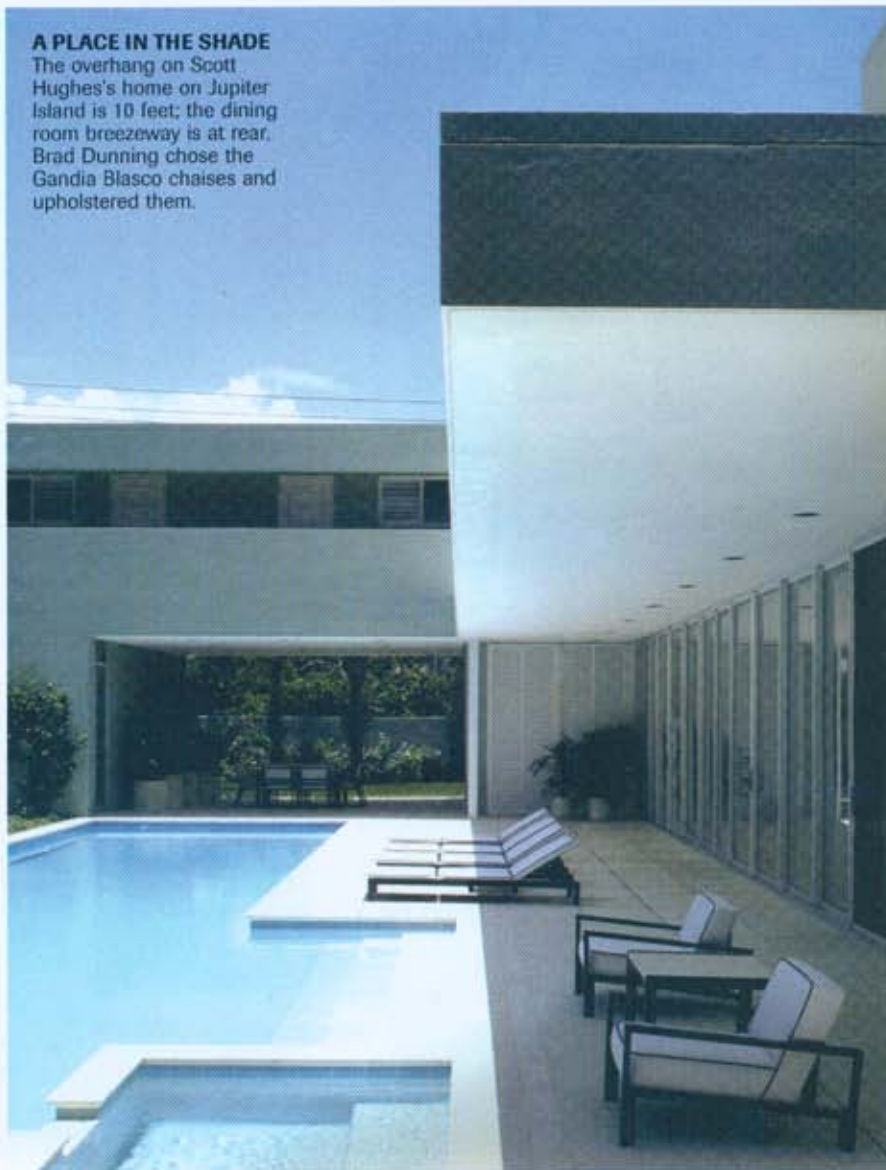


# Get Thee to the Lanai

BUILDING A PATIO? DO WHAT THE PROS DO.

BY SEBASTIAN SMYTHE



## A PLACE IN THE SHADE

The overhang on Scott Hughes's home on Jupiter Island is 10 feet; the dining room breezeway is at rear. Brad Dunning chose the Gandia Blasco chaises and upholstered them.

According to a Gallup poll, landscaping can add 7 to 15 percent to the value of a home. That's especially true in Florida, where homeowners can, with enough sunblock and bug spray, be outside 12 months of the year.

Call that outdoor addition to your house a patio or, if it's wood and raised, a deck; or if you're from the south and it has a roof a veranda; or if you're one of the Golden Girls a lanai; it's hard to find a house in Florida that doesn't have one.

But that deck or patio is as much a room in Florida as any other and needs planning, upkeep and furnishing. It isn't often that a home in Florida needs a patio built from scratch but old ones sometimes need a fix or an expansion. A popular midcentury finish for a patio was Chattahoochee, a concrete base with small, embedded pebbles. So far, so good. Then along came the fake-rock acrylic Chattahoochee in the '70s. Thirty years later, not so good.

