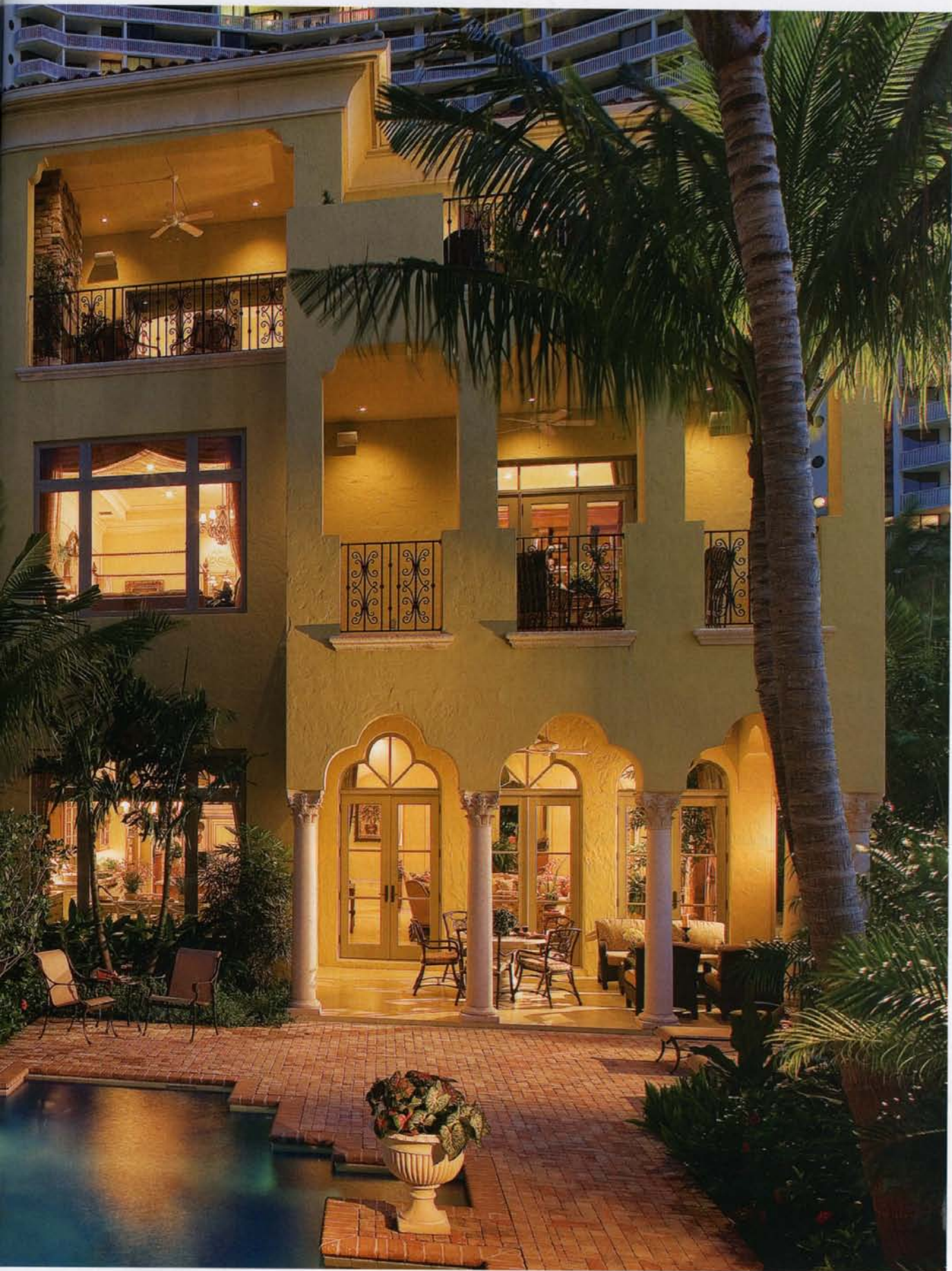
WHETHER YOU'RE IN THE MARKET FOR A THIRD, fourth or primary residence, the goal is the same: Your home must reflect your dreams and passions, as well as where you've been and where you're headed. In essence, your living environment—from the inside out—is your autobiography. So every element has to be executed with exceptional detail.

