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# Southern Exposure

*When a busy Boston couple builds a serene home in Palm Beach, one might think they're ready for a little R&R. Not Sandy and Bob Krakoff, who merely moved their action-filled lifestyle into a new domestic setting.*



BY NANCY JASLOW BADER • PHOTOGRAPHY BY JERRY RABINOWITZ

Sandy Krakoff doesn't seem easily frazzled. When asked about the road construction blocking her street, she initially responds with a blank look, before nodding in acknowledgement.

Then it hits you. This woman's primary home is near downtown Boston, where road construction has taken on a life of its own. The massive "Big Dig" is millions of dollars over budget and, some Brahmins claim, just as many years behind schedule. The first question people ask in the morning is which way the one-way street signs are directing traffic that day.

So what one might consider major roadwork leading to her Palm Beach home apparently doesn't even faze her.

In Boston, Sandy and her husband, Bob, can walk just about anywhere they need to go from their condominium overlooking the Commonwealth Avenue Mall. In Palm Beach, she says, "any walking we do is strictly recreational."

The Krakoffs settled into their home here just over a year ago. They had owned a small place at the Palm Beach Polo Club for eight years, but, as Sandy explains, "My car was on autopilot. The longer we stayed in Florida, the more time we spent in Palm Beach."

Eventually, the couple bought a ranch house, originally designed by John Volk, on Emerald Lane in north-central Palm Beach. The house had been added onto, though, and the quality had been compromised. The contractor hired by the Krakoffs recommended tearing it down. They did.

Enter Tom Kirchhoff, a Jupiter architect whose work Sandy had admired. Kirchhoff faced a host of challenges in designing the new residence. The property was odd-shaped and situated on a curved corner, where construction was limited by strict zoning requirements that included 30-foot setbacks on the





front and one side. His client stipulated five bedrooms, each with its own bathroom, and his-and-her bathrooms in the first-floor master. Plans included an office both spouses could use, a kitchen that would flow into the family room, and formal — “but not too formal” — living space suitable for entertaining friends and grandchildren alike. The floor plan was to be such that activities of the grandchildren and Arabella, the Krakoffs’ shih tzu, wouldn’t be limited. A pool was to be situated near the house.

As if these requirements didn’t make the job daunting enough, two

other obstacles presented challenges that might make lesser men cry. Sandy retained two independent interior designers, Benn Theodore from Boston and Carol Munzenreider of Perspective Design in Palm Beach, to work on the house while it was still in the design and construction phases. Plus, most of the project had to be done long-distance, since Sandy was still working full time in Boston.

The finished product is a 6,700-square-foot, two-story stately Georgian center-entrance home, roomy enough for a simultaneous visit by the Krakoffs’ three children (and their spouses) and three grand-



The home is outfitted in shades of off-white and beige. “I wanted the house to be very light, with very little specific color,” Sandy says.

The elegant dining room is just the spot for formal entertaining.



children. “We use the whole house,” Sandy says. There’s an elegant dining room and a well-designed kitchen, but no outside grill. Sandy’s favorite meal to prepare at home is brunch, served on the loggia, but she concedes that her most common dinner plans call for “reservations.”

It’s little wonder that the couple doesn’t have the energy to cook at day’s end. When they are at the house — their schedule usually alternates with 10 days here, 10 days in Boston — the Krakoffs keep on

the go. Bob often plays golf, but most of his time is spent running Advanstar, Inc., a Boston-based business communications giant that produces more than 100 business publications and nearly as many expositions and conferences.

Sandy sold her legal-profession placement business several years ago, but retirement hasn’t brought her much relaxation. She’s active in several charities, primarily in fundraising. Currently, she is focused on Boston’s Dana-Farber Cancer

Institute, of which she is a trustee — one of only two women ever to serve on the executive committee. She is particularly devoted to the Institute’s Gillette Centers for Women’s Cancers which, she says, is the only women’s cancer center to treat more than just the breast.

The Krakoffs, with Fredric and Helen Bossman, will co-chair the black-tie 11th-annual Dana-Farber Discovery Ball, Feb. 23, at The Breakers. The highlight of the evening, whose theme is “Good



Health Is Our Most Precious Jewel,” undoubtedly will be the U.S. introduction of the “Important Jewels Collection” by Christie’s Auction House. Guests will have an opportunity to try on the jewelry, which Christie’s will auction in New York in April.