"If it's natural rock we can pour on top of it," said Grace Pinzon, an owner of Sundek of Miami, a franchise that specializes in engineered pool decks, patios and driveways. "But the acrylic Chattahoochee, we have to remove that." Remove that as in jackhammer. The Sundek material is stamped to look like brick, tile or stone, but of course at a fraction of the cost of the real thing. Figure \$2.25 to \$5 a square foot for the surface layer, another \$5 to \$6 a square foot if they start from scratch and pour a four-inch concrete slab.

Ideally, a deck—or in Florida, where most houses are built at grade, a patio—is designed when the house is built. The architect Scott Hughes, who is based on Jupiter Island, Florida,

*Ideally the patio is planned along with the house.*

but also has an office in California, built a two-story house for himself around a pool near Hobe Sound. (Hughes is one of the award-winning modernist architects who make up the Florida Five, along with Albert Alphonso, Rene Gonzalez, Chad Oppenheim and Guy Peterson.)

Hughes's house is oriented so that a deep, 10-foot overhang protects the southern wall from heat gain in the summer and offers a shaded spot near the pool. A breezeway (more shade) becomes an outdoor dining room. "The biggest challenge in Florida is controlling sun and rain, so you can be inside and outside as much as possible," Hughes said. The project rightly made it into a 2002 book called *Dream Pools*.

A wooden deck is often found on houses that are raised off the ground, or around a pool to prevent slips. Some real estate brokers predict homeowners will get back 75 percent of the cost of adding a deck if they sell the house in the first year. Pressure-treated pine decking can run \$10

*When it comes to colors, black is the new blue, especially with the perimeter overflow pools.*

attracts birds and dragon flies; it's beautiful."

Maybe flaming pits that can float on a pool's surface and pool/spa combinations are more your style. "We have also seen an increase in fountains or spray jets with fiber optics," said Clay

Andrews, who owns Aquapool of Jacksonville. "People love the colorful effects, but they come with a price."

One thing that doesn't cost a great deal of money in a pool (perhaps the only thing) is the choice of color. Black is the new blue, especially with perimeter overflow pools. (These are the ones that drain into a trough in the surrounding masonry to provide the illusion that the pool is as flat as a pane of glass.) Glass tiles, which are animated when sparked by light, are also becoming popular for pool surfacing. Van Bower prefers recycled glass tiles from Oceanside Glasstiles of Carlsbad, California. One-by-one-inch recycled Oceanside tiles start at \$28 a square foot for solid colors. Other glass tiles may cost as little as \$4.60 a square foot.

According to Jose Ivan Lopez of Tropolis Inc., a landscaping business in Miami, a simple travertine pool surround could cost \$60,000, excluding landscaping, lighting and irrigation. Glass tiles and other high-end materials can double the cost. "I am working on a project on Key Biscayne with a glass-tiled pool," he said. "The price for the tiles alone is \$60,000."

Once you've paid so much for the pool, you might as well see it from the living room or bedroom, with portholes or glass walls or even a glass ceiling. Scott Hughes Architects—a firm with offices in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C. and Hobe Sound, Florida—placed a pool on the roof of a Jupiter Island home. Then they inserted skylights in the roof to throw water patterns into the main living spaces. Though expensive, this pool didn't cost as much as another one the firm did, a two-tiered infinity pool with fiber optics that ran \$175,000.

It is also possible (though hugely expensive) to extend the pool inside, so you can jump in in the living room and swim out into the yard. Aldo Andreoli, one of the three partners in Crea, which has offices in Milan, New York and Miami, says that Helena Arahuete of Lautner Associates designed an outstanding example of a swim-in/swim-out pool in California. "The house sits on the top of a hill, and the infinity edge of the pool disappears into the sky," said Andreoli. He added a water feature in a glassed-in opening at the center of a house he designed in Sedona, Arizona. The sunken pool studded with Balinese river rock added \$1 million to the cost.

Daniel Latour of Latour Design in Miami added an indoor/outdoor pool to a 30,000-square-foot house being built on San Marco Island. The elaborate structure, with a glass wall separating the indoor and outdoor pools, added \$260,000 to construction.

Gary Shear of Shear Construction and Development in Miami said that you can spend \$100,000 on decking alone. And other trends, like beach entry pools, "are dramatically increasing prices," he said. But people keep building them.

California is the only state in the country that has more pools than Florida. Last year, 734,702 in-ground pools were installed in Florida compared to 1,089,157 in California. So does a pool make a house more valuable?

