

HOMES

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Wanderlux: Thousands of miles north of home, a Miami vacation condo just for the love of entertaining



The 14th-floor condo offers spectacular sunrises. The interior design included a variety of types of seating to accommodate young and old.

We all have an unwavering ability to daydream big — and a penchant for real estate voyeurism (not to mention endless holidays) — so we've sought out some of the world's most spectacular year-round vacation properties.

We tour the types of homes usually seen only in movies and lottery dreams.

This week Wanderlux visits a Brazilian couple in their 4,000-sq.-ft. Miami condo.

Q – With your full-time residence in Sao Paulo, Brazil, why did you choose Miami for a vacation home?

It felt as if we were constantly in Miami, so it made sense to set up a base here instead of continuing with lengthy stays in a hotel. A hotel never feels quite like home no matter how luxurious the property. We wanted a place that was personalized just for us and embodied all the features we love about the city, from the coastal vistas to the international, artistic vibe. Most importantly, as a perpetual hostess with a solid group of friends and family in the area, I couldn't possibly imagine serving my guests ceviche and wine from a hotel credenza.

Q – What neighbourhood are you in?

We're in Aventura, which is interesting because it feels a bit suburban with ample green space and a relaxed atmosphere but still bears the markings of an exciting locale with great shopping and restaurants. We're a heartbeat away from Bal Harbour and adjacent to a number of marinas, so it's easy for us to hop onto a friend's boat and take off for a daytime adventure. It's the right amount of serenity and activity to suit our lifestyle.

Q – How often do you get to Miami? What's a typical length of stay?

We're here at the very least three to four times a year, and typically spend two or three weeks at a time. We purchased a four-bedroom unit to host our children and grandchildren while we're in town. Our home is in Sao Paulo, thousands of miles away, and we wanted to take advantage of our time here to reconnect stateside. The moment we arrive we're in an entirely different state of mind.



The large wall unit contains all the paraphernalia required for hosting parties. At left is the built-in nook. The surfboard art says "Don't Panic."

Q – How did you choose your building?

Our friends are in the same building and made the introduction. The [14th-floor] view alone sold us — it's the perfect band of deep blue and aqua off the coast of Golden Beach. The view extends from our living and dining space to our master bedroom. We hear the softened sounds of the waves at night, which makes for a great sleep.

Q – You used Grade New York to design your interiors. How did that collaboration come to be?

We have always admired the home of our friends who also live in Aventura; they had their home redesigned by Grade New York. We liked that the design was clean, modern and framed the ocean views. We felt their home had a sense of place, which is exactly how we wanted ours to feel.

Q – Tell me a bit about the process. How long did the renovation take? Were you involved with choosing every detail?

My husband and I had some ideas in mind in terms of our vision for a coastal space, but for the most part, we gave Grade creative liberty. We had dozens of conversations with them about colour palettes, materials and how we wanted our home to feel. Because of their history with our friends, the working relationship felt much more personal, which put us at ease.



Clean lines and neutral colours, with pops of colour, unify all the rooms in the four bedroom unit.

Q – Did you choose the artwork? Do you come to Miami in December for Art Basel? I consider myself a bit of a collector and find the local art scene very alluring. Although we're not often here during Art Basel, we make it a point to tour through the local galleries and stroll through (the art district of) Wynwood to soak it all in. We wanted our home to signify both our personal passion as well as the local culture, so Grade included a few pieces from artist Peter Tunney. They connected with Peter at Art Basel and knew his positive, graphic art would align with the vibrant feel of the condo. We don't surf but the "Don't Panic" surfboard in the living area is my favourite piece.

Q – Is the clean aesthetic of your Miami home similar to or a departure from your home in Sao Paulo?

Our home in Brazil is sophisticated, modern yet slightly eclectic, with an emphasis on displaying art, which is similar in philosophy to our Miami condo. The differentiation being that the palette, materials and overall design for each home was crafted in context to its surroundings. When we step foot in our Aventura home we know we've arrived in Miami. We feel and see the beach and that becomes intertwined with how we interact with the home and its features.

Q – All of your ceiling fixtures are so unique. Do you have a penchant for interesting lighting?

You should see our Sao Paulo home! Grade does tend to work with signature lighting fixtures and they knew they could take creative risks with us. I feel the lighting sets the tone and helps to differentiate one space from the next.



The kitchen serves its function well, with plenty of storage and counter space, but is visually very unobtrusive.

Q – Your kitchen is very form-and-function. Do you cook at home much or eat out at restaurants most of the time?

We are constantly cooking and entertaining, so we needed an intuitive space that serves our purpose but isn't our home's focal point. I think this was accomplished with the kitchen's minimal, slightly industrial design. It feels very cool and modern while blending into the background.

Q – Tell me the purpose of the wall bench inserted into the wall at the back of the living area.

Knowing that we would be entertaining, Grade designed this cozy niche as a place to gather — or to curl up and read a book. We like how it connects from the living to dining area.

Q – Considering this is not your primary residence, what do you store in the large built-in floating on your living area wall?

Good question! This stems from us constantly entertaining; we needed a place for our formal glasses, dishes, utensils and platters. We purchased 12 of everything, from aperitif glasses to champagne flutes. A smaller portion of the storage is allocated to board games, movies and other types of entertainment.



A comfortable (and efficient) banquette was built in to the eating area to maximize seating.

Q – Can I assume everything in your condo is exactly as you want and your days of approving fabrics and furniture are behind you?

Well, to be honest, when we originally renovated, we chose not to do the master bedroom because it meshed well with the rest of the renovated spaces, and having lived here for a few years we're ready to tackle that now.

Q – What are three things you most look forward to doing when you're back in Miami?

Hosting friends and family for drinks and nibbles, relaxing at the beach, and watching the sun rise over the Atlantic from our bedroom balcony.

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