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LIVE LOCAL ON THE CREATIVE COAST SARASOTA | BRADENTON

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LAUGHTER TO
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JACK DUSTY AND
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FROM THE TIPTOP

Sarasota architect Jonathan Parks explores the boundaries of intimate and communal living, creating a secluded Lido Shores residence with a non-traditional floor plan. The tranquil trickle of the waterfall stirs dimly lit turquoise waters, making every surface around the pool dance. Exhaling salty breaths nearly 100 feet away, Gulf waters infuse the air with a pungent coastal essence.

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Soaring fronds whistle indigenous tunes, heaving gently in the breeze. The westward-facing pool terrace glows with mellow ambers and vibrant fuchsias as the sun retires. Setting the tone for the Lido Shores getaway home, Sarasota architect Jonathan Parks creates a symphony of sensory experiences for his clients. “Imagine you’re inside a diamond,” suggests Parks, casting his vision for the elevated front-yard pool area.

Standing tall on a narrow 70-foot lot, the Westway Drive abode was designed with an upside-down plan. Unlike typical layouts where living spaces sit below and bedrooms above, TipTop is flip-flopped. The elevated living spaces give precedence to the dramatic vistas, creating a sense of novelty every time you venture to the top. The home’s spectacular views didn’t come easily. Parks initially visited the site, quickly realizing that even though the house was in close proximity to the water, the large surrounding homes obstructed all ocean views. Determined to solve the issue, he ascended into the lanky palms in a cherry picker, discovering the maximum building height revealed breathtaking perspectives of both water and city. Celebrating the views, Parks created what he called the “helicopter-landing pad,” the largest upper roof terrace he’d ever designed. “It’s

based on the idea of reward,” explains Parks. “I had to convince the owners to make it harder to go up to the roof terrace but once you got there, you were rewarded by the astoundingly beautiful panoramas.”

Picturesque views provide homeowners vivid snapshots to relish as they return to their primary residence in Western New York. They expressed their ultimate desire for a second home to gather family as kids grew older and went off to college. The home would be an element of consistency in a family whose lives are changing. Thoughtfully designing personalized spaces for each occupant to enjoy, Parks created various vignettes all throughout the home. One person basks in the ambient tropical warmth on the roof deck, another enjoys cool quiet time in the den. Tastefully integrating variety into elements of consistency with light, form and repetition, the house is a dynamic environment to create poignant memories in. “It’s not just a beautiful meal that’s one course,” says Parks. “We’ve provided them a wonderful palate of flavors to enjoy as they frequent the home at different times of the year.”

Embracing changes in light throughout the coastal seasons, the walls are consistently white from room-to-room. Parks’ decision was very much impressionistic in



House+ Home



nature, allowing light to paint the walls from cool azure to warm, burnt orange depending on the sun's position. The palatal decisions don't just cater to the eye; more than visual, they're "experiential." Cool metallic touch-points on elongated door handles and stair handrails tactilely complement the warmth of the durable bamboo flooring. With varied seasonal temperatures, the home, Parks says, "plays to more of an esoteric understanding of what it means to build in Florida."

From room-to-room, custom-made barn doors and locally fabricated concrete countertops allow residents to enjoy rustic features true to their natural state. "We used noble materials that were honest to what they were," notes Parks as he discusses the home's overall play on metal, wood and concrete. Noticeable sensitivity to natural materials coupled with sustainable technology distinguishes the TipTop House as a cutting-edge, contemporary home. Strategically-placed windows minimize dependency on mechanical systems for comfort-enabling passive cooling, heating, ventilation and lighting. Intelligent LED lighting and photovoltaic arrays contributed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Platinum certification. Parks' sustainable design approach satisfies clients with its consciousness of the Florida environment.





Focusing on both environmental and personal requirements, TipTop's spacious, fluid design maintains a delicate balance between intimate and communal living. For a family who entertains frequently, the biggest challenge was to screen potentially boisterous common area gatherings from direct view in more private spaces. Parks studied intently the transition from public to private, designing an elegant stairway to be used as a metal-façade and spatial buffer. Reminiscent of a musical harp, hanging rods fall gracefully from every floor, catching sunlight and distracting the eye from viewing distant spaces. The harmonious interplay of transparency and solidity gives rise to a striking stairway, celebrating residents' vertical and horizontal movement through the house. A symbol of the home's overall purpose, the stairway acts as a means of connection. As it joins household rooms on different levels, the home similarly unites family members at different stages of their lives. The Florida residence will continue to be a gathering place, accommodating both family celebration and relaxation as children ascend into their adult years. **SRQ**