This three-story Tuscan-style home named Villa Capri, one of 16 villa estates in the Villa Flora development on Miami's tony Williams Island, unfolds room by room as a tale of how the other half lives when they aren't hard at work. Winding staircases. Richly paneled libraries. Architectural elements fashioned after those found in 100-year-old Italian villas. An extravagantly architected and maintenance-free landscape design (so you don't have to bother with a gardener) and direct access to two marinas (just walk out the back door and hop

By B.A. HOFFMAN

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into your Lazzara 74 yacht). Plus streamlined, future-proof technology that's at your total beck and call—from the ability to control every light indoors and out to playing any CD or DVD in your collection—when and where you want. Villa Capri's LiteTouch system also has the ability to conserve energy by adjusting the automated blinds and draperies at the appropriate times, or by dimming the lights.

Ken Weitz of Vintage Properties, which partnered with Williams Island Realty on this home, bases his old-world villa look on the discoveries he made during various design expeditions to Italy. "The reason I'm there is to see the details—to find out where they come from and why they exist," he says, alluding to Italy's Tuscan-inspired colors, Venetian-palazzo facades, and Spanish tile roofs. "We look at villas built hundreds of years ago. [For Villa Capri], we worked extremely hard to create an authentic look and feeling, and a perfect sense of proportion."

This 6,000-plus-square-foot home is a marriage of this well-researched Italianate design with FutureSmart technology. Stroll across the Jerusalem stone flooring and take note of the rich decorative crown molding at every turn, as well as the faux-painted 40-foot-tall dome ceiling, countless palladium windows, a formal dining salon connected to the butler's pantry, and his and her studies, which are accessed by a spiral staircase. But what you don't see—the magical inner workings of



the home—is a host of modern-day amenities that would make any fifth-generation Italian drool: distributed audio and video everywhere, including the solarium; a FutureSmart network that ensures the smooth integration of new technologies into the house; a LiteTouch lighting control system that manages more than 280 lighting elements; and an XM radio hookup—just in case your wife decides to splurge for your 40th birthday.

"Quality was the main issue, so first we want to give credit to the developer for wanting the system to be first-class," says Home System Control Chief Designer Luis Couvertier, adding that the company's relationship with Vintage Properties started 14 years ago when Home System Control installed a LiteTouch system into the home of Vintage Properties' owner. "LiteTouch sets the standard when it comes to durability, quality, and reliability."

THE FUTURES M A R T W I R I N G S Y S T E M is the backbone of the home. It's a system that allows the homeowner to incorporate any current and new technology into the residence, including digital communications and networking systems to secure, inform, and entertain (i.e. telephone, audio, video, satellite TV, HVAC). "The house is prewired so you can view all sources—DVD, high-definition satellite, etc.—from the family room, all of the bedrooms, the kitchen, and in the game room, pub, or theater," Couvertier adds.

*"I wanted the home to seem as though it has been there for decades. We took great care to make sure all of the detailing was authentic."*

*—Ken Weitz, developer*





"The room is lined and interlined with silk to enhance acoustics," says designer Sandy Welsh of the theater (above). Since cabinetry wasn't a part of the design, the custom installation team incorporated sleek, beautiful-sounding left and right tower speakers out front; the center speaker is located above the screen.

"We went with a very attractive, great-sounding speaker. The [Definitive Technology speakers] give the impact we needed," says custom installer Luis Couvertier.

In the family room (left), the custom maple cabinetry is finished to complement the other woods used throughout the house.

Matte black walls and a built-in bookcase with gold wash highlights provide the foundation for her study (far left). The chairs are enhanced with gold leaf and distressed leather.



*"The traditionally classic furnishings in the living room embody timeless design," says designer Richard Veller. Two curved sofas from Ferguson Copeland are upholstered in a bronze moiré fabric and trimmed in antique brass nail head. The Louis XV tassel apron armchair in plaid silk taffeta is the source for the space's color palette. A custom rug, inlaid with a laurel leaf swag border and fleur de lis overlays, defines the space. The scroll patterns, faux finished and glazed in layers of natural pigment, highlight the walls here and throughout the house.*

But the heart of the Villa Capri is its Crestron automation system, which is tied into the LiteTouch system. This system, which features a built-in astronomical time clock for energy-saving purposes, makes the blinds rise or descend based on the position of the sun and allows the homeowner to dim the lights in the kitchen from his or her cell phone—or from a computer, a remote control, or a Crestron touchscreen in another room. The "all on" setting, a special feature, illuminates the entire house if the security system is breached.

"From the outside, they all work the same way," Couvertier says of the lighting systems. "They all have ambiance settings, illuminate entry passages, and provide mass control to the whole house. But what makes this system so superior is its reliability." What the custom installer is alluding to is something all Floridians—and most Southerners—can relate to: violent thunderstorms. "In our area, power fluctuation is tremendous. So the system can't be sensitive to that. [Lite-Touch] has power surge protection on its components—the central control processor, the dimmer module, and the control keypads. This makes a big difference because the system is less sensitive to its environment." In addition, LiteTouch

provides a limited lifetime warranty on its products instead of the conventional two- to five-year warranty. And Lite-Touch can service and support every system it has built during its 30 years of business. "If you have a 15-year-old system, you can still get parts for that—guaranteed," Couvertier says. "They never make a part, system, or service obsolete. Other companies don't do that."

