

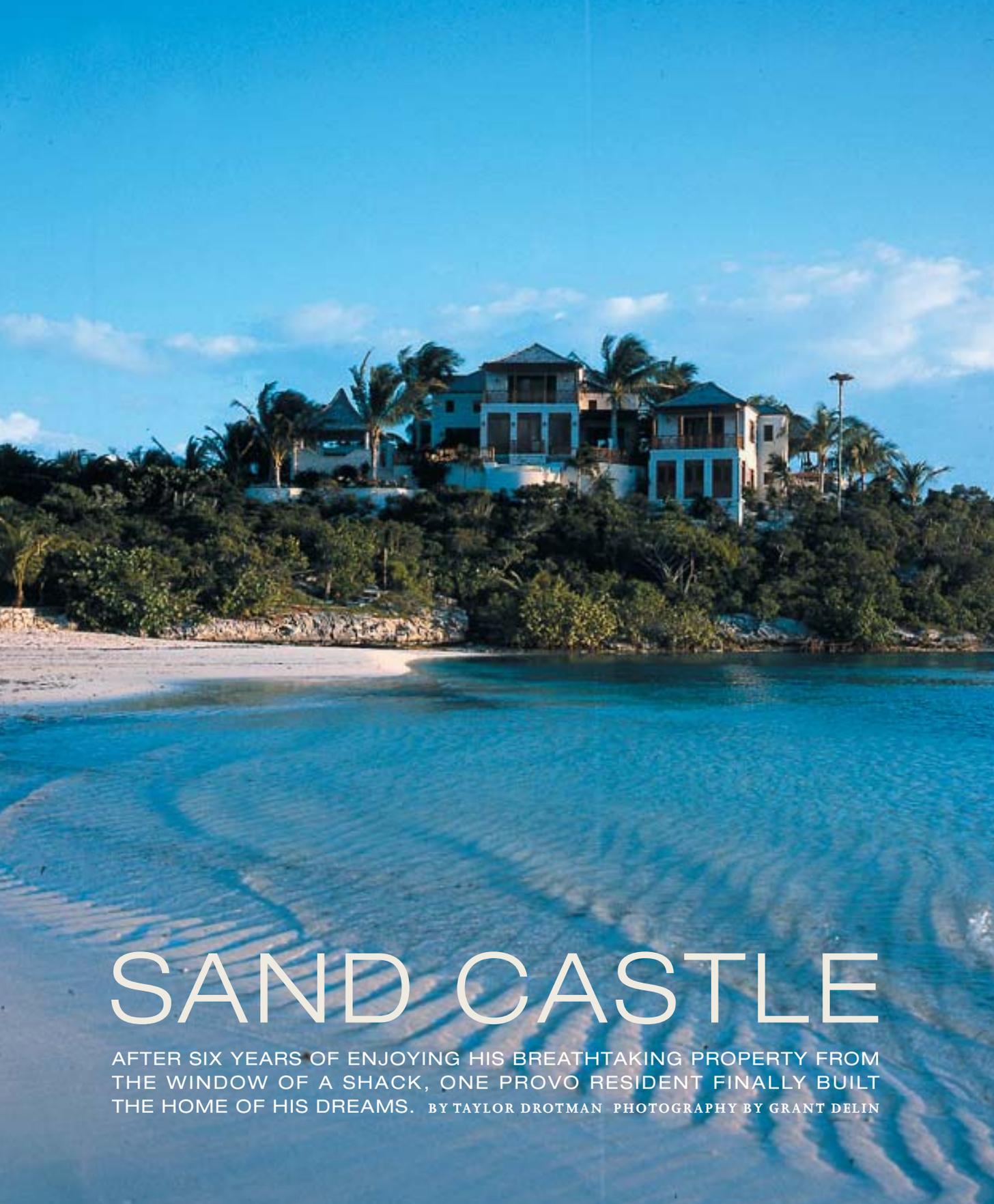
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SAND. SEA. SERENITY.

a view to a thrill

THE ELEMENTS OF THE TURKS & CAICOS
NATIONAL COSTUME STEPS OUT, SAILING WORLD HITS GRACE BAY,
PRIVATE AVIATION TAKES OFF, AND PROVO GROWS UP



