

Dream Team

CREATIVITY AND SKILL COME TOGETHER
IN AN ELEGANT BIG ISLAND HOME



Architecture by/ Roger Brasel, AIA, Hawaiian
Island Architects, LLC
Construction by/ Dennis Baldwin Construction
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ABOVE & OPPOSITE: The parabolic ceiling made of fir wood ceiling (clear stained to match the Honduran mahogany used in details throughout the house) expands towards the dramatic ocean view over the infinity pool. The curve is repeated in the entry's expansive glass-block walls, which flank a decorative water feature overflowing with tropical flowers and plants. The central rug is from Azadi.





ABOVE: The Master Bedroom has a view of Keauhou Bay. Furnishings provided by Fites Furniture.

OPPOSITE TOP: A modern kitchen (complete with a casual breakfast nook) mirrors the home's key materials and soothing color scheme. The contemporary cabinetry is custom milled and topped

with heavily mottled, dark concrete counters. Floors are travertine.

OPPOSITE: The Master features immense, clear-paned pocketing windows that look out over the pool and sparkling Pacific beyond. "Natural light pours in," Baldwin says.

the ability to open up a house's view as soon as you get through the front door."

Further personalizing the project was Baldwin's intent to put his own talents, particularly as a woodworker, to use in the construction of the house. Upon completion, he planned to use his residence to showcase the capabilities of his company, which specializes in high-end homes. Development of architectural plans was another story. For that, he teamed up with Roger Brasel AIA of Hawaii Island Architects, LLC, who also happened to have a neighboring home.

"Roger was able to call upon his experience and help bring to life elements that were critical to me, as well as bring in new ideas and design variations," Baldwin says. "Dennis had done a site analysis and wanted to create something unique that nobody else here had done," Brasel adds. "We took all the input, from the number of bedrooms to the design of an immense parabolic ceiling to the selection of materials, and figured out how to best achieve it all."

Upon approach, the overview of the 6,000 square foot house barely hints at the drama within. The structure features stucco siding (albeit with curvaceous detailing) and Hawaiian ohia wood posts, topped by a relatively traditional concrete tile Dickey roof with copper flashing. But step through the front doors and a different world opens up.

FOR DENNIS BALDWIN, OWNER AND SOLE PROPRIETOR OF DENNIS Baldwin Construction in Kailua-Kona, constructing his Keauhou dream home was an extremely personal affair. "It's a critical element to do your own work," he says. "It adds value personally and gives you a lot of creative latitude."

For years, Baldwin—whose previous history included 20-plus years in the design and building business in Utah -- had traveled the Islands in search of just the right building site, for which he had certain specific ideas in mind. "I had very detailed concept plans for the overall layout, entry views, ceiling details, pool shapes, and so forth," he recalls. "When we found this dramatic view lot in Keauhou, it was the perfect fit."

Still, there were challenges, most notably the one-third-acre site's extremely steep pitch. Baldwin embraced it, commenting: "I've always favored downsloping lots. They give you

RIGHT: Light pours into the master bath and illuminates the glass-block shower wall, custom cabinets and stone countertops.

OPPOSITE: The infinity edge-tile was mottled to simulate the ocean's edge. The decking is stained concrete.



“Roger did a great job combining our plans and details, shaping and combining them with his designs to achieve the feeling of subtle elegance we were after,” Baldwin says. “We fed off of each other and created a unique and beautiful home.”

Just inside, Baldwin's penchant for curves is punctuated by a key element of the house, a stunning fir wood ceiling (clear stained to match the Honduran mahogany used in details throughout the house). This striking ceiling looks like the upside-down hull of a boat. "It's a fairly radical design, an expanding parabolic arch," Baldwin explains. "But it's also reminiscent of the European shipbuilders who came to the Islands in the early days." The curve is repeated in the entry's expansive glass-block walls, which flank a decorative water feature overflowing with tropical flowers and plants.

Stepped down from the entry, an elegant living room opens up completely to the outdoors via expansive mahogany-framed pocket doors. "We wanted to create a feeling of spaciousness throughout the house, and minimize the feeling of inside versus out," Baldwin says. Beyond the doors, a sprawling lanai encompasses a 1,200-gallon hot tub that spills into an infinity-edge swimming pool lined with custom glazed tiles that reflect the light like blue sea glass (except, of course, for the green-tile turtle that "swims" at the bottom). Views of the ocean are vast and unobstructed.

To one side of the living room, a modern kitchen (complete with a casual breakfast nook) and dining room mirror the home's key materials and soothing color scheme, and show off some of Baldwin's skills to boot. Like the ubiquitous trim work, the contemporary cabinetry is custom milled. It's topped with heavily mottled, dark concrete counters that were poured in

place and finished with a heavy, curved edge, and fitted with stainless steel appliances. Floors are travertine. Lighting in the curvy pop-up ceiling is subtle and task-specific.

Of the home's five bedrooms, which are set in an opposite wing, the master is naturally the most significant. In addition to being spacious and private, it features immense, clear-paned pocketing windows that look out over the pool and sparkling Pacific beyond. "Natural light pours in," Baldwin says. Light pours into the master bath as well, and illuminates the glass-block shower wall, custom cabinets and stone countertops.

Furnishings throughout the house were sourced through Fites Furniture in Kailua-Kona. "We had a great relationship with them," Baldwin says. "They had a lot of experience with interiors and fit the mold perfectly." In addition to fir, mahogany, textured concrete and travertine, materials included tumbled marble, clear heart redwood and koa wood. "It provided a nice blend of colors and textures," Baldwin says.

While Baldwin no longer lives in his dream home (it's now owned and occupied by a high-profile physician who prefers to remain unnamed), he is understandably still quite fond of it, and speaks highly of Brasel's contributions and the process through which it came to be. "Roger did a great job combining our plans and details, shaping and combining them with his designs to achieve the feeling of subtle elegance we were after," Baldwin says. "We fed off of each other and created a unique and beautiful home."