Suppose your guests are enjoying cocktails on one of the home's many outdoor lanais overlooking the marina and the nearby bay. While you're putting the finishing touches on a few trays of hors d'oeuvres in the kitchen, you can program the lanai lights for a "soft start" to add to the mood at hand (the setting also extends the lightbulb's life expectancy since less power is being sent to the bulbs). Or increase the speaker volume by the pool so the music will not drown out your guests' conversations on the terrace. If you are making a few bowls of popcorn in the kitchen but do not want to make your guests wait for you to start the movie in your state-of-the-art screening room, just dim the lights and start the film from the nearest Crestron control panel. Making all of this high-end technology work like magic is as easy as touching



*The gourmet kitchen includes a butler's pantry, which leads directly to the dining room. Floored with Galala limestone, the space is "an enduring symbol of all a kitchen can be—with the power to cook whatever your heart desires," says designer Welsh. "It is, top to bottom, a state-of-the-art kitchen that will make all serious cooks seriously happy." The stove hood is faux enhanced to resemble an old work stone, while the backsplash is tumbled marble. Cabinetry is antiqued with a coffee wash. All appliances are by KitchenAid and Thermador.*

a single button. And thanks to the home's fully engineered programming, the results are always reliable and magical.

TO MAKE THE GRAND INTERIORS OF ITS estate homes work as cohesively as its stunning technology systems, Vintage Properties brought Carl's Furniture in Boca Raton, Fla., on board. "They're talented designers and they're not restricted to the lines they display," Weitz says, adding that Carl's Furniture is currently working on a model home in another Vintage Properties development where the residences start at \$5 million.

High on Weitz's list was a design team that could complement the attention to detail that's evidenced in every architectural detail. "Every nook and cranny of design has been thought about—it's not just a plain arch but an arch with detail," Weitz says. "The molding is custom double-scallop molding, the windows quatrefoil and clerestory. We put a lot of tumbled stone on the exterior that looks like it's 200 years old. You would expect to see something like this if you walked down an Italian street."

"We use finishes that are European in nature," adds in-

terior designer Richard Veller of Carl's Furniture. "And we carry the detailing of the exterior into the interiors. We wanted to give the home global scale and appeal since most of the people who live here are varied in backgrounds and cultures. There's an international draw here, so the home had to be global and sophisticated in appeal."

The theater, for starters, is an honorary nod to Venice, with its silk-lined walls in bronze and umber chenille-covered sofas and ottomans, which double as cocktail tables. An illuminated coffered ceiling casts a glow below, while delicate hand-carved onyx sconces draw attention to the ornately framed artwork that's reminiscent of Venetian minstrels. The decorative custom cornice above the screen and matching draperies to the side add to the richness of the environment. A second set of draperies—this time in bronze silk—frames the Stewart FireHawk projection screen and conceals the entryway to the equipment closet.

A similar Venetian look, along with another coffered ceiling, finds its way into the main floor's family room and the upstairs pub room—complete with a dark hand-carved cherry wood bar and distressed leather barstools accented with



The towering staircase (top left), which extends from the ground level to the third floor, balances the energy in the grand home. In the game room (top right), the custom granite-topped bar complements the decorative mirror with applied moldings. Caned wood barstools adorned with French brass nail heads add an element of old-world style. The dining room table of crotch mahogany (above) and gadroon carvings is surrounded by royal mahogany chairs with plume-carved backs. Glass hurricane lamps mingle among crystal pendants in the chandelier.

## TECH TALK: THE VILLA CAPRI

The foremost goal with this installation was to increase the value of the model home without significantly impacting its price. In the words of Tony Khoury, owner of Home System Control in Miami, "The house itself is definitely a luxury house, but from our end, we wanted to deliver a luxurious experience on a less-than-luxurious budget. The theater doesn't have the \$100,000 projector that we would normally install, but it gives you the similar impression."

To create that impression, Khoury and general manager Luis Couvertier installed the **Marantz VP-12S4**, a high-definition single-chip DLP projector—renowned for its clarity, contrast, and brightness, not to mention value and reliability. Marantz also supplied the room's **SR9300V THX Ultra 2 Receiver**—whose per-speaker tone controls allowed for a high degree of sonic finesse in the drapery-heavy room—as well as its **DV6400 Progressive Scan Universal DVD Player**, which converts standard-definition DVD video to high definition before passing it along to the projector.

