

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name CASA DEL MAR

other names/site number Case, Thomas, House

2. Location

street & number 25 South Washington Drive

N/A  not for publication

city or town Sarasota

N/A  vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Sarasota code 115 zip code 34236

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne P. Walker / Deputy SHPO 1/9/97  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
2.14.97

Casa del Mar  
Name of Property

Sarasota, FL.  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	1	structures
0	0	objects
2	1	total

**Name of related multiple property listings**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/ Mission/  
Spanish Colonial Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
MODERN MOVEMENT/ Moderne, Art Deco  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco  
walls Stucco  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof Ceramic Tile  
other  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuations sheets.)

**8. Statement of significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution road patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction of represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1937

**Significant Dates**

1937

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Arch: Martin, Thomas Reid

Blder: unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository

# \_\_\_\_\_

Casa del Mar  
Name of Property

Sarasota, Fl.  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	3	4	4	2	2	0	3	0	2	2	5	9	0		
	Zone		Easting			Northing											
2																	

3																	
	Zone		Easting			Northing											
4																	

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Victoria "Mikki" Hartig/ Sherry Piland, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date January 1997

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Continuation Sheet**

**CASA DEL MAR  
SARASOTA CO., FL.**

Section number 7 Page 1

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Casa Del Mar, the Thomas A. Case House, at 25 South Washington Drive, Sarasota, Florida, was constructed in 1937. The one and two-story house has an irregular U-shaped plan. It is constructed of concrete block surfaced in stucco and rests on a concrete foundation. The various roof forms are surfaced in barrel tile. A contributing barbecue pit is located at the eastern corner of the property. At the rear of the property, a non-contributing wood dock extends beyond the seawall into Sarasota Bay.

**SETTING**

Casa del Mar is located in the John Ringling Estates Subdivision on St. Armands Key, an island in Sarasota Bay. The Ringling Causeway connects the Key with downtown Sarasota, approximately 2 miles to the east. Although a few other mid-1920s and two 1930s houses are located on South Washington Drive, and one 1920s house is one block west on Jackson Street, there is no concentration of historic buildings or structures on this street, in the vicinity, or elsewhere on the island. The majority of the surrounding housing stock are concrete block, Ranch style homes, constructed after World War II. Several such residences have been demolished for their waterfront sites in recent years, and modern two-story residences, constructed above the flood plain, have been built in their place.

**EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION**

The house is comprised of a series of cubic sections. The main facade of the house faces to the southwest (Photo 1). The central section, with a gabled roof, projects slightly forward. Three sets of paired, 3-light, vinyl casement windows, covered with decorative iron grills, are evenly spaced across this facade. The windows are set into the wall above large, curved, stucco pedestals, incorporated directly into the wall plane. The main entrance is set back at the south end of this portion of the house (Photo 2). A carved, pecky cypress door, with strapped iron hinges and hardware, is set in an arched opening. Centered above the door is an elaborately carved masonry relief panel with a floral design flanking a medallion with a castle motif. Masonry pineapples extend above the panel from the corners (Photo 1). An L-shaped entry courtyard extends to the south of the front entrance (Photo

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2). This courtyard is enclosed by a stuccoed knee wall. Original terra cotta tile flooring covers the entry porch, courtyard, and steps ascending to the front entrance. The steps are flanked by two masonry lions at the ground level.

A secondary entrance, providing access to the kitchen and service area, is placed at the north end of the main projecting block of the house (Photo 3). This entrance is screened by a stepped masonry wall and is sheltered by a tiled shed roof. Just to the north of this entrance is a two-story section. It contains a garage on the first floor and living space on the second floor. The first story contains the original, wood, overhead garage door. Centered above this, on the second story, is a small balconet constructed of pecky cypress and accessed by paired French doors.

The primary feature of the rear (northeast) elevation is a courtyard located between the projecting north and south wings of the house (Photo 4). The east end of the southeast section contains two sets of French doors, separated by a paired casement window. The courtyard is extended beyond the wings of the house by two masonry wing walls (Photo 5). The northernmost wall extension has two rectangular glass block panels flanking a tile-covered wall fountain (Photo 6).

The northwest and southeast elevations are fenestrated with paired casement windows with projecting stucco sills. A secondary entrance is located at the east end of the northwest elevation (Photo 5).

