

Palm beach real estate: Contemporary home for sale at \$14.95 million.

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REAL-ESTATE

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Throughout their years together, Michael and Suzanne Ainslie have enjoyed the process of building their homes. Maybe that affinity is built into their DNA? Michael is a former chairman of the Palm Beach Planning and Zoning Board and Suzanne is an agent with Sotheby's International Realty.

Here's how their latest Palm Beach real estate endeavor came about. In 2017 a property at 596 N. County Road, which adjoined their custom-built home on Plantation Road, came up for sale.

"There was a very nice elderly lady living there, and we thought: If that becomes available, let's build again ... " Suzanne explains.

[Michael Ainslie talks about his career in memoir \(palmbeachdailynews.com\)](https://www.palmbeachdailynews.com)

['Zen-like' living on the North End \(palmbeachdailynews.com\)](https://www.palmbeachdailynews.com)

[Our Town with William Kelly: Civic Association's Michael Ainslie receives 2022 Randolph Award - Palm Beach Civic Association](#)

Her husband finishes her sentence: “With a ground-floor master bedroom.” Then it’s Suzanne’s turn again: “And I wanted a bigger closet,” she says.

So with that plan in mind, they bought the North Country Road property, demolished the house there and later sold their former home on Plantation Road.

And in 2020, they completed the five-bedroom, six-and-a-half-bath house. The Bermuda-style home has 5,255 square feet of living space inside and out.

Today, though, the Ainslies are planning to travel more and have bought a condominium at Forte, the condominium tower under construction in West Palm Beach near The Bristol. And as such, Suzanne has listed the house through Sotheby's International Realty at \$14.95 million.

Her husband’s career has included serving as CEO of Sotheby's Holdings when it owned the famous auction house and the Sotheby's International Realty brand. He later was a director of Lehman Brothers and helped oversee the distribution of the investment bank's assets as part of its bankruptcy. He also held the chairmanship of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

One enters the home through a courtyard entry flanked by fountains for a Zen-like effect and set back between the garage and the kitchen/family room area. In the foyer are an elevator, a powder room and a stair hall, with the living room and loggia immediately to the west.

On the north side, next to the kitchen and family room, is the dining room. On the south side along with the garage are the laundry area, an office/ bedroom suite and the poolside main bedroom suite, which has two bathrooms and two walk-in closets.

On the second floor are three bedroom suites, one with a pool-view terrace.

For the design, the Ainslies put together a team that included architect Nelo Freijome of Spina O’Rourke + Partners, Michael Berry of Berry Custom Builders and landscape architect Mario Nievera of Nievera Williams Design.

Their new home, Suzanne says, is “a little more contemporary” than their former residence.

“The house is very nice,” Michael adds, noting that he got his first-floor master and Suzanne got her closet, which is “one of the world’s largest closets. I call it the sixth bedroom,” he says.

The house features voluminous ceilings and large-format tile flooring. Among the special details are an electric ribbon-style fireplace in the family room and a staircase embellished with chrome reglet insets. The custom cabinetry includes a window seat in the office and built-ins on the second-floor landing.

“It’s a very good house for entertaining,” Suzanne says. “When we fold back the Euro door between the living room and loggia, it becomes one space. It’s also nice because the loggia has retractable screens, a fireplace and a TV, so it’s a whole new room.”

With entertaining in mind, the Ainslies had French doors installed in the dining room. They open to a side garden with a patio that can accommodate outdoor dining.

Michael’s son, a Los Angeles chef and consultant who designs restaurants and kitchens, helped them with the layout of the kitchen.

“It’s extremely efficient,” Michael says. “The relationship of the Wolf cooktop to the sink and refrigerator is in the famous triangle (configuration).”

The kitchen is fitted with white cabinetry and high-end appliances that include a wine-storage refrigerator and a French-double-door SubZero refrigerator. The floor is covered in wood, which is comfortable when people are standing while cooking, Michael adds.

The residence also has a full-house generator, electric vehicle charging stations and a rear gate that accesses Plantation Road to provide additional parking.

The Ainslies decided upon a variable-speed air-conditioning system with a thermostat in every room for energy efficiency, Michael says, and they used innovative LED lighting accents, which also save on electricity. In the living room, for example, colored LED lighting is hidden under the wet bar’s translucent sea-glass countertop — Suzanne likes to set the lights at blue, while Michael enjoys magenta.

The bottom of their 40-foot infinity-edge pool also has LED lighting. And since the lot is deep, the pool runs lengthwise away from the house, allowing room for an adjacent lawn area.

Michael points out that that property faces west, so “we look down Plantation Road to a wide-open expanse that will never have a house on it. We enjoy the sunset views.”