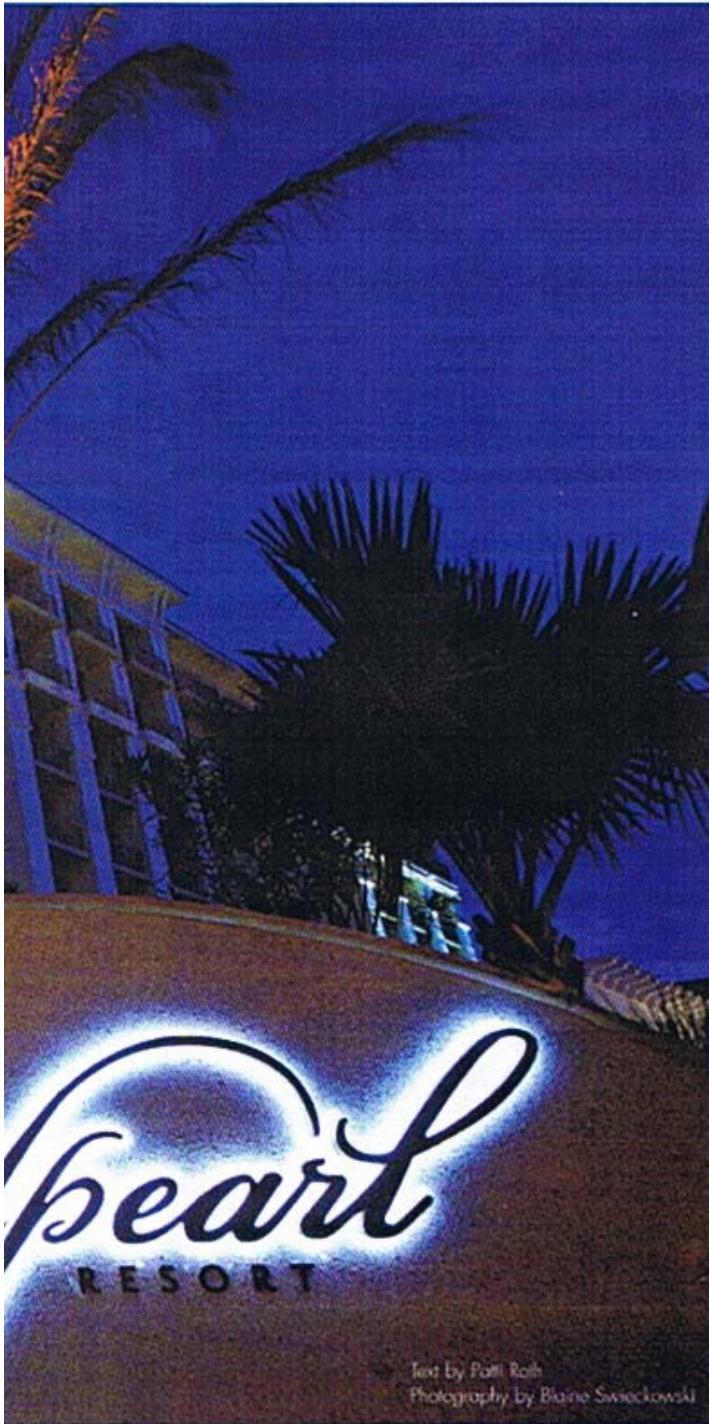


U.S. ARCHITECTURE

Top Projects
2007/2008







Text by Patti Roth
Photography by Blaine Swieckowski



Right on the beach, Sandpearl Resort offers guests a luxurious Florida vacation venue. Relaxed elegance and enjoying the outdoors are among the project's driving forces. For a refreshing dip, guests either stroll out to the ocean or hop into the freeform pool.

The structure's design showcases its scenic vantage points. The Gulf of Mexico offers an appealing visual backdrop at the resort restaurants and from plenty of room balconies.