SAND CASTLE

AFTER SIX YEARS OF ENJOYING HIS BREATHTAKING PROPERTY FROM THE WINDOW OF A SHACK, ONE PROVO RESIDENT FINALLY BUILT THE HOME OF HIS DREAMS. BY TAYLOR DROTMAN PHOTOGRAPHY BY GRANT DELIN





ASK ANYONE INVOLVED WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF Highlands what made the project so extraordinary and the immediate answer is the site. Not surprisingly, it's also the answer to what made the home such a challenge.

Occupying approximately three acres in one of Providenciales's oldest neighborhoods, the property had an interesting lineage even before the current owner took up residence. It was bought by one of the island's earliest developers—for whom the area is now named—sold to a group of Swiss friends, and only ever saw a tiny shack built on it. The lack of development could perhaps be explained by the home's eventual builder, Ken Brown of Kenneth Brown Construction. "It's such an amazing site with so much going for it that when I was hired for the job I knew it was really important to do it justice. It's just a spot you don't want to mess up."

When the eventual owner arrived in Provo in 1995, he had already spent months in the Caribbean looking for property without success, and it was only after a spur-of-the-moment trip to Club Med that he began to consider the Turks & Caicos. "I was shown a number of properties by a realtor and then stumbled upon this spot while out for a walk. I didn't know if it was for sale, but it was like nothing I had ever seen. It was on the top of a hill with a beach on one side, a lagoon on the other with space for a private dock, and a view of the sunset." The shack built by the first owners still stood, and the former

lawyer moved in. “I lived in the shack for six years. It was essentially being held together by termite glue, had holes in the floor, and utilized a towel as a bathroom door. I only survived summer storms there because the wind blew right through it, but the view was so glorious I didn’t care. It was only because my family couldn’t visit—I’m one of ten children—that I finally decided to build.”

But when that time came, more than a mere upgrade was planned. He wanted to build his dream home, and as such recruited noted local architect and friend Rory Stevens and Simon Wood of Simon Wood Associates. “He wanted to combine the intimacy of Provençal architecture with the open airiness of the Caribbean,” says Wood. “Moreover, having lived on the property for so many years, he knew the winds and the exact movement of the sun, and wanted to position the house to maximize the light, enjoy the sunset, and benefit from the natural breezes.” The eventual design allowed the rather spacious house to be naturally kept cool without the assistance of air-conditioning, and conversely outside, a number of different recesses were created to catch the breeze without being windy.

As a bachelor, the owner had the main part of the house designed as a one-bedroom master suite with an open kitchen and living room space ideal for socializing. But the house was also intended to grow. The study, set off from the master suite, was designed to be transformed into a nursery for when the time came. “We used the elevation and the fall of the land to inspire us. Essentially our design was a response to the splendor of the site,” says Wood. From the kitchen, the living room is a step down, and outside the deck falls a level further below ending with an infinity-edge Jacuzzi. Likewise, the guest wing, which is connected by a covered pergola and affectionately known as “Mom’s room,” is also designed to flow down the hill. By placing the entrance at a lower elevation, “the approach to the house and walk up the winding stairwell conceals the ocean, so that the view has maximum impact,” adds Wood.

An architect himself, the builder worked closely with Stevens and Wood when it came time to make the renderings real. “Rory’s sketches are done as vignettes and are incredibly detailed, so in the building process nothing was left to chance,” says Brown. But despite all of the planning the site remained a challenge to construct due to the elevation. “Because we had limited access, we had to start at one side and work our way out of the property,” adds Brown. When it came time to landscape, Natalie Zaidan, owner of Environment Arts, had to contend with the same challenges. “We had to landscape each area as it was built, which was a particular challenge as the site required jackhammering the ground limestone to get every tree placed.”

All of that work did result in distinguishing the house as a truly fine edifice. “We used great materials throughout, but the level of finish is perhaps most impressive,” says Brown. Mahogany doors and windows used throughout create an interesting contrast to the cedar-shingled roof, and three types of stone were used, each specific to its placement. The foundation stone is rustic and loose, the wall stone is in an organic formation with natural joints, and the column stone is set as finished blocks.

