

HOLLY BONDAR

Island Time Renovation & Design



COURTESY PHOTOS

Holly Bondar has lived in Washington, D.C., Italy, France and California.

And each of those places has many styles of architecture.

For Ms. Bondar, going to high school in France enhanced her appreciation for beautiful buildings.

She has made Jupiter her home base for the past 13 years.

As an interior designer and residential general contractor, specializing in residential interior design and renovation, Ms. Bondar wears many hats.

She says clients relish having all the facets of their home plan under one design roof.

We asked the Duke University graduate about her influences on design and architecture, her enterprising firm and what she loves most about the design-build life in South Florida.

You can build anything — but out of all disciplines, what is your favorite thing to do?

Our firm is a design-build general contractor, so we do build new houses, but our forte, and what I love most, is renovations because they are the most challenging.

Tell us about your company family.

We have architecture and interior design in-house, all in one firm, which means we handle the whole process from soup to nuts, bringing the whole project to fruition. We have really amazing crews who are full-time employees, people I have worked with for more than a decade right under the same roof, and everyone is like a member of the family. We do all of the kitchen and bath space CAD in-house. That is also a really great thing to have all of those elements come together to make the project special.

What are a few of your favorite current home design trends?

Open contemporary design is huge.

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It is the return of the dining room, but open, in a more family-friendly way. For years it was just this room in the house that no one really ever used but if the kitchen is the heart of the home, the dining room is the soul. The family dining room is still elegant, but it's something you use.

If you had to pick a favorite thing to install in a house, what would that be?

I love home theaters. They used to be overdone and people didn't use them, but for families with kids it has become a big part of family life, with movies and games, it is a family-friendly place that is a sanctuary. There is an emphasis on installing places where people can gather. The other thing to remember is to ask yourself: "What do you need? What do you love?" Busy hectic families with kids and stuff everywhere, getting your house right will make it serve you rather than you serving it and pay you dividends. It's like the saying, "Everything in its place and a place for everything." Only keep what you need.

What trends are you glad to see go away?

That stadium seating effect, two-level island. It is a barrier to togetherness, not part of it in where you're watching rather than participating. I love a higher island that's stand-up height so you don't have to break your back washing dishes that allows for people to gather around in the kitchen. I also love having a bar area because it takes some of the pressure off the kitchen. Kitchens have a way of getting congested when you're

entertaining and a functional bar alleviates some of that.

What advice can you share for a homeowner embarking on renovation?

If you have a vision or gut feeling about your place — don't let others shake you or interfere with that. You know what you want and what is possible — you might need someone like us to help you get there, but a lot of the time, it takes guts to get the glory in a challenging home renovation.

What makes working in and around the Jupiter-Palm Beach area special to you?

Some people work their whole lives to retire and get to a place like this. Others ask themselves, "Why wait?" and they come here earlier in life. The scope of activities and amenities allow us to live that true island lifestyle, while still having amazing medical facilities, world-class restaurants and people who embrace design and architecture who have the money to do it, which is nice. But actually, one of the coolest things is it doesn't matter if it's a 1,200-square-foot condo or 10,000-square-foot mansion. Everyone is seeking their slice of paradise, and we get to help them achieve it. ■

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