**INTERIOR DESCRIPTION**

The entry door leads into a small foyer. A connecting hall then leads to two bedrooms, each with its own bathroom. Both baths retain their original fixtures, and floor and wall tile. Northwest of the foyer are a living room, dining room, and kitchen. Stairs at the north end of the kitchen lead to a bedroom and bathroom located over the garage.

The living room retains its original decorative elements, including a cathedral ceiling with pecky cypress beams and built-in bookcases, flanking the archway leading to the dining room (Photo 7). Decorative tiles are inset into the walls below the bookcases.

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According to the original plans of the house, paired decorative wrought iron gates were to hang in the archway between the living and dining rooms. If these gates were installed during construction, they have since been removed by an earlier owner at some unknown time. The living room features a fireplace with a stuccoed chimney breast which is devoid of a mantle (Photo 8). Walls throughout the house are plaster. Wide baseboards are present throughout the house. The flooring in the entrance hall, living room and dining room is original, glazed, terra cotta tile. The bedrooms have wood floors.

An enclosed rear porch, overlooking the courtyard area, can be accessed from the living room and the kitchen. The south corner of the porch features a small corner fireplace with a stuccoed chimney breast decorated with hand-painted tiles (Photo 9). A pecky cypress cabinet and wet bar are placed in the opposite corner of the porch (Photo 10).

**ALTERATIONS**

Minimal alterations have occurred to the house. The principal change has been the replacement of the original paired, steel casement windows with vinyl units matching the originals in size, location, and number.

The only other major alteration is the enclosure of a rear, screened porch, overlooking the courtyard area. This was accomplished by the installation of paired, glass panel doors flanked by fixed units within the original screened wall, with no change to the size or shape of the openings (Photo 11).

The area over the garage was originally used for servants' quarters and storage, and consisted of two rooms and a bath. In 1994, it was reconfigured into one large room with a large closet and bath.

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**SECONDARY STRUCTURES**

An original barbecue pit, covered in many areas with colorful glazed tile, and incorporating two seats on either side of the cooking area, is located in the backyard, at the east end of the property (Photo 12).

A non-contributing wood dock, constructed ca. 1993, extends from the rear of the property into Sarasota Bay (Photo 13).



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Casa del Mar, the Thomas A. Case house, qualifies for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C for its architectural significance. The house is a major design by the prominent Sarasota architect Thomas Reed Martin. Built in 1937, the house is an excellent representation of a transitional period in architectural tastes, for it incorporates elements of the Mediterranean Revival style, popular in the 1920s, with elements of the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles of the 1930s. The residence has undergone few alterations and retains its architectural integrity to a high degree.

**HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

Several barrier islands, including Siesta Key and St. Armands Key, separate Sarasota Bay from the Gulf of Mexico. Most of these small islands were relatively isolated and largely uninhabited until the 1880s, when a few hardy homesteaders began settling on them. Siesta Key was the earliest to be developed. A subdivision was platted at the northern end of the Key in 1907. However, development was slow until a bridge joining the Key with the mainland was constructed in 1917.

Like most communities in Florida, Sarasota experienced significant growth during the Florida Land Boom of the early 1920s. A number of new subdivisions were platted during this period. By the end of March 1923, circus owner John Ringling had purchased the entire island of St. Armands Key and most of Longboat Key. He joined forces with Sarasota developer Owen Burns to form Ringling Estates, Inc. to develop these barrier island with upscale residential subdivisions. Three large dredges were used to build up St. Armands Key and the surrounding mangrove islands with millions of cubic yards of fill to create solid land. The appearance of the islands of St. Armands, Lido, and the southern end of Longboat Key were entirely changed. John J. Watson was in charge of the planning, engineering, and landscaping design. Ringling Isles, as the subdivision on St. Armands Key was known, was considered one of the best planned developments in Florida. However, the island was accessible only by boat, and before any successful development could be realized, a bridge was needed to link the island with the city of Sarasota. A bridge to the island, the Ringling Causeway, opened in January 1926. In the meantime, sewer and water mains were installed, roads were hard surfaced and canals were dredged, thousands of coconut palms and Australian

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palms were planted, and statuary to embellish the subdivisions was purchased in Italy. By May 1926, Ringling and Burns reported that sales in the subdivision reached \$1,500,000.

