

An aerial photograph of a large, multi-level white house with red accents, situated on a tropical island. The house features a prominent gabled roof with red shutters and a large swimming pool with a striped umbrella. The property is surrounded by lush greenery and palm trees. In the foreground, there is a wooden dock extending into the water with a swing set. The overall scene is bright and sunny, capturing the essence of a tropical vacation home.

# An Element of Surprise

At Kings Crown, unexpected details and dramatic moments reveal themselves one at a time.

*Words by Natasha Were. Photography by Brett Davis and Ana Lui.*

**P**erched at the edge of Dunmore Harbour, on the western shore of Harbour Island, Bahamas, Kings Crown is a property that reveals itself slowly. From the driveway, the single-storey silhouette and dormer windows peeking from the shingled roof suggest an unassuming island cottage, one that settles into its surroundings with quiet ease.

Step through the red-painted front doors, however, and this impression dissolves. Red, long associated with the safe return of seafarers and a subtle nod to the island's shipbuilding past, recurs throughout the house, but nowhere more dramatically than in the entry foyer, where two oversized crimson Chesterfields face one another beneath a cluster of delicate shell chandeliers.

Beyond them, the real drama unfolds. An almost invisible wall of glass draws the eye along an elevated lap pool, its black-and-white checkerboard tiles stretching 75 feet toward the horizon.

What appears to be a modest bungalow is, in fact, a 7,500-square-foot, eight-bedroom residence with a private dock

and sweeping harbour views. Conceived and designed by Paul and Rita King, experienced developers whose roots on Harbour Island run deep, the home bears all the hallmarks of owners who know and love their island.

Built across two storeys, Kings Crown is a family home first and foremost and a vacation retreat second. Daily life unfolds on the upper level with the pool as its central axis, the main living spaces running along one side and the family's three bedrooms along the other. Below, five guest suites and a series of leisure spaces accommodate the ebb and flow of visitors, while preserving the intimacy of the floor above.

"We've always been inspired by the traditional architecture and craftsmanship of Harbour Island, so while the structural core is poured concrete, the exterior is clad in cypress siding, with white shiplap lining the interior walls and maple ambrosia warming the ceilings above," the owners say.→



"Over the years, we've also salvaged traditional building materials, local limestone and Abaco pine, from derelict houses and used these in accents throughout the property."

If the exterior is an exercise in restraint, the interior is where the Kings' flair for creativity emerges. Their playful approach to design grounds the grand proportions, turning what could feel imposing into something decidedly inviting.

In the open-plan kitchen, above the poured concrete countertops, a wall of hand-painted tiles, commissioned from an artist in the Netherlands, depicts local marine life in red – stone crabs, spiny lobsters, octopus, and wahoo. This colour is echoed in bold Big Chill appliances, while salvaged brass ship lights hang above the island, their metallic warmth repeated in fixtures and hardware throughout.→



The kitchen and dining room flow onto a deep covered terrace, where low-slung couches and an outdoor bar are perfectly positioned for casual sundowners. Beyond, a sunken deck sets the stage for meals almost suspended over the water. The furniture is arranged in descending height order – bar stools, dining chairs, sofas and lower deck – ensuring that wherever one sits, sightlines to the sea remain unobstructed. →

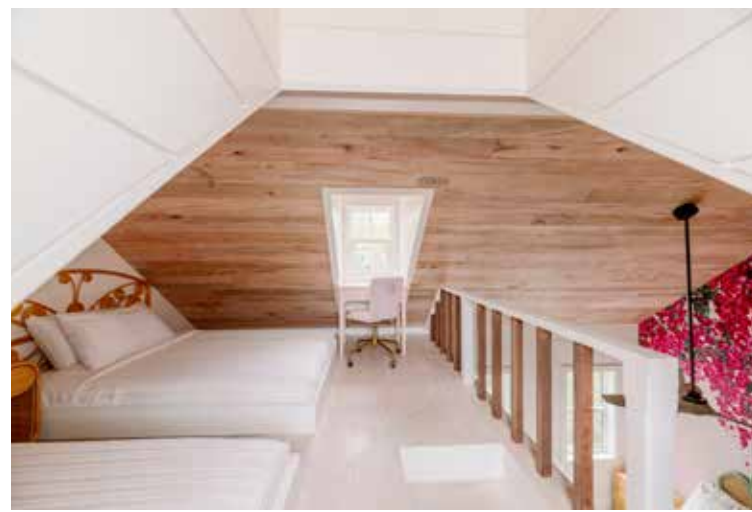




The Kings' instinct for balancing resourcefulness with whimsy is perhaps most evident in the principal suite. Here, offcuts of timber from the ceiling are arranged in a herringbone pattern to create a one-of-a-kind headboard, with vibrant wallpaper depicting a giant flamingo above it. The bathroom is equally eclectic: the combination of botanical prints, industrial-style

copper taps, elegant shell chandeliers, and a concrete bathtub is an unorthodox composition, but one that just works. A discreet wine and coffee bar in the corner of the bedroom seems to encapsulate the Kings' sense of irreverence and their commitment to celebrate life from first pour to last. →





The children's bedrooms are equally considered. In the daughter's, fuchsia bougainvillea appears to cascade down one wall, while up in the loft, a desk fitted neatly into the dormer window creates a study nook flooded with natural light. The son's room is calmer, with white walls and a built-in bunk bed, offset by striped tiles and fish-print wallpaper in the bathroom.