"A pool may add about 10 percent to the value of a house, but only in the lower price range, which nowadays is under \$1.5 million," said Esther Percal, a senior vice president at Esslinger-Wooten-Maxwell in Miami. "You can't sell a \$2 million, \$5 million or \$10 million house for 10 percent more simply because it has a pool." The question then becomes, could anyone sell a \$5 million home in Florida that didn't have a pool? ■



**A DANIEL LATOUR POOL**

This project for San Marco Island in Miami Beach has an indoor/outdoor pool.



**A SCOTT HUGHES POOL**

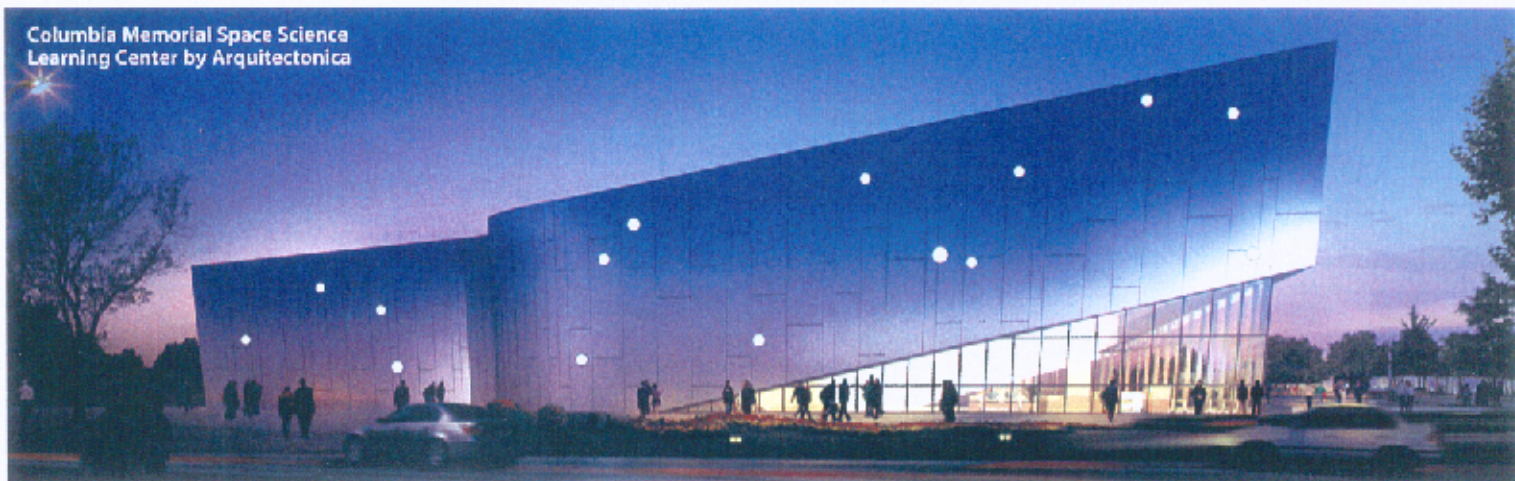
The site, on Jupiter Island, seemed to call for an infinity edge pool.



**A JOSE IVAN LOPEZ POOL**

Lopez, of Tropolis Inc., built this simple pool with low coping in Miami Shores.

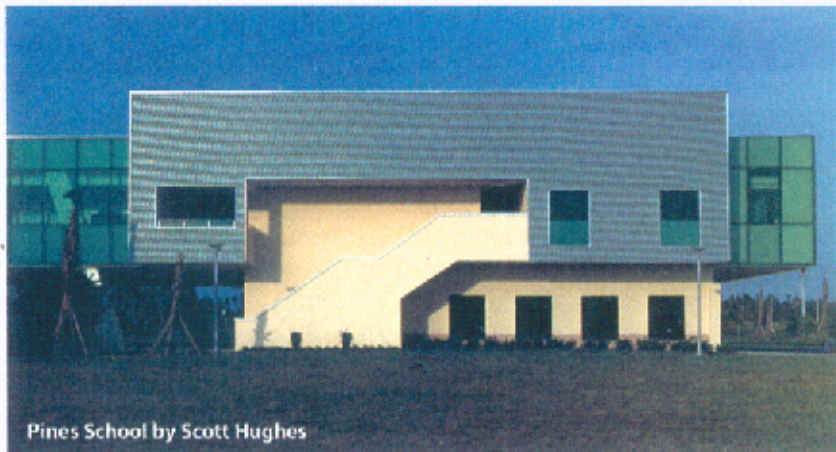
**Columbia Memorial Space Science Learning Center by Arquitectonica**