The real estate market, however, began to collapse in late 1926. Ringling and Burns each experienced individual financial losses and legal challenges. Their land holdings in the subdivision were swept up in a flurry of lawsuits and financial problems. Few houses had been constructed on St. Armands Key before the collapse of the market, and twenty years passed before any substantial new construction began.

Casa del Mar was designed by prominent Sarasota architect Thomas Reid Martin in 1937. He received this commission from northern businessman Thomas Alva Case. Case had purchased this parcel on St. Armands Key in the John Ringling Estates subdivision for his new winter and retirement home. Case began to spend his winters in Sarasota after retiring from business in 1938. He had been employed by the Robinson Clay Products Company of Akron, Ohio. He had served in World War I as a member of the Canadian Army. During World War II, he was prominent in the organization and management of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary in the Sarasota area. Case served as president of the Sarasota Angler's Club and was prominent in yachting, and civic circles. He was also well known through his interest in the conservation of wild life and in the protection of game fish in Sarasota Bay and the surrounding area. He and his wife Marguerite McLennan were members of Saint Martha's Catholic Church. The Cases also maintained a summer residence in Algonquin Park, Ontario. Case resided in his Sarasota home for most of each year until his death in February, 1948. His wife retained ownership and continued to reside in the house until 1960.

**ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT**

The Casa del Mar incorporates elements of the Mediterranean Revival, Art Deco, and Art Moderne styles in its design. The most popular style for residential architecture in Florida during the 1920s was the Mediterranean Revival style. The style contains architectural elements derived from the area around the Mediterranean Sea, especially Italy and Spain. It is found most frequently in states which have a Spanish Colonial heritage, as Florida does, but its use gained some popularity nationally. Various aspects of the Mediterranean Revival style have been

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categorized as Spanish Colonial or Mission Revival, but the result is a wide array of eclectic buildings. All variations have some general characteristics including a preference for barrel clay tile roofs, stucco walls, arched entrances and windows, porches, patios, balconies, complex roof lines, and ceramic tile decorations. Other identifying features include arcaded wings; multilight casement and double-hung sash windows, often deeply set in the walls or arched openings; use of wrought iron; and balconets. In Florida, the popularity of the Mediterranean Revival style soared in the 1920s and maintained a pervasive influence on building design until World War II.

Even as the Mediterranean Revival style reached its height of popularity in the 1920s, a modernistic architecture was being created that rejected most earlier conventional design standards. The 1925 Exposition des Arts Decoratifs held in Paris gave birth to the Art Deco movement. The Art Deco style was employed in apartment buildings, office towers, theaters, and a few homes from the 1920s through the 1940s. In residential architecture the style is characterized by low relief ornament, usually focused on the central area of the building and around the doors, windows and roof; metal casement windows; and the use of glass block as a decorative element or as windows or wall sections. In general, the Art Deco style is defined as having two rather distinct phases. The initial phase of the late 1920s and 1930s used rectilinear, geometric surface ornamentation, often applied to express the verticality of the structure. The later phase, in the 1930s and 1940s, was more streamlined, and has become known as Art Moderne. Characteristics of the Art Deco style included: smooth wall surfaces, usually of stucco; towers or other vertical projections extending above the roof line; symmetrical facades; and a unique form of ornamentation consisting of zigzags, chevrons, sunbursts, spirals, and/or stylized motifs of plants and animals; and conventionalized leaf and plant forms combined with abstract arabesques, elongated ovals, octagonal panels, and spiral forms.

New industrial and technological developments in the early 1930s led to the evolution of the Streamlined Moderne style, which reflected the current interest in the streamlined designs in vogue for ships, airplanes and automobiles. In contrast to the verticality of the Art Deco style, the Moderne style emphasized the horizontality of the building through the use of bands of contrasting finish materials and bands of windows. The