Descending to the lower level, more unconventional details await. Each of the five guest suites opens onto either a private garden or, in the case of the second principal suite, a waterfront deck with bay views. While the shiplap walls lend Caribbean character, distinctive wallpapers – a stormy seascape, delicate orchids, seashells and swaying palm fronds – give each room its own identity.

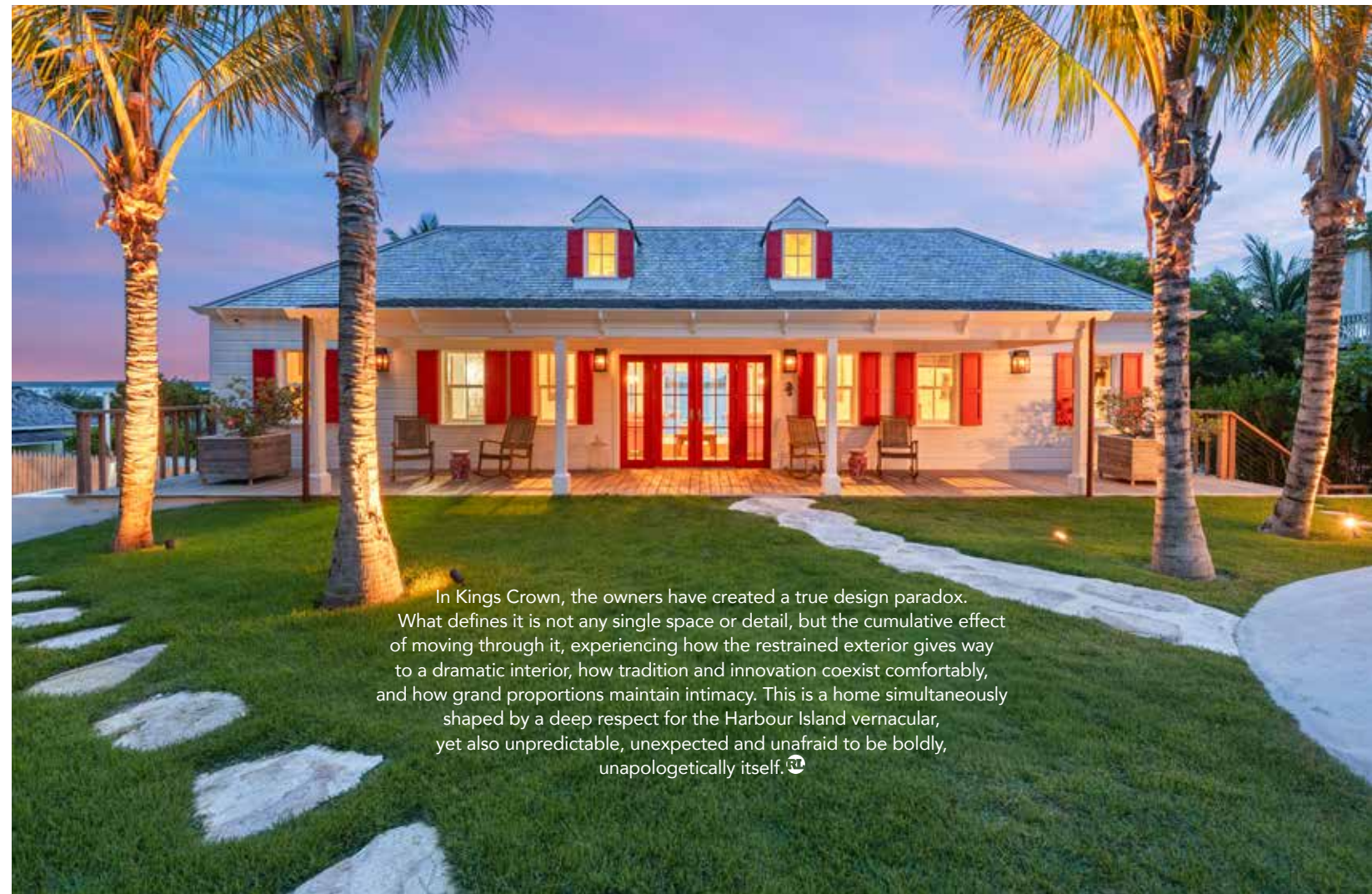
The windowless spaces beside and beneath the pool have been reimagined rather than concealed: one houses a fitness room, with a Peloton bike, treadmill and rowing machine, another is a playroom (affectionately known as the 'kids dungeon') where monstera-print rugs cover the walls, transforming it into an unexpectedly exuberant space.→





Perhaps their most experimental concept, however, is the rec room: a gathering space for all ages, it houses multiple sofas, a full bar, a pool table and a wine cellar constructed from reclaimed timber. Here, glass garage doors roll up and out of sight, providing endless views over the bay, and the floor is covered in sand, dissolving the boundary between indoors and outdoors.

From there, it's only steps to the private dock, from which one can climb down into the sea and snorkel on the Kings' artificial reef, home to grunts and snapper, green morays, and a handful of turtles, or take a seat on one of the in-water swings, with toes dangling in the warm, Bahamian sea.



In Kings Crown, the owners have created a true design paradox. What defines it is not any single space or detail, but the cumulative effect of moving through it, experiencing how the restrained exterior gives way to a dramatic interior, how tradition and innovation coexist comfortably, and how grand proportions maintain intimacy. This is a home simultaneously shaped by a deep respect for the Harbour Island vernacular, yet also unpredictable, unexpected and unafraid to be boldly, unapologetically itself. 🏡