Outside, the landscaping similarly uses multiple textures to complement the home design. “We used layered textures and shades of green for an elegant,

PREVIOUS SPREAD

THE HOUSE IN ALL ITS GLORY AS SEEN FROM THE BEACH. A DEMONSTRATION OF PURE FORM—THE GUEST-WING STAIRWAY PROVIDES A CASTLE-LIKE FEEL.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT

A MASK BOUGHT ON A FAMILY TRIP TO SOUTH AFRICA. BEACH BONFIRES WITH FRIENDS ARE A REGULAR OCCURRENCE. THE MASTER BATH WITH ITS SHOWER-ADJACENT DECK OFFERS QUITE A VIEW. ONE OF THE HOME’S MANY SHADED SPOTS. THE SUNKEN LIVING ROOM SPILLS FROM THE EXPANSIVE KITCHEN.





natural look. The home owner didn't want formal gardens, but instead wanted plants that were in harmony with the natural bush," explains Zaidan. "Some flowering plants were included for color, but the house really speaks for itself, so we didn't want to add elements that were distracting. More than anything else, the landscaping gives the house a sense of history, as if it belongs in this place and always has." The black olive trees that line the driveway for example—a nod to the owner's Canadian roots—will eventually grow into each other and create a canopy to drive beneath.

Surrounded by natural elements, in both the interior—the sublevel and wine cellar wall feature exposed limestone—and exterior—an Osprey nest was built to house the local birds—the house is very much in harmony with its environment. "From my deck the water is so clear I can see eagle rays and turtles swim through the canal, and the beach is a perfect access point for kayaking, which I do daily," says the owner. "The environment is also perfect for kids and dogs," which is particularly important as the home's three other occupants are Scout, Qunga, and their daughter Thandi, a family of purebred Rhodesian ridgeback dogs. Doggy stairs were even constructed to allow the ridgebacks to easily patrol the property, an element Simon Wood admits is one of his favorites, as it expresses the particular lifestyle of the owner.

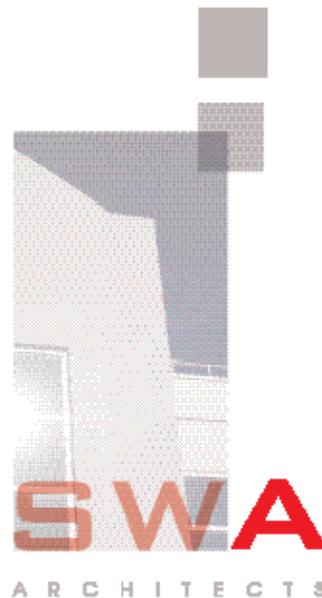


As for the interior design, that process worked a bit backwards. “I went to Bali and Java even before the house was complete and filled an entire container with all of the pieces I loved, many of which were oversized teak furniture,” says the owner, who doubled as designer. “I didn’t want a professional to decorate the place with their idea of what I would like.” His idea tastefully included not only actual furniture, but decorative elements that were later added to the house. Stained-glass windows from a home in Java became outdoor deck windows and a Balinese stone monolith became an entrance sculpture. Even the tiles and marble throughout the house were collected during his travels throughout Asia.

With building and decorating now a few years behind him, all that’s left is to enjoy the home that was eight years in the making. “The views never stop amazing me, and each time a new family member or friend comes to visit, I get to re-experience it through their eyes, and that’s why I started all of this in the first place, to share it with them—because I was okay in the shack.” ■

CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT
A VINTAGE BOAT GREETS VISITORS AS THEY ENTER. INCORPORATING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, THE WINE CELLAR IS MADE OF LIMESTONE. THE ARCHWAY BEFORE THE ENTRANCE STAIRS DELAYS THE GRATIFICATION OF THE INEVITABLY AMAZING VIEW. OUTDOOR PALAPA, HOME TO MANY A DINNER PARTY AND DOMINO MATCH.

I N T E G R I T Y
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