The key player in the Clearwater Beach, Fla. project is JMC Communities based in St. Petersburg. The award-winning development firm built thousands of condos and other residential units in its home county. The project team also includes Adache Group Architects in Fort Lauderdale and Colorado-based Hensel Phelps as the general contractor.

JMC's goal for Sandpearl is to provide a high-quality resort with the look and feel of going to a friend's beachfront home. The resort is the first of its type to be built in the area in more than 25 years, according to JMC officials.



The appeal of the site includes a gorgeous stretch of beachfront within a walkable community that includes shops, restaurants and entertainment, explains Michael Cheezem, chief executive officer of JMC Communities.

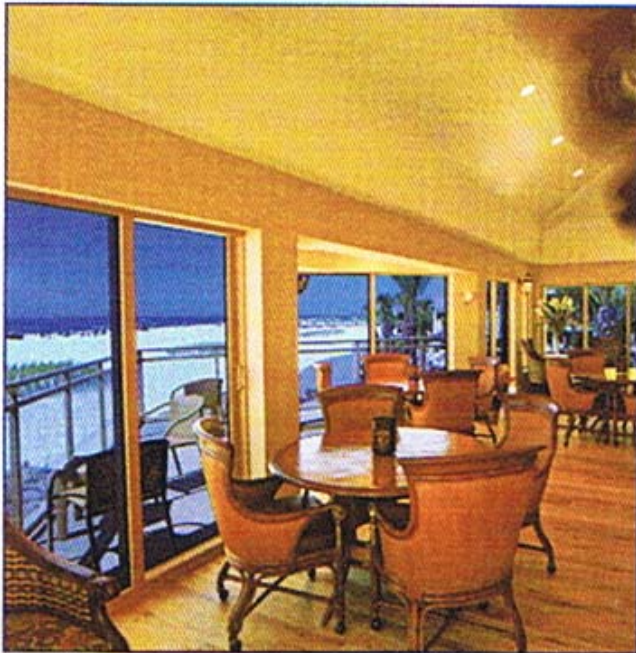
Among the key factors in determining the design of the 253-room resort was keeping the site coverage to a minimum to take advantage of open space. Elevating the resort provided an open section beneath the building for parking. In addition to an efficient use of space, the parking location offers an environmental advantage, by reducing heat gain of typical lots.

The parking lot is among the array of environmentally preferable measures that are key priority in the project. With attention to such facets as energy and water efficiency and healthy indoor air quality, the project team is seeking certification from the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program.

Adache staff describe the design as offering Caribbean island feel, enhanced by the decorative landscaping and soft paint hues. Other elements that follow the island theme include deep roof overhangs and decorative brackets and lattice work. The doors, windows and columns provide an appealing architectural rhythm.

Working on the gulf added some of its own issues for the construction crews. "As the Sandpearl Resort is built on an island, the only access to and from the project is over a bridge," said Brian Fischer, project manager for Hensel Phelps. "In addition to the difficulties of arriving and





leaving the site, are the issues of parking near the site, laydown area shortage on the site, high volume of pedestrian traffic immediately adjacent to the site, noise and work hour restrictions, mandatory shutdowns in utility installation due to high volume traffic - spring break and holidays."

For guests, the oceanfront location is a key draw. Other amenities include the pool, fitness center and spa, restaurant with indoor and outdoor seating and nine meeting rooms and outdoor event space totaling about 25,000 square feet.

The measures intended to reduce energy use include a high-efficiency cooling system and technology that allows the temperature of unoccupied rooms to be adjusted remotely. The windows and sliding glass doors are double pane, laminated and tinted. The pool uses a geothermal heating and cooling system.

Recycling was among the green building practices implemented during construction. About 65 percent of the debris was sent off for reuse. The design also includes water-saving faucets, toilets and shower heads. The amount of water saved from the fixtures as well as the efficient laundry equipment is about the equivalent of water used by 18 average households, according to information from JMC Communities.

To promote healthy indoor air quality, the project team selected construction materials, including flooring, sealants and paints, with lower emissions.