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After dining at the Bangkok home of James H.W. Thompson in 1959, British writer Somerset Maugham sent a thank-you note to the American silk entrepreneur. “You have not only beautiful things,” he wrote to Thompson, “but what is rare you have arranged them with faultless taste.”

Thompson’s taste—as well as the texture of his former residence—made an exceedingly lasting impression on a California couple who visited the property eight years ago. After removing her shoes when entering the home (now a museum and cultural center), the wife walked along the entry’s worn teak floor. “It felt like butter,” she recalls of the sensation, which would soon serve as the inspiration for Nandana, the private residence

and resort that she and her husband completed in January.

To build Nandana, which is set in an oceanfront gated community on the west end of Grand Bahama, the couple enlisted Hawaii-based architect Mark de Reus. Like the Jim Thompson House, the 18,000-square-foot retreat (from \$4,750 per night for as many as six people and from \$8,000 for as many as 10) incorporates freestanding structures into an organic whole. “We liked that idea of different bungalows,” says the wife, “something very separate and private, but where you could come together with friends in the evening.”

No matter the time of day, Nandana (Sanskrit for “paradise”) is an ideal place to gather with friends who appreciate faultless taste—and endless views of sea and sky. ➤

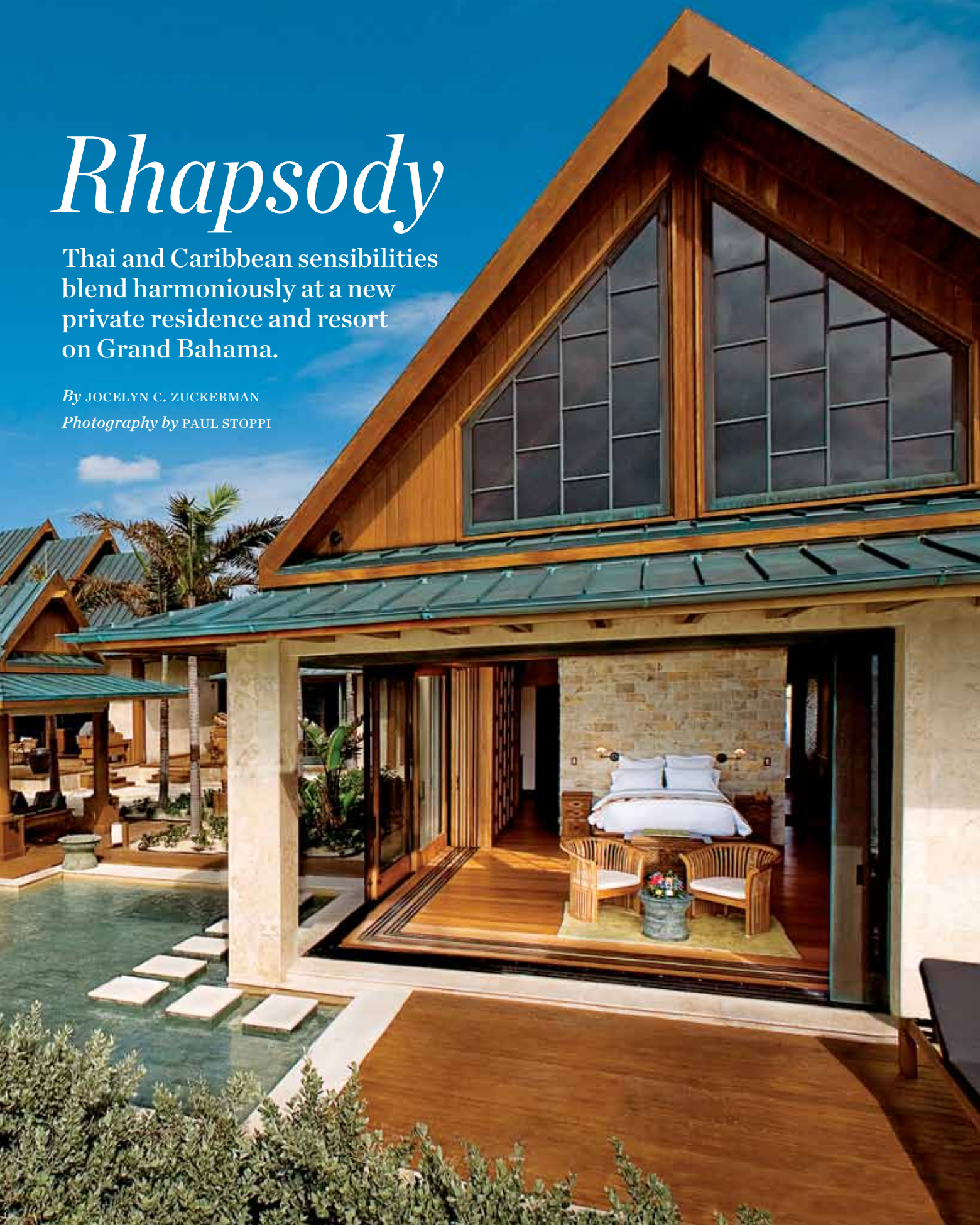


Rhapsody

Thai and Caribbean sensibilities
blend harmoniously at a new
private residence and resort
on Grand Bahama.

By JOCELYN C. ZUCKERMAN

Photography by PAUL STOPPI





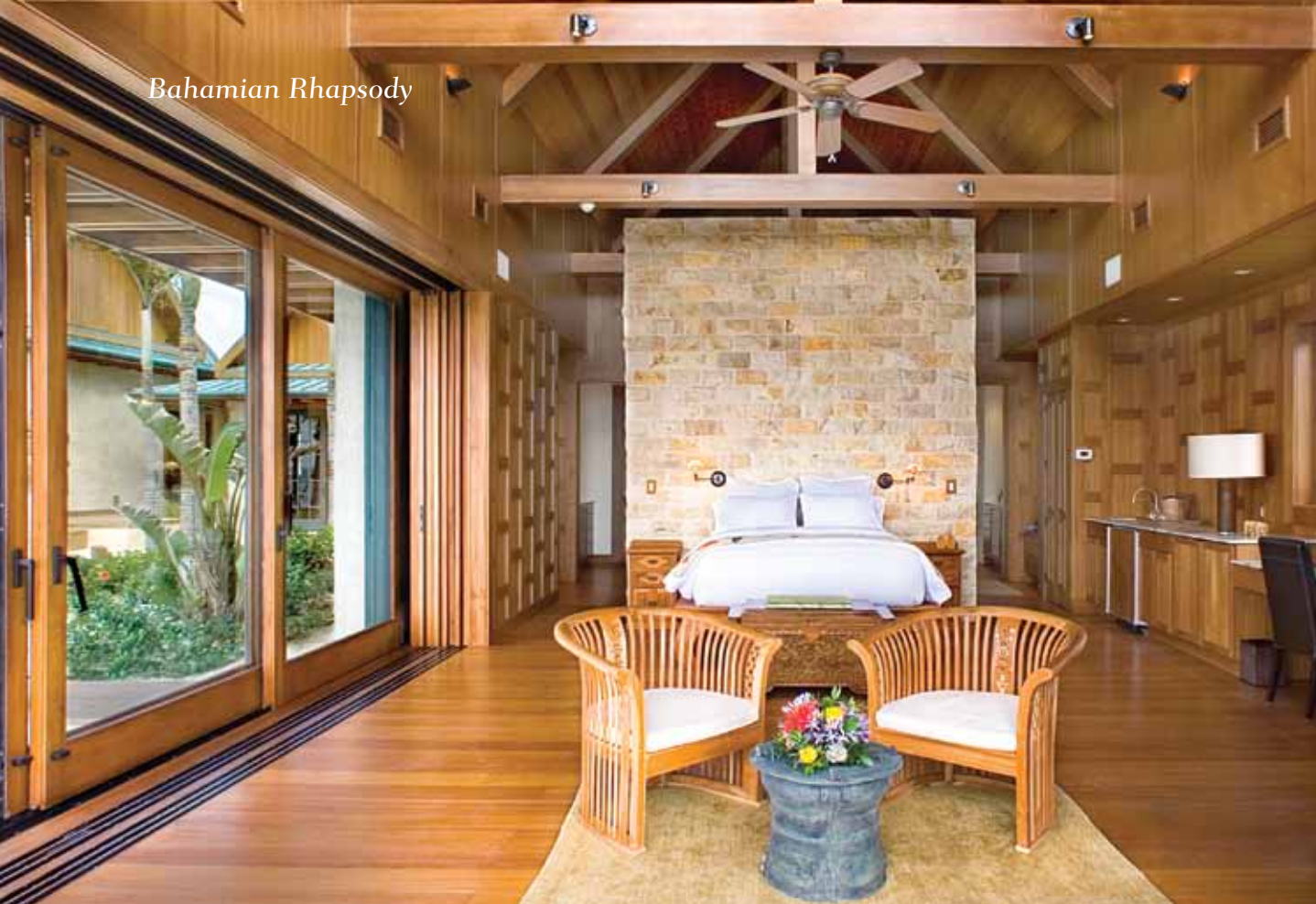
First Course | Entering Nandana through 250-year-old teak doors salvaged from a Javanese temple, guests have a view through to the dining room, the infinity pool, and the Atlantic Ocean beyond. Heavy glass doors slide away to open the interior to ocean breezes. “The idea was to create a tropical piece of architecture that would have a sense of place and destination,” says de Reus. “This entailed fitting Western lifestyles into a traditional Thai building form.”

