

OCEAN DRIVE



FUN HOUSE

BOLD ART, MODERN FURNISHINGS, AND A MOTLEY BUNCH OF TOYS MERGE IN A WARM YET PLAYFUL MIX IN NIGHTCLUB IMPRESARIO **DAVID GRUTMAN'S** SUNSET ISLAND HOME. **BY JEAN NAYAR**

At first glance, there's little about David Grutman's Mediterranean-style house that would suggest it's the home of one of the country's premier nightclub operators. Its traditional terra-cotta shingles, porte-cochère, and primly manicured lawn don't quite sync with what you'd imagine would appeal to a guy who rules the nightlife scene in Miami. "When I bought [the property] last July, everyone told me I was crazy," Grutman exclaims. "They said I was buying a house my grandmother would want." Yet, just inside the foyer, a gumball machine filled with neon-hued candies offers an initial clue about the colorful character who lives within the sprawling waterside mansion.

Situated on a double lot on Sunset Island, the house's leading selling points, according to Grutman, were its views of the water, its wide lot with 210 feet of waterfront (ideal for his 40-foot VanDutch yacht, called *Groot*), and its massive backyard. Surveying the property's landscape,

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David Grutman aboard his boat, the *Groot*, that is docked at his Sunset Island home.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SIMON HARE

The kitchen countertop is made of white quartz, and the lighting fixtures are from Restoration Hardware with a chrome finish; the clean, sleek look is made less serious with playful elements such as the Cap'n Crunch box mounted on the wall. RIGHT: Grutman (LEFT) and interior designer François Frossard.



“YOU WOULD THINK I’D HAVE A STRIPPER POLE, BUT THERE’S NONE OF THAT KIND OF STUFF.”—DAVID GRUTMAN

Grutman easily saw the potential for the lifestyle he wanted, and he collaborated with his longtime friend, designer François Frossard—known for his restaurant and nightclub designs—to convert the 5,000-square-foot residence and grounds into an inviting, exciting estate that’s as much a comfort zone as it is a party pad.

By night, Grutman spends his time lording over Miami’s two hottest nightclubs—LIV, the Fontainebleau Miami Beach’s rocking double-height dance haven, which reportedly raked in \$40 million last year, and Story, South Beach’s famed hot spot in South of Fifth. “We have the best DJs, the best

crowd—we love dominating the nightlife market in Miami,” Grutman says. By day, though, he sleeps in, then spends afternoons mostly on the phone with his staff, talent agents, and promoters as well as musicians and artists who perform at his clubs. As an antidote to his crazy work life, Grutman tasked Frossard with crafting interiors that exuded comfort. “Dave works nonstop; he’s always on the go,” says Frossard. “So the home needed to be more like a safe haven or retreat for him, to [give him] a break from the nightlife scene.”

The house also needed features that would make it easy for Grutman to entertain.

While his only roommates are Charlie and Kona, his English setter and Australian shepherd, and a one-eyed cat named Winker (who’s known to cause mayhem by occasionally jumping into the pool), Grutman often plays host to a wide range of visitors, including DJs, artists, musicians, and celebrities from all over the world. “I love spending time with creative people, so I have an open-door policy,” he says. “I like people to feel that when they come from out of town they have a comfortable place to stay in Miami that’s not a hotel. You never know who’s going to be here.”

To make the home both

comfy and guest-friendly, Frossard’s first step was to reconfigure the dining room and kitchen by knocking down the wall that separated them and opening up the rooms to form one large entertaining space. An expansive new kitchen island rimmed with white leather bar stools, crisp white cabinets, and a circular breakfast table now make this gathering space the “center point of the home,” Frossard explains.

