

BY THE PUBLISHERS OF MIAMI MAGAZINE

MODERN LUXURY

Interiors

South Florida

THE RISING
AT HOME IN THE FLORIDA SKYLINE

INTERIORS BY STEVEN G. STOPS THE SHOW
BRITTO CHARETTE'S DELECTABLE TASTE
PALM BEACH ECLECTICISM BY WILLIAM BERNARD
THE ROMAN SPRING OF VALERIO MORABITO

PLUS

BROWN DAVIS, MAISON ET OBJET & IVANKA TRUMP

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MIAMI BEACH

EASY GLIDER

The developer of Beach House 8 gives a lesson on insouciant glamour.

By Drew Limsky | Photography by Kate Benson



INTERNATIONAL MALE
Valerio Morabito strikes a pose at his waterfront home.

Valerio Morabito is a man who is comfortable in his own skin. Who wouldn't be, in that skin? Lithe of body, with longish, shiny brown locks and a crinkly, fairly intoxicating smile, the Roman-born real estate figure exudes warmth. He doesn't walk so much as glide through his canalside Mediterranean-style home, with its white overstuffed sofas, its Keith Harings and stacks of design books, pausing by his waterfront pool to play with his 4-year-old dog, Cesare. And play.

Morabito has the Roman pedigree and the pet with the name of an emperor; he went to school with the children of diplomats; and his family renovated some of the most important historical buildings in Rome (the family business is infrastructure and engineering). Yet Morabito, who is not yet 40, carries no pretension. He created a home where no one has to be "scared" to sit on the furniture. "You can't overdo," he says. "You have to be able to live and move."

"Quality of life comes first," Morabito likes to say, and his way of exhibiting *dolce far niente* is to load up his Viareggio-built boat with Cesare and some pasta to cook and head toward the Bahamas. He's naturally athletic (he favors kite surfing and paddleboarding), but his contemplative side is palpable. Morabito still reads hardcover books, and admiringly points out the technique of Haring: "He hardly takes the brush from the canvas, and yet there's balance and symmetry."

Morabito's attraction to balance and symmetry is apparent in one of Miami Beach's most buzzed-about projects, the sculptural Beach House 8, which he is developing with Ugo Colombo. The luxury Collins Avenue project, built by Arquitectonica, will contain just eight residences, including a duplex penthouse. The apartments will boast Calacatta marble and fixtures by Boffi. Michele Bönan, the Florentine architect and designer who has put his stamp on hotels, yachts and restaurants (e.g. Casa Tua), will handle the interiors.

Though Morabito is committed to Miami (he's building a new modern Thai-style house) and finds it difficult to imagine living full-time in Italy again (despite the annual holidays in Capri), for Beach House 8 he enlisted Italian partners and products. "It's best to surround yourself with people you trust," he says. An afternoon spent with Morabito gives one the sense that Miami will one day be as Italian as he is—and that if he has anything to say about it, the beach will drip with all the comforts of his homes.