

So. Fla. Architect Wins National Design Award



Robert Barnes & Associates, Architects & Planners, has won a Grand Award for New Commercial and Environmental Reclamation for Morada Bay Beach Café and Bar in the National Commercial Builders Council 1999 Awards of Excellence. Morada Bay Beach Café is located in Islamorada, in the Florida keys.

The Awards of Excellence program recognizes achievements in the national commercial building industry for design, market appeal, energy efficiency, challenges faced during construction, and overall success of the project.

Morada Bay Beach Café sits on land that had been brutally stripped of its vegetation by previous owners. The re-built native hammock was created with the transplant of large canopy trees, essential to growth of an understory forest. The tree canopy will grow into a hardwood habitat for Florida Keys wildlife to ensure a project that thoughtfully blends the built environment with its natural surroundings, and to create environmental and commercial sustainability.

The design enhances heritage architecture, with a discipline for historic detailing peculiar to the Florida Keys. Ramps, walkways and parking surfaces were covered with natural materials, such as pea rock, wood chips and compacted sand, designed to cause minimal impact to the sensitive keys environment.

Metal roofing with low emissivity protects the interior from the intense South Florida sun. Large, covered, wrap-around verandas provide a hospitable transition between the warm outdoors and the air-conditioned interiors. Dormered roofs with clerestory windows allow natural light and provide exhaust for warm air that collects at the ceiling. Ceiling fans, high-efficiency lighting and insulation further help to conserve energy.

Robert Barnes worked with government land planners to meet strict land use requirements. He demolished old and decrepit buildings on the site, and replaced only the square footage removed, thus making a strong case for a highly sustainable project.