



CHRIS BARBARA
DEVELOPMENT



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The Burlingham Residence

REAL-ESTATE ENTREPRENEUR SHIFTS FOCUS TO BUILDING LUXURY OCEANFRONT HOMES THROUGH CHRIS BARBARA FINE HOMES, INC.

by Daniel Casciato

When Chris Barbara was challenged to build an oceanfront vacation home for one of his clients, William Burlingham, his goal was to give the client the feeling that he was not in South Florida. "The creation of this home was inspired by Mr. Burlingham's countless surfing adventures around the world," says Barbara, president and founder of Chris Barbara Fine Homes. "His main focus was to design an eco-friendly home that served as an extension of his travels and surround himself and guests as a 'fun house' to share the time together."

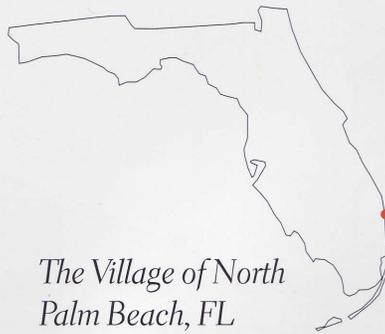
Barbara delivered a masterpiece. The 3,000-square-foot, three-bedroom, two-bath Burlingham Residence utilizes a modern, tropical theme with a thatched roof over the front of the home, and carbonized bamboo and Italian trav-

ertine as the main flooring surfaces. The kitchen features cabinets made of cross-cut maple stained in a dark mocha color, bamboo granite countertops, and a multitude of low-voltage LED lights. The bathrooms were done with hand-laid 2" x 2" Mexican beach pebble from floor to ceiling, with an inlay of bamboo paneling. The exterior has a true tropical feeling with a wide variety of native and non-native palm trees, plants, bamboo cap rocks, and an assortment of Mexican beach pebble.

Barbara, who left a career in law to pursue other ventures, founded Chris Barbara Developments, a full-service development company that offers clients general-contracting, design-build, and construction-management services. Typical development projects for the firm span across many



NATURAL ELEMENTS
Equipped with a thatched roof, the Burlingham Residence's exterior features an assortment of native and non-native plant life.



The Village of North Palm Beach, FL

POPULATION: 12,582
ATTRACTIONS: Beaches, museums, waterparks, zoos

Before Barbara's father came on board, the company was developing 3,000- to 4,000-square-foot homes. Today, with 12 employees, the company is building homes with an average square footage of 10,000. Revenues exceeded \$5 million last year, and the business continues to grow. "Our philosophy is that we have extraordinary communications, combined with delivering projects timely and competitively, all while exceeding our clients' quality and expectations," says Barbara, who, as president, takes a hands-on ownership approach to his business to ensure each project is a success. "Our success also comes from our willingness to hit singles and doubles, not always the homerun, to capture the contract."

Barbara enjoys being personally involved in each project that his firm constructs. "We're very communicative throughout the entire process," he says. "For example, our on-site project superintendent has strong management skills and confirms everything in writing, including the minutes of the weekly client meetings. No one has ever said to us, 'You never told me what is happening on the job.'"

Communication is critical for the company, since it deals with many homeowners who live and travel abroad. "We often communicate with clients either by e-mail or via iPhones so we can send them photos about what is going," Barbara says.

His strategy of continuously updating the clients—whether it's by conference call, in person, or via e-mail—has proven to be quite successful. "We sit down with our clients three times a week, go over the job schedule, what will be occurring and what has occurred, and just really keep them abreast about what's going on," he says. "Right now, clients are so sophisticated and very budget-conscious. In other words, you have to sit down with them and value-engineer the job in order to get it where they need to be. That's the fun part of the job. I enjoy sitting down with the clients and try to build their dreams." ■



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