

WEB-EXCLUSIVE HOME TOUR

The Kennedy Winter White House Is Updated with the Unexpected

Design firm Pembroke & Ives brings new life to an iconic oceanfront estate in Palm Beach through the addition of color and light

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Most famous for having been the “Winter White House” of John and Jacqueline Kennedy, this 1923 Mediterranean-style villa, perched above 200 feet of prime Atlantic coastline in Palm Beach, Florida, has been reimagined through a careful top-down overhaul. To direct the renovation of late society architect Addison Mizner’s historic façade, much of which is landmarked, the home’s new owner brought on longtime collaborator Andrew Sheinman of Pembroke & Ives.

When the New York–based owner discovered the property, which was not for sale, Sheinman recalls, “it was in very, very poor shape, so it was about building a new house from the inside out.” It was a tall order made even loftier by the demands of the residence’s legacy and the haphazard alterations—done by the previous owners, who bought the house from the Kennedy family in 1995—which all had to be identified in archival photographs and undone piecemeal. Updates to the home, including new windows, French doors, and the conversion of a garage into a foyer, were, in Sheinman’s words, “very gentle and sympathetic to what was already there.”



The iconic, landmarked front gate, where JFK and his family were famously photographed.

“This house is part of the rich history of Palm Beach—it is fun to think of all the people who have spent time here and have walked these halls,” says the owner of the home, where President Kennedy is said to have formed his cabinet, written *Profiles in Courage* and his inauguration speech, and spent one of his last nights before his assassination in Dallas. “We kept much of the original architecture of the home, but created a completely new interior,” she adds of the 11-bedroom, 17-bathroom residence. “Now we are writing our own family history.”



The pool house lounge is accented by drum coffee tables from Fernando Mastrangelo, an Espasso chair, Christian Liagre stools, and Pelle pendant lights.

That new history, at least aesthetically, includes the addition of a lot of color and glamour (a lacquer specialist was flown in from New York for the job), as well as an impressive art collection that marries with the bold design scheme. Though the owner does not consider herself a serious collector, she hired an art consultant, Barbara Annis, to work alongside the Pembroke & Ives team to select pieces that would add whimsy and a sense of occasion. **“One of the client’s M.O.s is to create a happy environment—a place that is very uplifting,”** says Sheinman. **“We tried to make it sophisticated but not too stiff,”** he adds. **“Often one finds that you live in only one room of the house, but I am happy to report that they really live in every single room.”**



The master bedroom, one of the owner’s favorite rooms, affords a breathtaking view of the Atlantic.
A George Condo painting hangs above a grey lacquer Jean Louis Deniot dresser from Jean De Merry.
The chair is Jorge Zalszupin from Espasso.

Asked about her favorite parts of the property—which includes a new tennis court, extended swimming pool, and lush landscaping designed by Nievera Williams—the owner, whom Sheinman repeatedly calls “courageous” for taking on such a high-profile project, doesn’t hesitate. **“I love the family room, which is fun, colorful, and comfortable and overlooks the pool as well as the ocean,”** she says. **“I also love my bedroom, where I can see the sea from my bed. I think it’s the most magical place to wake up.”**

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