



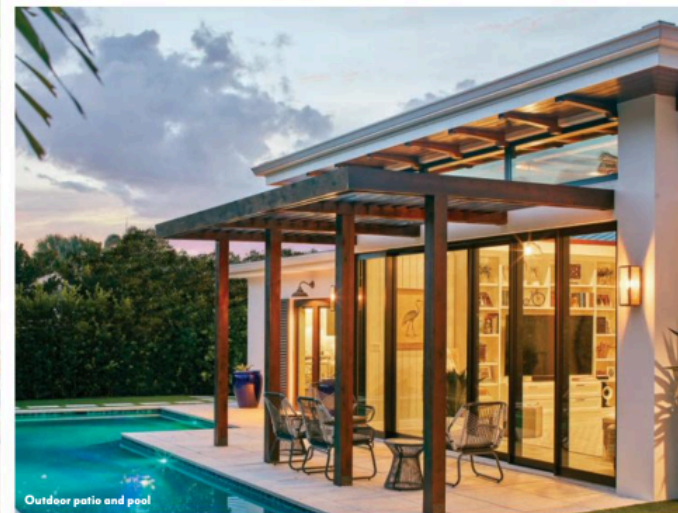
Rill converted a screened-in porch into a sun-filled living area that opens to the pool.

DANA HOFF PHOTOGRAPHY

# Contemporary COTTAGE

Architect James Rill collaborates with longtime friends to convert a mid-century vacation home in Jupiter into a modern, cozy, full-time dwelling

by JEAN NAYAR



Outdoor patio and pool

For years, the owners of a charming mid-century home in Jupiter used the compact cinder-block cottage as an easy-to-access vacation home while raising their three sons in Fort Lauderdale. But after their children grew up and moved out of the family residence to the south, they decided the time was right to make their Jupiter getaway a full-time dwelling. "When our sons moved into their own homes, our Fort Lauderdale house felt way too big, and we were living in only part of it," they say. "We loved the community around our vacation home, and we wanted to be closer to the water, so we opted to make the Jupiter home our primary residence."

There was only one problem with their plan: The 1,600-square-foot weekend home wasn't quite large enough for the entertainment-oriented lifestyle the couple was accustomed to. So they tapped their college friend James Rill, principal of Rill Architects,





to help them renovate and enlarge the single-story residence to make it viable for full-time use. Thanks to Rill's astute alterations and additions, the understated home is now a comfy, easy-care, beach-inspired haven that is ideally scaled for everyday living for the couple and their black Lab, Charlie. Yet it is also large enough to accommodate their three sons and daughters-in-law, as well as a growing brood of grandchildren, when the whole family gathers on weekends or special occasions.

"The primary goal was to open up and enlarge the house to make it conducive to family living and entertaining," says Rill. To give the home more gravitas as a primary residence, Rill sought to enrich both the interior and exterior with more character and elegance. One of his first moves was to create a front exterior courtyard by repositioning the garage and adding built-in window boxes and a trellis at the entry to create a sense of warmth upon arrival. "The garden wall and planters give the home the feeling that it's opening its arms to you as you enter and creates the air of an outdoor room from the inside," says Rill. Working with local builder Mercurio Construction, he also added a new standing-seam metal roof with outrigger brackets under the eaves and new windows and shutters as character-building exterior elements. An added bonus: A brand new patio, pergola, and lap pool—elements the home lacked in its previous incarnation—enable the easy living to extend seamlessly outdoors.

The home itself was also reconfigured to allow for an expanded and more family-friendly layout. On the couple's wish list was to transform the three-bedroom-two-bath house into one with four bedrooms and three baths. They also wanted to add a mudroom and laundry area, open the kitchen to the living/dining spaces, and expand the master bedroom with additional wardrobe and closet space. While initially the owners and







the architect talked about adding another floor to accommodate these spaces, Rill strongly encouraged them to expand laterally instead to retain a lower profile, in keeping with the scale and proportion of other homes in the area. With the owners' consent, he added an extra bedroom and bath on one side of the house, making the overall plan more symmetrical, then moved the garage closer to the street and added a mudroom to the other side of the home. He also opened the kitchen to the former modest living area and adjoining dining room; converted a former screened-in porch into an expansive, light-filled

primary sunroom/living space that opens to the pool; and expanded the master suite to make room for larger closets and dressing areas as well as a laundry room. In all, the additions and improvements increased the size of the home by roughly 40 percent, to 2,700 square feet.

Rill also tended to details that add substance and make the home worthy of primary-dwelling status. Among the upgrades that contribute to a newfound sense of elegance: a cedar ceiling in the lofty sunroom; new V-groove paneling in the sunroom and kitchen; and millwork on the tray ceiling of the dining room, where a new table from Restoration Hardware surrounded by slipcovered chairs from Ballard anchor the space with contemporary flair. Working closely with the owners on every aspect of the interiors, Rill helped shape the rooms to reflect their personal style by mixing cherished pieces from their previous home with new furnishings and accents that suit the home's new size. Enhanced light fixtures—such as the pendants from Hudson Goods over the island in the kitchen and the



Clockwise from top left: The airy, open kitchen features custom cabinetry, wide-plank wood floors, and pendant lighting; the brand new lap pool, with outdoor patio and pergola; the home's inviting exterior with courtyard, window boxes, and trellis.

delicate lantern from Lumens Light in the dining room—brighten the home with classic modern flavor. Wide-plank wood and ceramic flooring underfoot keeps the home easy to maintain, and fresh coats of Farrow & Ball paint in a diverse palette inject richness and warmth.

Now that the renovation is complete and the owners have had a chance to enjoy the home's expanded and updated form with the entire family, they see the dwelling as an ideal setting for their latest stage in life. "It's cozy and functional, and we use the whole house," they say. "It's the perfect size—we love it." ♦

#### DESIGN DETAILS

Architecture, Interior Design, Landscape Design: James Rill, Rill Architects, [rillarchitects.com](http://rillarchitects.com)  
Custom Cabinetry, Roof, Shutters: Mercurio Construction, North Palm Beach, 561.346.5147  
Pool: Craft Master Custom Pools, West Palm Beach, [craftmastercustompools.com](http://craftmastercustompools.com)