The theater serves not only to showcase the equipment itself, but also the potential of the home's FutureSmart Structure Wiring System. "Ultimately, we could have done a surround-sound theater in any room of the house," says Couvertier. "Every home in this development is prewired so if someone wanted to do a theater in the family room or in the master bedroom—anywhere in the home—those rooms are ready for anything." For a full equipment list, please visit our website at [hemagazine.com](http://hemagazine.com). —Dennis Burger

### RESOURCES

**Architect:** Scott Blakeslee  
Disher & Associates of Boynton  
Beach, Fla. ([sbdassociates.com](http://sbdassociates.com),  
561.733.8800)

**Custom Installer:** Home  
System Control of Miami, Fla.  
(305.271.1699, [hscontrol.com](http://hscontrol.com))

**Developers:** Vintage Proper-  
ties of Delray Beach, Fla. (561.  
496.7899, [vintageproperties.com](http://vintageproperties.com)),  
Williams Island Realty of  
Aventura, Fla. (305.937.7800,  
[williamsislandrealty.com](http://williamsislandrealty.com))

**Interior Designer:** Carl's  
Furniture of Boca Raton, Fla.  
(561.226.1111, [carls.com](http://carls.com))

**Control system, touchscreen  
remotes:** Crestron (800.237.  
2041, [crestron.com](http://crestron.com))

**DVD player, surround-sound,  
video projector:** Marantz (630.

741.0300, [marantz.com](http://marantz.com))

**FutureSmart structure wir-  
ing system:** Honeywell (800.  
328.5111, [futuresmart.com](http://futuresmart.com))

**High-definition satellite receiv-  
er:** DirecTV (800.DIRECTV,  
[directv.com](http://directv.com))

**Lighting control:** LiteTouch  
(888.548.3824, [litetouch.com](http://litetouch.com))

**Racks:** Middle Atlantic (973.  
839.1011, [middleatlantic.com](http://middleatlantic.com))

**Satellite radio receiver:**  
Polk Audio ([polkaudio.com](http://polkaudio.com),  
800.377.7655)

**Screen:** Stewart Filmscreen  
(310.784.5300, [stewartfilm.com](http://stewartfilm.com))

**Speakers:** Definitive Technol-  
ogy ([definitivetech.com](http://definitivetech.com), 410.363.  
7148), Elan Home Systems (859.  
269.7760, [elanhomesystems.com](http://elanhomesystems.com)),

Niles ([nilesaudio.com](http://nilesaudio.com), 305.  
238.4373)

**Surge suppression:** Panamax  
(415.499.3900, [panamax.com](http://panamax.com))

antique French brass nail heads. The card table seating is cushioned with a goldish spice tapestry, while the upholstered cornice topping the glass doors simulates an arched window, a design motif that is prevalent throughout the house. Cherry wood makes a second appearance in the latticework wine racks that flank a decorative mirror. A scagliola stone fireplace lures guests to break from their card game and linger for a cocktail or two on the covered lanai. The coffered ceiling, here and elsewhere in the home, is trimmed with applied moldings.

Moorish-style arches can be found everywhere. "The arches play on Venice and Venetian styles," says interior designer Sandy Welsh of Carl's Furniture. In the family room, arches gracing the tops of the glass doors maximize the natural light streaming in from the pool area; window treatments in gold, green, and a red-brown striped silk lend a sense of movement to the fabric. "These are traditional and classic furnishings that embody timeless design," Welsh says. Two large-scale sofas—one skirted with bronze chenille and silk pattern pillows, and the other a brown-bronze chenille with turned legs—focus on the custom maple wall unit that showcases the TV. Double- and triple-coffered ceilings, faux-finished walls, rich woods, gold-finished carved tables, and patterned and textured fabrics continue the Venetian design motif elsewhere, from the master suite to her study.

"Living in this house, with its marina, pool, and lush grounds, is like being on vacation," Welsh says.

"It's costly to do it this way, but the detail is there because we conceived it as such," Weitz says. "And it's the only other single-family villa enclave on Williams Island. For just about anyone, this is a dream house." For a full list of interiors, please visit [hemagazine.com](http://hemagazine.com). For information about new homes in Villa Flora, which start at \$3.5 million, please contact Williams Island Realty (305.937.7800, [myvillaflo.com](http://myvillaflo.com)). **HE**



The ornately carved custom bed, accented in gold leaf, overlooks the marina and the pool. The boxed swags bear a green-bronze silk, while the end panels coordinate with the silk bedding. "We have our own window and custom bedding department," says Veller.