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ABOVE: Tucked inside a niche in the living room's ribbon-mahogany paneled wall, "Spring Light," an oil-on-canvas still life by Canadian artist Jun Peng Wang, radiates under recessed lighting. Hand-colored parrot lithographs, circa 1860, hint at the home's Pacific islands flavor.

ABOVE RIGHT: The foyer's burgundy-red backdrop contrasts sharply with the living room's creamy-white walls. A bench covered in fabric festooned with swaying palms and an original oil painting by Canadian artist Liane Abrieu, "Le Marche," introduce the room's accent colors.



AN AURA OF WARMTH

A Designer's Manalapan Home Springs To New Life With Exotic Antiques, Vibrant Art And Tropical Touches

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Palm Beach Gardens, FL

When designer Cindy Ray and her husband purchased this single-story, 1970s home on an overgrown lot on Point Manalapan, it was "basically just a big, open space with bedrooms, a kitchen and one huge room," Ray says. "The house had been renovated prior to our purchasing it, but the interior had very little to no architectural detail. It had a good structure

and promising potential." Since Ray and her husband wanted a charming home on the water, they knew some major renovations lay ahead.

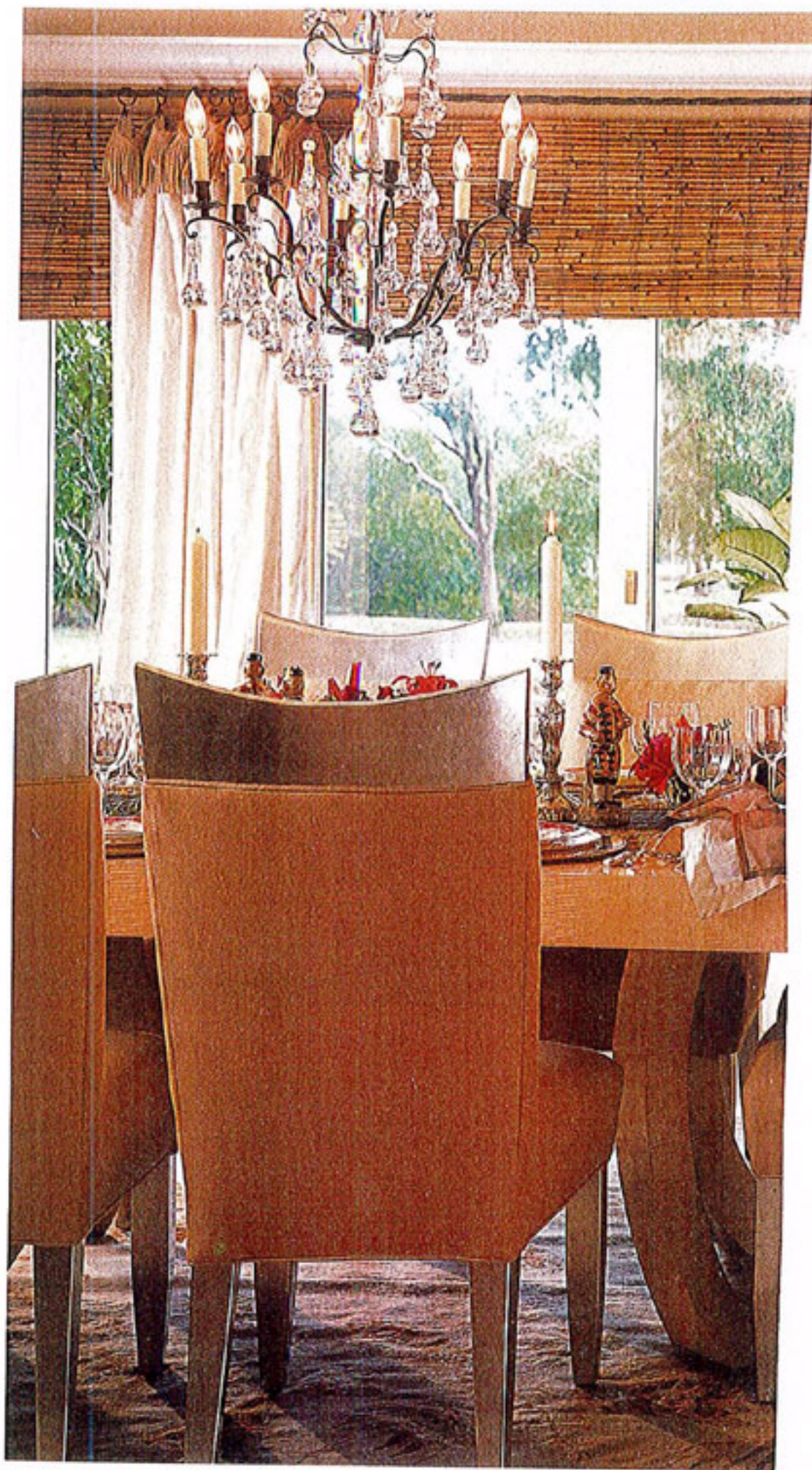
The home's secluded island location, framed by trees and wrapped in waterways, convinced Ray to transform the simple house into a strikingly sumptuous home that appropriately showcases her collection of Anglo-Indian antiques and

original paintings by Canadian artists. The two-year renovation and design project involved extensive restructuring.

