

THE REPORT

This Sleepy Florida Beach Town Is Home to the Most Amazing Architectural Hideaways

St. Petersburg may have been born in the Gatsby era, but its Mediterranean Revival styles withstand the test of time

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While many believe Palm Beach, Florida—with its grand Addison Mizner mansions and Spanish Colonial-style clubs—is the only destination for design lovers in the Sunshine State, there's another beachside town that holds the key to secret architectural sanctuaries. Most of St. Petersburg, which is located in northwestern Florida on the Gulf of Mexico, was built during the 1920s by local developer Perry Snell. Snell placed his personal stamp on the city by constructing Mediterranean Revival homes and public spaces that feature stucco walls, lush gardens, and red-tiled roofs. The developer's penchant for Spanish stylings influenced other architects' visions around the charming beach community, and, together, they created a cluster of design gems that dot the oceanfront. Read on as *AD* uncovers the city's hidden treasures.



Photo: Courtesy of The Don Cesar

The Don Cesar

Often referred to as the “pink palace,” the Don Cesar is something of an icon on the Gulf Coast. When it was first built in 1928, by architect Henry H. Dupont, the hotel acted as a playground for the elite, including F. Scott Fitzgerald and Clarence Darrow, who would roam the baroque hallways and dance on the marble floor of the King Charles Ballroom. During the 1940s, the hotel was converted into a hospital for airmen returning from their World War II tour. Fast-forward three decades and the beloved pink lady has retained its lavish roots, while reopening as a luxury hotel with the same Moorish flair, including horseshoe arches, decorative tiles, and beautiful courtyards. *3400 Gulf Boulevard, St. Pete Beach, FL.*



Photo: Courtesy of the Salvador Dali Museum

Salvador Dali Museum

If you're not captivated by the 2,100 works of artist Salvador Dali, then you will definitely be blown away by the building's perplexing shape. The museum, which was redesigned in 2011 by architect Yann Weymouth of HOK, features a whimsical geodesic glass bubble, also known as the "enigma." The bubblelike structure is constructed from 1,062 pieces of glass and pays homage to the dome at the Dali museum in Spain. Inside, guests are greeted with a helical staircase that reflects Dali's obsession with the shape of DNA molecules. *1 Dali Boulevard, St. Petersburg, FL.*

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Photo: Courtesy of Visit St. Petersburg Clearwater

The Post Office

Built in 1916, the town's post office was the nation's first open-air concept. Throughout the downtown landmark, you will find the original intricate metalwork on the arches and staircases, as well as carved stone details that provide a glimpse into the heart of the Mediterranean Revival era. *400 First Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL.*



Photo: Courtesy of Princess Martha

Princess Martha

This redbrick building is the city's prime example of 1920s Neoclassical architecture. The former hotel first opened its doors during the Florida land boom era to accommodate the burgeoning number of tourists, adding hundreds of suites to the area. During that time, notable guests like Jimmy Carter and Babe Ruth stayed in the Rocco-designed rooms with sculpted windows and decorated gold columns. *411 First Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL.*



Photo: Courtesy of the Admiral Farragut Academy

Admiral Farragut Academy

Previously known as the Jungle Country Club Hotel, the Academy catered to wealthy Northerners during their summer vacations back in the Jazz Age. In 1945, the textured stucco structure was sold to Admiral Farragut Academy, which uses the building's two wings as part of its military

campus. Today, the main entrance is still easily recognized by its two-story sopraporta, capped by four urns. *501 Park Street North, St. Petersburg, FL.*



Photo: Courtesy of Sotheby's International Realty

Boyce Guest House

Located in the North Shore area, one of St. Petersburg's oldest neighborhoods, this landmarked home retains its original charm with six bedrooms and seven baths spread across three stories. In a break from the city's Spanish influences, the cozy residence is a mix between Prairie and Craftsmen architectural styles, with decorations kept to a minimum. If you happen to be in the market for a new home, the former carriage house is currently available for \$1.59 million. *635 Bay Street North East, St. Petersburg, FL.*