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Spring
2020

AT HOME ISSUE



the movers PEOPLE WHO MOVE MIAMI.



{RAINMAKER}

Edgardo Defortuna

The secret to this developer's success is to help his buyers live their best lives in the manner in which he does.



Picture the scene: Edgardo Defortuna and his wife, Ana Cristina, his closest collaborator, were in Paris at the Four Seasons Hotel George V. This is the hotel that turned Paris on its ear. Its 1920s heyday was long past, so when it was announced, in the late-1990s, that the property would be resurrected to rival the City of Light's famed "palace hotels," Paris sniffed. Then the George V reopened; Paris, which enjoys novelty even more than snobbery, cheered.

For their part, the Defortunas were suitably impressed. Many well-to-do couples would have left it at that. But when you're the founder, CEO and president of Fortune International, one of the top development firms in Florida and Latin America, you want to meet the interior designer.

MEETING OF THE MINDS

That would be the legend himself, Pierre-Yves Rochon. "He had an office five minutes away," Defortuna recalls. "We took a taxi over — we were in Paris for two days. His assistant said Pierre-Yves was booked for next three weeks. I told her we were leaving tomorrow, but here's my business card, and asked if he could please look at our projects." An hour later, the Defortunas were granted a 10-minute appointment. The couple rushed back to Rochon's office. The meeting lasted two and a half hours, and the Defortunas ended up hiring the esteemed designer to work on their Key Biscayne home. That's how the Defortunas roll. So when it became time to develop Jade Signature, Defortuna asked himself, "Why can't we give our clients the same look and feel as our home?" Rochon, as everyone now knows, became the designer of the luxury residences in Sunny Isles.

Lightning also struck with Herzog & de Meuron. After a 10-hour flight to Zurich, the Defortunas were driving to Basel, in the snow. Ana took Edgardo's hand. "What are we doing here?" she asked as the windshield filled up with white. "We have wonderful architects in New York and Miami." But they took the meeting, the inconveniences soon forgotten. "They'd come up with everything on our wish list," Defortuna says. "Every detail had been studied. We left saying, 'This is it. This is who we want to work with.'" That's how the Pritzker Prize-winning firm came on board as Jade Signature's architects. It's not about celebrity for the Buenos Aires-born real estate titan; it's about chemistry.

SEASONED STARCHITECTS

And now, with Fortune International's latest addition, The Ritz-Carlton Residences, Sunny Isles Beach, more marquee names have put their stamp on a Fortune International condominium: Arquitectonica is the architect, while Michele Bonan, the Florentine master known to Miamians for his work on Cipriani Downtown, created the interiors. Defortuna says that to see what Bonan did with the club room on the 33rd floor — perfect for an Aperol Spritz — is to see "the reality surpassing the dream."

A LIFE REALIZED

As he tools around in his Rolls-Royce, playing chauffeur to clients or to Ana Cristina and their three boys, life is indeed a dream — one that he conjured. And as the Defortunas are enjoying branzino and burgers at Jade Signature's grill, residents tend to drift up to say they can't believe he's given them their idyllic Miami lifestyle. He can believe it — because he lives it.

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KREPS DEMARIA

INDULGE Magazine

INDULGE is the luxury magazine of South Florida, published seven times a year by the Miami Herald. The award-winning magazine showcases South Florida luxury at its finest, including the people and brands influencing our everyday lives. With special editions devoted to Food & Wine, Home & Design, Fashion, Art and more, INDULGE curates the best of what's high-end and what's right now -- in Miami.

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