

# AT HOME

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## A MODERN MANSION IN THE ESTUARY

+ THE ARTISTIC DWELLING OF CHICO'S FOUNDERS

ARCHITECTURALLY CHIC ON CRAYTON ROAD

GARDENING ART IN PELICAN BAY

A SPA-LIKE RETREAT IN NAPLES

# THE CLOISTER

A 1928 MIZNER RESORT ON SEA ISLAND, GA., IS REDESIGNED TO APPEAL TO TODAY'S TRAVELERS.

BY SHERRY BECK PAPROCKI  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY HARLAN HAMBRIGHT

AT A TIME IN THE 1920S BEFORE THE WORLD WENT MODERNISTIC, FLORIDA DESIGNER ADDISON MIZNER DEVELOPED THE SPANISH AND MEDITERRANEAN REVIVAL STYLE THAT WAS INTRODUCED IN BOCA RATON AND MANY OF PALM BEACH'S GRAND MANSIONS.

Even today, modern architects have an appreciation for his finite sense of proportion often found in the columns and arches of his work. His legendary design has lived on for nearly a century, and his influence is often felt in various settings and establishments.

For Southwest Florida interior designer Pamela Hughes, Mizner's impact was important when she went to work on a renowned Georgia resort, The Cloister at Sea Island. Hughes was the interior designer responsible for a three-year redesign at the resort focused around one, salvaged Mizner room, known as The Spanish Lounge. The late architect's impact, she says, was felt throughout the entire project even though most of the old hotel was entirely replaced.

## ARCHITECTURALLY BUILT

Strong wooden beams support the ceiling within the vast Mizner room at The Cloister resort. When The Cloister's original buildings were demolished, the room that best depicted the work of its original architect was dismantled and put into a warehouse. Once it was resurrected as a wing in the new building, furnishings and other adornments were kept simple.





Hughes' story regarding the redesign is one that involves villages of Turkish rug weavers creating 750 new carpets from wool that was organically dyed, draperies completed in Portugal with yards of trim that required the total attention of one of her staffers, and furniture reproductions made from authentic antiques at a Los Angeles factory. To those who had not visited the original resort, The Cloister's update seems like a total renovation rather than the mostly new building that it includes. "We took immense care to duplicate the details that Mizner used," Hughes says.

The original Mizner room is now only one wing of the hotel, and it is starker than most of the resort's other spaces. "We saved the one room that Mizner did," she says.

#### INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE

Guest rooms at The Cloister vary broadly from one room to the next. Carpets were created by Turkish weavers in small villages throughout the country as the color scheme for each room was customized. Drapery fabrics were woven in England on vintage wooden looms, while drapery trims were created in Portugal. "A great deal of care was spent on details," explains Hughes, who visited The Cloister's extensive archives to chose the artwork now used throughout the hotel.

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"We just put it in a warehouse." Now resurrected, it features original stained glass windows and heavy wooden ceiling beams. Four original Mizner lounge chairs were reupholstered and incorporated among its furnishings. Hughes explains that Mizner's style had fewer frou-frou details, such as ornate draperies and other elements generally considered seminal to design. For Mizner's work, the focus was on structure, not fabric; style, with a bit of glam. AH

*IF YOU GO: The Cloister at Sea Island is a Forbes five-star resort located off the coast of Brunswick, Ga., 90 minutes north of the Jacksonville airport and 90 minutes south of Savannah. Room rates begin at \$395 per night. Visit [seaisland.com](http://seaisland.com) for additional details.*



**SIP IN THE CELLAR**

"We wanted to make it look like a basement in a real Mizner mansion," designer Pamela Hughes explains, regarding The Cloister's wine cellar. Vintage oak beams, brick floors and walls, and a long, custom-made table were incorporated. Chairs are antique reproductions made by Ferrante in Los Angeles.