“The ball raises money for Dana-Farber, but we also donate a portion of the proceeds to a local cancer-related organization,” Sandy says. “That’s why we get a lot of local support, even though Dana-Farber isn’t based here.” Sandy hopes the ball will raise enough for a \$1 million donation to Dana-Farber and an additional amount for the Pediatric Oncology Support Team (P.O.S.T.) at St. Mary’s Hospital in Palm Beach Gardens.

Sandy conducts much of the ball’s organizational work from her second-floor study. The room is one component in a design strategy that comes together to establish the residence as a second home, rather than a vacation home.

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The library (below left, right) is the nerve center for Sandy’s charitable activities, while the loggia (above, left) is ideal for relaxing.





The living room, distinguished by the large-scale Antonio Bentrone painting, is Sandy's favorite spot.

"I wanted the house to be very light, with very little specific color," she says. The color palette is essentially off-white and beige, with one huge burst of color emanating from a large-scale floral painting by Antonio Bentrone on the living-room wall. Sandy and Bob discovered the work at Art Miami, an exposition that Bob's company sponsors.

The floors are marble, except for the bedrooms and library. "Marble is cool, and pleasant to walk on bare-foot," Sandy explains, "and we do a lot of barefoot walking." One other area where marble is absent is the whimsical cabana bath, accessible only from the loggia, and made slip-proof for the Krakoff grandchild-

dren's safety. Another accommodation for the younger generation is a "grandparents' fence" around the pool area, which is set up when the children are visiting and stored in the garage when they're not.

Much of the home's furniture, including two Weimann chairs by the living room fireplace, was reupholstered to tie in with the Krakoffs' color scheme. The leather couch in the library, distinguished by its deep, rich tone, was designed by the Krakoffs' son, who is president and chief creative designer for Coach, the leather goods corporation. (Although that's the only piece of furniture in the house designed by their son, Coach is not underrepre-

ented here. When asked how many Coach handbags she has, Sandy smiles and replies, "Lots.")

The home's furnishings are an eclectic mix. "I love to go on the hunt and find things," Sandy says, "and once I do, I don't get rid of them." The couple often travels overseas for Bob's business. Sandy's favorite destinations are France and London. A golden, bronze-based table in the library and a bowl showcased in the living room were made in Paris by Herve Vanderstarten, famous for designing the J'Adore perfume bottle. The handwoven fabric on the living-

*continued on page 179*

## Southern Exposure

continued from page 121

room stool was discovered in Florence. The library bar and dining-room buffet were constructed by a local craftsman; the dining-room chandelier came from the Elephant's Foot antique shop in West Palm Beach. The dining-room chairs began life unadorned, then the medallions and gilding were added, and finally came contrasting fabrics. The dining-room table seats 10 to 12 comfortably; a second table can be brought in to seat 16.

The Krakoffs collect art, mostly American: David Hockney, Donald Sultan, glass by Dale Chihuly. "It's not enough that it be an important piece," Sandy says. "It has to have artistic value and be something we want to live with." While the couple acquired most of their collection during various travels, Sandy did purchase a Fujita box, displayed in the living room, on the Internet.

The kitchen is smaller than Sandy would like, but as spacious as the odd-shaped property allows. By opening the kitchen to the family room and a view of the walled garden outside, the kitchen appears larger than it is. Entertaining is facilitated by a catering kitchen in the garage.

A rare, quiet evening at home is apt to be spent taking a walk or watching DVDs, although, Sandy says, it's hard to find a movie Bob hasn't already seen on one of his frequent international business flights. For Father's Day last year, she gave him the DVD set of the first two seasons of *The Sopranos*, one of his favorite television shows.

Sandy loves the way the house has come together, but singles out the living room as her favorite. Bob's is his study, where he can go to smoke a cigar. Surprisingly, Sandy doesn't outlaw smoking in the house. "He can smoke anywhere he wants," she says, "as long as he cleans up." ❧

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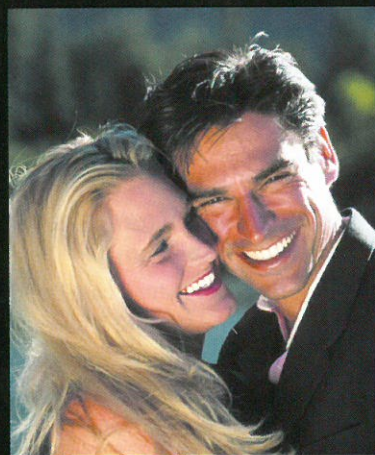
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