The designer also gutted and redid all of the bathrooms—encasing the guest bath with floor-to-ceiling Calacatta marble—and refinished the floors throughout. With the shell complete,

the duo then started from scratch on the décor, shopping in Wynwood and the Design District and in New York to fit out the living spaces and multiple guest rooms with mostly neutral-colored modern furnishings and quiet accents that set a soothing tone throughout. “You would think I’d have a stripper pole, and this and that [clubby accoutrement], but there’s none of that kind of stuff,” says Grutman.

Grutman’s playful side is instead revealed in his collections of toys and art—the only significant *objets* he brought with him from his previous home, a penthouse condo on Belle Isle. As

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CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: The home is filled with assorted collectibles and works by local artists, like this vintage 1950s record player and Alex Yanes's *Good Vibes*; hanging on the wall is a piece by INO; miniature toy dolls of Run-DMC.

inviting as the contemporary interior spaces are, these attention-grabbing collectibles, photographs, paintings, and sculptures pepper the rooms with zippy pops of energy and color. “What’s great is that most of the art is by local artists,” says Grutman, who counts works by Santlov, Alex Turco, and Alex Yanes among his favorites.

A set of custom-designed shelves in a sitting area off the kitchen, one of the few lounge-worthy spaces in the home, with smoky blue velvet chairs, serves as a place to display a portion of his hundreds of toys—cartoon-like Kidrobots, tiny soldiers, Matchbox cars, Mr. T and Doughboy figurines—like a peanut gallery of pals along one wall. In the living room, a commissioned work called *The World Is Yours in Gold* by Alex Turco adorns an entire

wall around the fireplace with rich texture and muted washes of color.

Outside, more of the fun stuff unfolds. With a few swift gestures and some additional landscaping, Frossard reshaped what was a virtually empty lawn into a variegated yet relaxed playground. A massive circular swing bed—large enough for two or more people—hangs from a branch of the backyard’s only tree, which is also ringed by a semicircular built-in bench topped with plump custom cushions that can seat a sizeable crowd and overlooks the water. A colorful totem sculpture made by another local artist sits at the far corner of the yard.

Frossard also added a flavorful mix of furnishings and accents around the pool. An extra-long table topped with a raw-edged slab of wood

and surrounded by a clutch of plush chairs sits beneath a patio canopy and is illuminated by a vivid red neon GOLD RUSH sign mounted on the side of the house. “We salvaged it from the now-defunct strip club in downtown Miami,” notes Frossard of the only point-blank nightlife-inspired accent on the property.

After ambling through its flowing spaces, it’s easy to see how the house has become the perfect place for a teddybear-playboy-madman like Grutman to live

and sometimes work—in addition to managing his clubs, the self-made kingpin is currently planning a new hotel and 500-seat restaurant as well as a possible reality TV show with a “nightclub rescue theme.” Refreshed as it is with Frossard’s deft structural tweaks, fine-tuned furnishings, and custom accents as well as Grutman’s quirky art and collectibles, the Mediterranean-inspired abode now hits all the right notes for this crowd-pleasing entrepreneur to contentedly call it home. **OD**

DESIGNER DETAILS

Interior designer François Frossard incorporated out-of-the-ordinary highlights into nightclub mogul David Grutman’s new Miami home.

Exquisite display

components: Custom shelving and display units—almost as artful as the curios they contain—provide a way to curate disparate collectibles with a few impactful gestures in various rooms, including the kitchen and den.

Statement pieces: A pair of riveted metal-clad Arne Jacobsen Egg chairs—gifts to Grutman from Frossard—an antique barber’s chair, and a vintage scale, along with plenty of local art, enliven the modern rooms with punches of personality.

Evocative light: A constellation of lanterns suspended from a tree, in-ground up-lights that highlight an exterior sculpture, and a bright red vintage neon sign next to the pool infuse the backyard with a mildly clubby vibe when the sun goes down.

Flowing spaces: Removing walls and opening up the kitchen and dining areas into a grand room allows guests to gather in one welcoming space on the main floor, while a series of doors open onto the patio from multiple points, easing the flow between indoors and out.

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—FRANÇOIS FROSSARD