**SCHOOLS FOR THOUGHT**

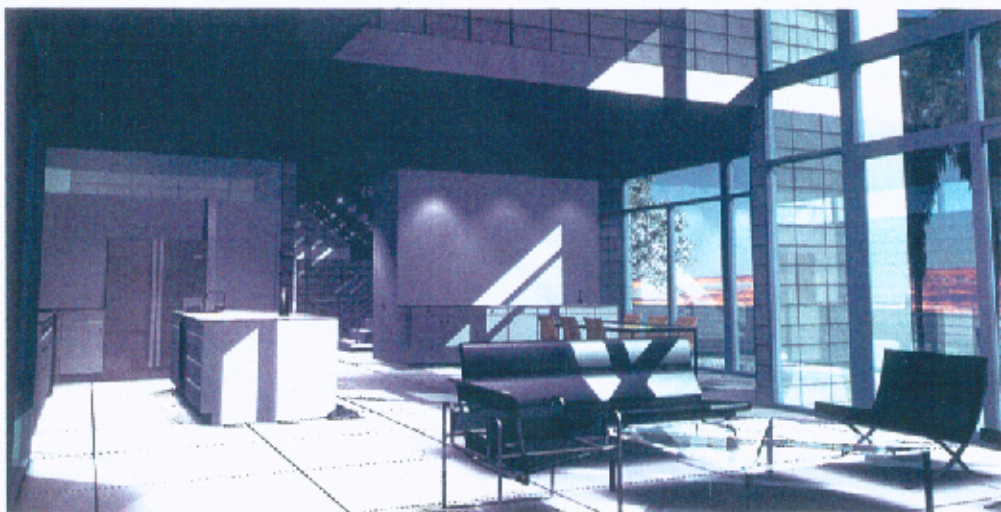
A new Arquitectonica-designed learning center will open next year in Downey, California, in honor of the astronauts who died in the 2003 Columbia shuttle disaster. Bernardo Fort-Brescia, chief design architect at Arquitectonica, which was founded in Miami 30 years ago, said the center's fluid and dynamic lines are meant to reflect "the optimism of the astronauts and mankind traveling to space." The silvery, 18,000-square-foot Columbia Memorial Space Science Learning Center, which lifts to a double-height entrance, is set on a former Boeing test facility. Arquitectonica Geo, the firm's landscape component, will also be involved. More Arquitectonica work can be seen at [www.arquitectonica.com](http://www.arquitectonica.com).

Closer to home, the architect Scott Hughes, who has offices in Los Angeles and in Jupiter, Florida, designed the now-completed Pines School, a 97,000-square-foot campus for a private kindergarten through 12th grade school in Hobe Sound, Florida. Fritted glass was used to control sunlight, and tensile roof structures provide comfortably shaded outdoor spaces. "Only the classrooms are air-conditioned," Hughes said. More of his work can be seen at [www.share.com](http://www.share.com).



**Pines School by Scott Hughes**

**Houses of Indian Beach by Guy Peterson**



**MODERN TERRITORY**

Many modern homes sit at the end of long driveways, their simple structural beauty hidden from all but the occasional passing pelican by palm fronds and bamboo clusters. The Sarasota school of architecture ambassador and modern architect Guy Peterson is hoping to change that with The Houses of Indian Beach, his 23-home modernist enclave in Sarasota, Florida.

Peterson and his design team have combined contemporary technology with the Sarasota school's aesthetic principles to develop the houses, which will cost \$1.7 million to \$3.5 million and exist within one of Sarasota's oldest neighborhoods. Peterson says one goal of the project is to make modern architecture more accessible. "There is a market for good modern architecture," he said. "But there's just not a neighborhood where you can go and see it."

He wanted to design the homes within the present landscape. Accordingly, the houses' designs depend as much on the lay of the land as on their neighbors' aesthetics. Preserving this natural environment scores double green points for capitalizing on the cooling potential of the large live-oak canopy as well. "We've broken some of the houses into different pavilions," Peterson said. "You might go from a main house to a guest house through the trees. We had to break the house apart to build among the trees." But thanks to the subdivision's layout, the birds aren't the only ones who will get a good view of these modern homes. Construction of the first, a spec house, will begin "within a few months," Peterson said. — Ricci Shryock