Nandana’s living room (above right) centers on a low-sitting Balinese table and deep daybeds covered in Thompson silks. The couple made several trips to Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam to purchase items for Nandana, including the Cambodian temple chimera figure that separates the living and dining rooms.

Meals served at the dining room’s Indonesian table (or on the patio or beach) tend toward seiches and Asian-style salads, though menus are entirely at guests’ discretion. Massages and other treatments are administered in a spa room, which is adjacent to a fitness area and yoga terrace. In addition to spa, pool, and beach activities, diversions at Nandana range from excursions in the property’s sport-fishing yacht and tender (both with private guide) to rides on its ATVs and bicycles.







Teak Dreams | Nestled among palm trees on either side of the main building, the two 1,000-square-foot Pavilion Suites open onto private patios with thick-cushioned loungers overlooking the sea. In a nod to the Jim Thompson House, teak (purchased by the owners in Myanmar) covers the suites' floors, walls, and ceilings, the latter of which slant upward in traditional Thai style. Panes in the ceilings allow guests to view stars at night while tucked beneath Frette linens in the pedestal beds.

Decoration in the four bungalows (two slightly smaller suites are set back from the beach) is kept at a minimum, the better to highlight water, palm fronds, and sky. In one of the Pavilion Suites' sprawling bathrooms (left), a white orchid drapes over a marble countertop. Both master bathrooms feature indoor-outdoor showers inlaid with river stones that massage your feet as you bathe. Here, as elsewhere at Nandana, the faucets and lights turn off gradually, so that nothing jars or intrudes on the serenity of the place.

Bahamian Rhapsody



Over the Top | During the construction of Nandana, the owners visited Aman-i-Khás, a luxury wilderness camp in Rajasthan, India. They were so taken with the romance of the Amanresorts property's canopied suites that they decided to build one of their own. (The owners were also taken with Nazia and Vinay Puhl, a young couple on staff at the resort, who now serve as in-house masseuse and guest-services manager at Nandana.)

Situated alongside a canal, this 2,000-square-foot canvas structure includes a roomy sitting area and a bath separated from the bedroom by a cotton partition. In addition to providing accommodations for an additional couple, the tented suite offers an alternative sense of place: Set across a private gravel road from the main building, the isolated outpost conjures savannah rather than lush tropics.

Whatever your pleasure, a stay at Nandana ensures an experience of quiet luxury amid surroundings of exquisite taste. ☐

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