"I lowered ceilings, created hallways, added columns, molding and other architectural details, and honed the polished marble flooring," Ray recounts. "I converted the one Great Room into dining, living and family rooms, and created a foyer." From room to room, the interior reflects Ray's highly personal and original style — a look that juxtaposes the exotic aura of antique, British-Colonial furnishings from India, Indonesia and the Orient with bold colors and streamlined, contemporary pieces.

In the living room, Ray set the scene with a striking backdrop: a ribbon-mahogany paneled wall with niches to display art and celadon vases. Playing against the wall's checkerboard pattern of wood grains is an ensemble cast of light furnishings and jewel-tone accents. A pair of dark-wood, antique Chinese cocktail tables draws together a trio of off-white plush sofas — one crisply tailored with nail-head trim. Mahogany-framed armchairs with cane backs, circa 1860, complete the grouping. Accent pillows fashioned from ornate silk and taffeta splash the sofas with reds, greens and golds — reflecting the tones in the Tibetan area rug. A floor lamp with a Fortuny silk shade adds a touch of whimsy.

While soft creamy walls denote the entrance to the living room, rich red, faux-leather painted walls cloak the adjoining foyer in spicy allure. Against this backdrop, an 1870s, Anglo-Indian rosewood sideboard, detailed with hand-carved sunbursts, recalls the days of British rule in India. The patina of a mirror framed in tortoiseshell bamboo appears to have developed over the years. "I've been collecting Anglo-Indian and Eastern items for quite a while," Ray says. "They mix well with contemporary furnishings because many of the pieces have strong,



clean lines, and the combination integrates the past and the present."

Given the dining room's warm ambiance, it's no wonder this space is the designer's favorite for enter-



taining friends and family. Linen-covered chairs with platinum-colored accents surround a sycamore table, inviting leisurely dining and conversation. A butter-scotch-and-cream area rug, anchoring the table and

ABOVE: A sycamore table sparkles beneath a graceful, 1850s French chandelier, composed of forged iron and crystal teardrops. Vibrant colors in another still life by Jan Peng Wang, "New Year's," enliven the room's subdued palette.



chairs, subtly alludes to the home's tropical climate. Nestled in a corner is an 1850s-style, Anglo-Indian, cane-and-rosewood armchair with a beaded pashmina accent pillow. The armchair blends with a reproduction of an antique butler's tray, punctuating the room's international feel. Sunlight sifts through bamboo shades framed by cotton-embroidered draperies, glazing the caramel walls in a soft glow.

Ray designed the family room with an emphasis on relaxation, choosing a cozy and inviting sofa upholstered in deep butter-colored chenille. "This room had to be comfortable, as it would also serve as a media room," says Ray, the parent of a teenage daughter and college-age son.

An ottoman with a water hyacinth base topped with tiger-stripped needlepoint fabric functions as a cocktail table, and cleverly pulls apart into sections for additional seating or side tables. Club chairs covered in

muted-green fabric and accented with gold Oriental lions allude to the home's Eastern influence. Round- and diamond-shaped, dark-wood occasional tables, trimmed in chrome, display personal mementos. The use of natural materials continues in the textured wool-and-jute area rug and cotton draperies that frame the lush gardens outside.

ABOVE: In the family room, a wild mix of patterns and fabrics distinguishes the accent pillows on the sofa. "Porte des Tresors," a stunning portrait of artist Song Zhang and his son surrounded by Chinese symbols, draws all eyes its way.

FACING: Amid plentiful foliage dotted with orchids, the garden patio makes the everyday world seem far away. "We created very natural and lush landscaping," owner/designer Cindy Ray says. "Our waterfront home affords us privacy."

Tucked within the garden setting, an intimate patio affords the best views of the abundant greenery and flora beyond. Weathered and worn, an Indonesian weaving table acts as a cocktail table, surrounded by four tightly woven rattan chairs. Perfect for outdoor entertaining, the chairs feature wide arms, green cushion backs and leopard-patterned seats.

Ray carried the garden's soothing green undertones into the master bedroom, where quilted bed coverings in muted-sage green establish the palette. "My goal was to create a feeling of serenity in the master bedroom," she says.

Tiny green and gold alligators scamper among mini-palms on the pale-green upholstered headboard. The master bedroom also reveals more Anglo-Indian pieces, including an 1870s rosewood campaign chest, an antique British-Colonial desk that functions as a bedside table, and a teak camphor trunk at the foot of the bed. A feminine Victorian slipper chair covered in soft green velvet pairs with the desk for reading or writing. The floor, awash in a straw-colored wool sisal carpet, adds textural interest. "I chose the carpet to evoke the feel of a sandy beach," Ray says. As practical as they are striking, plantation shutters enhance the tropical aura while filtering the sun's midday rays.

Ray designed her home from the heart. Taking its cues from the Far East, and traditional and contemporary design, this interior conveys ethnic modernity at its best.

RIGHT: In the master bedroom, the deep blues and greens in a surrealist oil painting by Liane Abrieu invite viewers into its dreamy, moonlit scene. A pair of blackamoor lamps, featuring dangling tassel accents and long poles topped with shades, lends exotic flair.



