

This copy is for your personal, noncommercial use only. You can order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers [here](#) or use the "Reprints" tool that appears above any article. [Order a reprint of this article now.](#)

Printed on page 11

Georgian jewel stands out in Osprey

By *MARSHA FOTTLER* Correspondent

Published: Sunday, June 6, 2010 at 1:00 a.m.

The bayside enclave at The Oaks is sprinkled with majestic mansions like diamonds on a Tiffany necklace. But a recently renovated, 6,000-plus-square-foot, canary-and-white Georgian jewel stands out.

Maybe it's the thousand-pound bronze classical sculpture of angels and animal heads that is front and center, and framed by a curving and lighted double coral-stone staircase. The staircase is ornamented by four huge Doric columns, and punctuated by a pair of salt-crusted stone urns that could conceal a good-sized person standing up. The classical urns sit on a coral-stone porch and flank a mahogany set of doors with elliptical clerestory window and side lights. A monumental lantern swings from chains overhead.

And you're not even inside yet.

This Osprey Point Drive, British-style country home conveys what architects call a "sense of arrival." Big-time sense of arrival. But a lot of Oaks neighbors are asking themselves who will be arriving with pockets deep enough to purchase and maintain such expertly chiseled and beautifully molded eye candy?

The renovation of this magnificent Georgian, outside and inside, has taken one year, and is the signature work of contractor Timothy P. Macksey, owner of Old World Master Builders, and interior designer Jonathan Slentz of Jonathan the Interiors. The house is on the market for \$4.9 million through Realtor Joan Parkinson of Michael Saunders & Company.

The owner of the property bought the waterside estate in 2009 and immediately began an extensive reconfiguration of rooms and a thorough upgrade of amenities with the intention of customizing the residence as a glamorous vacation home for her family.

Nine-inch fancy crown molding went up everywhere. But the homeowner's plans have changed and she is currently renovating another seasonal place in Prestancia with the help of Macksey and Slentz. The waterside Georgian gem of Oaks Bayside is available to be somebody else's fantasy island.

Richly furnished with massive antiques and reproductions that are the correct scale for the dimensions of the rooms and the ceiling height, this Oaks Bayside house is being lived in while its on the market. The house is a Christie's Great Estates listing.

"My client loves to renovate big gorgeous houses, and she has the means and the talent to do it all over the country and in Canada," said Parkinson, the real estate agent. "It's her hobby. I searched with her for two years until we came upon this place at The Oaks. She always starts in a highly desirable neighborhood and she



STAFF PHOTOS / CHIP LITHELAND

The renovated 6,000-plus-square-foot, British-style house in The Oaks, featuring a sitting room and piano, five bedrooms, incredible craftsmanship and attention to detail, is on the market for \$4.9 million.

chooses a large home that looks grand from the outside. Then she makes it even more magnificent with unique detailing and luxury materials."

The house was originally listed for \$7.7 million, but Parkinson's client paid substantially less than that in 2009.

She has subsequently put hundreds of thousands of dollars into a dazzling redo where budget has bowed to quality craftsmanship and detailing at every juncture of the renovation process.

The "wow" factor on the other side of the front doors is a double-volume grand salon where all eyes are drawn to a 700-pound, crystal-and-brass chandelier suspended from a custom medallion 22 feet overhead and hand-painted by Slentz.

"The chandelier was carried here from the homeowner's other property in its own 6-by-6-foot crate with handles on the side," said the designer. "Then we had a lift bring the thing into the house. We had to add more chain, and it's motorized so it can be lowered for cleaning. The style is French Empire, and, to take full advantage of its beauty, I hung a huge mirror over the fireplace so the chandelier is reflected in it."

The dining-room chandelier is Strass crystal hand-made in Spain and measuring 46 inches. Macksey's team had to build scaffolding to install the light fixture and reinforce the ceiling beams to bear the weight. Four people worked on the installation, and then it took three days to put on all the faceted crystal prisms.

"There was a map and instructions in Spanish and German," recalled Slentz. "Drove us crazy. But the result is pretty amazing. That chandelier is a show stopper." The chandelier hangs over a glass-top table that seats 12. The walls are Venetian plaster. The flooring throughout the home is Asian rosewood.

The two-story home has five bedrooms. In the formal powder room, 24-karat gold-plated Waterford sconces bounce light off a commode with 24-karat gold trim, gold and crystal faucets, and a tea-rose colored marble counter.

The kitchen opens to the family room that overlooks the formal loggia with its outdoor kitchen, fountain, disappearing-edge swimming pool, and, beyond that, a nature preserve thick with mangroves along Sarasota Bay. The views are to Siesta Key and Casey Key. The kitchen area includes a bar, butler's pantry and spacious breakfast area defined by columns and arches and six sets of windows.

"The kitchen was one the two most challenging aspects of the renovation, mostly because of what we wanted to retain, not what we wanted to get rid of," said Tim Macksey.

"The original cabinets, done in an antique ivory glaze on maple, were of fine quality with wonderful hardware. So, Jonathan and I, working with the owner, designed what we wanted, and then Ray Routh's woodworking team matched the new with the existing cabinets so perfectly that it's impossible to tell what was here before and what we added."

The carpentry team also enlarged the range hood for the six-burner Dacor gas stove. "When it came time to match the existing hardware, we tracked down the supplier in West Palm Beach. Then, they went to the source in France, and artisans there had to craft the handles and pulls we wanted to match those that we had," said Macksey.

Every glass-front lighted cabinet in the kitchen and bar is backed with beveled mirror.

"The amount of custom millwork in this whole house is enormous, and it's been done by a team of expert craftsmen that it's almost impossible to assemble today," said the contractor. "The amount of detailing and the consistently high quality of

that detailing in every space is truly what sets this house apart, and a lot of it you can't even see."

Right Media

The four-car garage, hidden from street view, has exquisite stone floors and is outfitted with chandeliers. The garage lobby has matching cut-glass chandeliers (in the elevator and in the foyer), making the transition from the real world into this residential fantasy seamless and up to the standards of the rest of the ground level, which includes a laundry room the size of a New York City one-bedroom apartment. It's appointed with marble and custom cabinetry, including a drying wardrobe with adjustable louvers on the door. You could land a helicopter on the marble island, intended for crafts, flower arranging or folding laundry.

Interior designer Slentz said his biggest challenge in the house is a stairway that started out with some onyx trim. "The golden onyx from Turkey, called cappuccino, is so beautiful that the homeowner decided she'd like to see more of it," said Slentz. "Soon, the wall of the stairwell, the trim and then the walls of the hall leading to a guest bath were all onyx. When we got to the bathroom, we wrapped the whole room in onyx and added an onyx vessel sink. It's absolutely unique and stunning."

To finish off the project, Slentz called for a black wrought-iron handrail that is ornamented with genuine gold leaf.

You can bet that browsers and potential buyers of this property will be meticulously screened, meaning there's not much chance of the general public seeing Macksey's and Slentz's stellar work.

That's too bad. The house is worthy of being part of some grand public house tour. There's plenty to see and to talk about, such as the putting green on the upper sunset terrace, in a house that could inspire new hotels in Dubai.

This story appeared in print on page I1

Copyright © 2012 HeraldTribune.com — All rights reserved. Restricted use only.