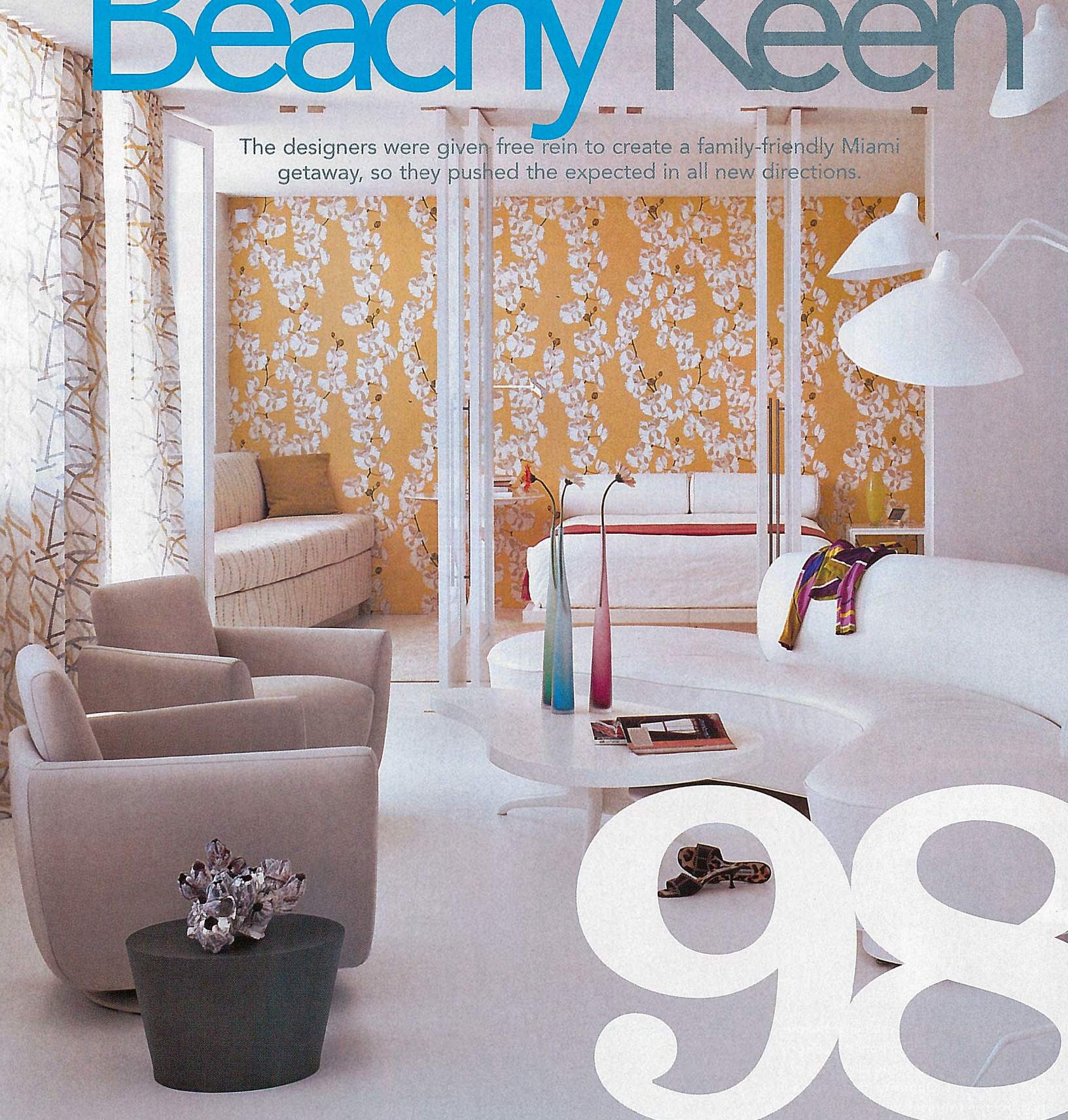


# Beachy Keen

The designers were given free rein to create a family-friendly Miami getaway, so they pushed the expected in all new directions.



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Playful zoomorphic furniture like the boomerang sofa and the tentacle-like floor lamp lead the eye on a curvy trip. The main living area is really four spaces: bedroom, living room, dining room and kitchen. The master bedroom can be closed off with pivoting glass doors. "The master bed is high," says the owner, "because I thought if anyone had a view it should be me."

ou can't judge a building by its exterior," says Michael Pierce, half of the New York City design firm Pierce Allen. The glamorous tropical-modern apartment featured here is situated inside a simple '60s concrete wallflower in SoFi (South of Fifth), at the lower end of Ocean Drive's art deco strip, before the overscale condos that are home to celebrities like Ricky Martin.

From the outside, the building is a dull concrete box on stilts, but inside, it is a veritable Left Bank of photographers, painters and creative types such as dancer Tommy Tune and knitwear designer Lucien Pellat-Finet. Pierce's creative partner, DD Allen, has had a holiday home in this building for seven years. "It's one of South Beach's best-kept secrets. I'm bringing all my friends in," she admits.

One such, a Manhattan client, snapped up a 1,200-square-foot holiday escape here. Pierce Allen was delighted to do the renovation, although Allen confesses: "I have a bit of apartment envy, as she has twice the space I have. A lot of the moves I made for her were my living out a fantasy of what I couldn't do with my own space."

Designing an all-white interior was a new direction for Pierce and Allen, and their client wasn't sure she wanted such an extreme look: "I have stayed at the Delano [Philippe Starck's white-on-white hotel], and it is so antiseptic," she says. And as a single adult of the baby boom generation, with 16 nieces and nephews, all of whom like to visit; she needed an interior that would be child- as well as beachproof.

PRODUCED BY LINDA O'KEEFFE AND NISI BERRYMAN. PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARLOS DOMENECH. WRITTEN BY LUCIE YOUNG.



**T**he client's favorite room is the master bedroom, where she likes to lie in the morning and watch the ocean. "It is probably the nicest bedroom I have ever slept in," she says. At night, she can close off this space with eight pivoting glass doors. During the day, the doors are left open to enlarge the main living space.

Her other favorite element of the design is the lighting. "It is unreal. The best time is when it has just gone dusk. There's a lot of recessed light that shines out from behind and inside things." According to Pierce, the idea was "to make everything very warm and mysterious at night." Perimeter lights flood down to make the walls glow.

The place she wound up with is not the original design. "We had a couple of different plans," says Allen. "The bedrooms all moved around and the kitchen was in a couple of different

spaces, and then one day, we realized we had to put as much as possible across from the south-facing windows and the water."

The client's one regret? Making the kitchen so large. "It is horribly overequipped for the amount and kind of cooking I do," she says. South Beach has such a great range of restaurants within walking distance, she barely cooks at all. The kitchen gets most of its use for informal entertaining. During the day, she often sits at the little desk in there.

"I have a DSL line in the bedroom and in the kitchen," she says. "If I do serious work then I sit at the desk at the back of the bedroom with no view, and if I do conference calls, then I sit in the kitchen and look out the window. I look at the sea and what goes on in the park next door, which is better than any sitcom." 📺  
*See Resources, last pages.*



This page (clockwise from top left): Bathroom vanities of surfboard acrylic float off the ground; floor-to-ceiling curtains make the guest room feel bigger; the mirror in the master bedroom a typical Pierce Allen gesture. Opposite (from top): The dining chairs are another cruise ship detail; Pierce (left) and Allen describe their work as "tight architecture loosed up with color."

