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A woman with blonde hair, wearing a bright pink two-piece suit and a pearl necklace, stands smiling in a large, ornate wrought-iron gate. She is holding onto the sides of the gate. The background shows a sunlit outdoor area with greenery and a hanging plant.

My Place *in the* SUN

When I walk through these heavy wrought iron gates, it's like walking into my own fantasy world. The madness of the big city is forgotten – instead of car horns I hear the occasional ripple of water in the pool, and the back-▷

FABRIC SELECTIONS
BY RICHARD FEATHERSTONE



My Place in the SUN

drop of noisy traffic is replaced by the sounds of a warm tropical breeze rustling the leaves of palm trees. My home in Palm Beach is the one place in the world where I can truly get away from it all.

The house is called *Concha Marina*, which means seashell in Spanish. It was built in the 1920s by the famous architect Addison Mizner, and this is where he actually lived. Mizner built about 30 homes and his buildings are now historic landmarks, including this one. For that reason, if I move a chair from left to right, I'm dead.

Well, it's not quite that bad, but I did have trouble with the pool because I wanted to tile the edge with blue Spanish-style tiles and the town's powers-that-be said "no way." However, when I pointed out to them that with no obvious edge to the pool, people at my parties would be falling in and breaking bones (not to mention my favorite wine glasses), they soon let me have my way.

The shape of the pool is my own design, inspired by a gorgeous pool that I saw in Hawaii. The whole area used to be a lawn with a sad little fountain in the middle, but I really wanted somewhere to take a dip. However, I couldn't ▸



Above left: Croissants and coffee in the breakfast room is the best way to start the day. I find the color yellow very invigorating and who could resist an ocean view first thing in the morning? Below left: I don't have to worry about any unexpected guests in the covered veranda – there's enough space at the table for 32 people.





If anyone were to ask me about my favorite "room" in Palm Beach, I would have to say it's a lounge chair next to the pool in the sun.



I wanted to add glamour to this room, so I took the plain iron chandelier and draped it in French crystal.

My Place in the SUN




really envision anyone (especially myself) doing 100 Olympic-style laps – I wanted more of a calming oasis, which is why I painted it green rather than the more obvious turquoise. Part of its charm is that at any moment it can be turned into a magnificent fountain – there are water jets at each corner. The pool is partly shaded by a huge seagrape tree with low-hanging

branches. Soon after I moved in, I had to hang a painted wooden parrot from the tree because so many people were banging their heads on the branches and slipping into the pool. Now they see the parrot first, and I'm no longer running out for Band-Aids every five minutes.

I do have permission to build a saltwater pool at the front of the house, but



Don't be fooled by this photo of mom and me sipping champagne in the kitchen. If you came here on a normal day, we'd probably have our sleeves rolled up to our elbows creating some delicious concoction.




My Place in the SUN

*You can see my
love of rich
textures and
colors in the
sitting room.*

as it's so close to the ocean and quite exposed, it does get a little windy out there. If I'm looking for seawater, I prefer to cross the lawn and go through the hidden tunnel that brings me right out at the most beautiful private beach.

Concha Marina has a very Mediterranean feel, as do most of Addison Mizner's buildings. The wooden ceilings are hand-painted with lovely pastel designs, lending a light, airy feeling to the house.

I developed the Mediterranean theme by shipping incredible ceramics from Italy and Spanish-style tiles from Mexico. A couple of the ▶



*A bedroom
with a view –
it makes me
bounce out of
bed in the
morning.*



When I first walked into the entrancéway with its cold stone walls and floor, I felt as though I'd stepped into an English castle. So I developed the theme with English crests and flags. The palm you can see reminds guests they're in a tropical setting.

My Place in the SUN

I love to have parties by the pool. At night the subdued candle-style lighting gives the area such a romantic feeling that guests love, not the least, because it makes everyone look good.





kitchen tiles have animal footprint indentations. This is because when they're being made, they're left outside overnight to dry and occasionally coyotes and other nocturnal animals walk over them. These tiles are supposed to bring good luck to the home, so I insisted my fiancé Roffredo have some of these ready-trodden tiles installed in his groovy downtown New York home.

The whole family loves to dine in the covered veranda because it is such a change from New York. The carpet there is really unusual because you would think it was a mosaic floor until you actually stepped on it.

When I first saw this house, it felt so lush and exotic that it reminded me of the jungle. That inspired me to commission two jungle-style murals – complete with monkeys – for the veranda. I then carried the monkey theme very subtly throughout the house with small brass monkey ornaments and pots with monkey designs because the animal was the favorite of architect Mizner.

The veranda is where we have lunch – usually lobster or shrimp – and dinner parties are such great fun here.

Every second of my time at Concha Marina rejuvenates me just that little bit more, so by the time I go back to New York, I'm ready for business – at least until those car alarms get to me again. □

Photos: Ivana: Stephen Wolter;

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