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style featured smooth wall surfaces that were frequently curved and usually stuccoed. Glass block and steel railings for stairs and balconies were frequently utilized. Other characteristic elements of the style included rounded corners, horizontal banding, and long stretches of windows. Popular new materials were often used, such as aluminum, chrome, and neon lighting. This style is generally considered the late phase of the Art Deco period and was popular during the 1930s and 1940s.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The architect of Casa Del Mar was Thomas Reed Martin, a prominent Sarasota architect. Martin, a native of Wisconsin, studied architecture and construction while working in Chicago as a draftsman and woodworking company manager. In 1911, he was retained by wealthy Chicagoan, Mrs. Potter Palmer, to remodel her newly-acquired winter estate on Sarasota Bay. Martin subsequently moved to Sarasota permanently in 1920. During the next three decades he designed more than five hundred homes in the Sarasota area, many in the Mediterranean Revival style. Among his designs in Sarasota are the 1925 Mediterranean Revival style home for L.D. Reagin (NR 1984); Burns Court, a complex of fifteen Mediterranean Revival style bungalows built between 1924-1925(NR 1984); and the Municipal Auditorium/Recreation Club, a modernistic design done in collaboration with Clarence Martin, built in 1937 (NR 1995). He also designed the Hacienda Hotel in New Port Richey, a 1927 Mediterranean Revival style building (NR 1996).

The design of Casa del Mar represents Martin's adjustment to changing architectural tastes. Most his work during the real estate boom years of the early 1920s was in the Mediterranean Revival style. This house incorporates some of those Mediterranean Revival stylistic elements, notably the ornamental detail, but is more subdued and streamlined in character, signaling Martin's move into a more modernistic phase of design. This is revealed in Casa del Mar through the use of linear ornament, windows grouped in bands, and glass blocks. The design of the house incorporates good ventilation and easy access to the exterior, both important concerns for a tropical setting.

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Grismer, Karl H. The Story of Sarasota. Tampa: Florida Growers Press, 1946.

Hatten, Hap. Tropical Splendor. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986.

Matthews, Janet. Sarasota: Journey to Centennial. Tulsa: Continental Heritage Press, 1985.

Plat Map Files, City of Sarasota. Plat Map of Ringling Estates, 1925.

Polk's Sarasota City Directory. Jacksonville: R.L. Polk and Co., 1926-1955.

Sarasota Herald Tribune (Sarasota). Obituary Clipping File.

The Story of St. Martha's Catholic Parish, Sarasota, Florida, 1912-1977. Sarasota: St. Martha's Catholic Parish History Committee, 1977.

This Week in Sarasota, 2 (1925).

Weeks, David C. Ringling: The Florida Years, 1911-1936. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993.

**Interview**

Martin, Jean, granddaughter of Thomas Reed Martin. Mikki Hartig, 15 September 1995, Bradenton, Florida.

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National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

**CASA DEL MAR  
SARASOTA CO., FL.**

Section number 10 Page 1

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## **VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Lots 12, 13 & 14, Block 15, St. Armands Subdivision of John Ringling Estates.

## **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with Casa del Mar.

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CASA DEL MAR  
SARASOTA CO., FL.

Section number Photo Page 1

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1. Casa del Mar, 25 S. Washington Drive
2. Sarasota, Sarasota County, Florida
3. Mikki Hartig
4. March 18, 1996
5. Historical and Architectural Research Services, 3708 Flores Avenue, Sarasota, Fl. 34239
6. Main (southwest) facade, view looking northeast
7. Photo 1 of 13

Items numbers 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.

6. Main (southwest) facade, view looking north
7. Photo 2 of 13
  
6. Main (southwest) facade, view looking east
7. Photo 3 of 13
  
6. Rear (northeast) elevation, view looking southwest
7. Photo 4 of 13
  
6. Rear (northeast) elevation, view looking south
7. Photo 5 of 13
  
6. Detail, courtyard fountain, view looking west
7. Photo 6 of 13
  
6. Interior detail, first floor; view looking northwest from foyer, through living room, and into dining room.
7. Photo 7 of 13
  
6. Interior detail, living room fireplace; view looking northeast
7. Photo 8 of 13
  
6. Interior detail, fireplace, enclosed porch; view looking south
7. Photo 9 of 13
  
6. Interior detail, enclosed porch; view looking west
7. Photo 10 of 13
  
6. Detail, rear (northeast) elevation; view looking southwest
7. Photo 11 of 13

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
6. Barbecue pit, east corner of property; view looking east
7. Photo 12 of 13
  
6. Wood dock, rear of property, extending into Sarasota Bay; view looking northeast
7. Photo 13 of 13

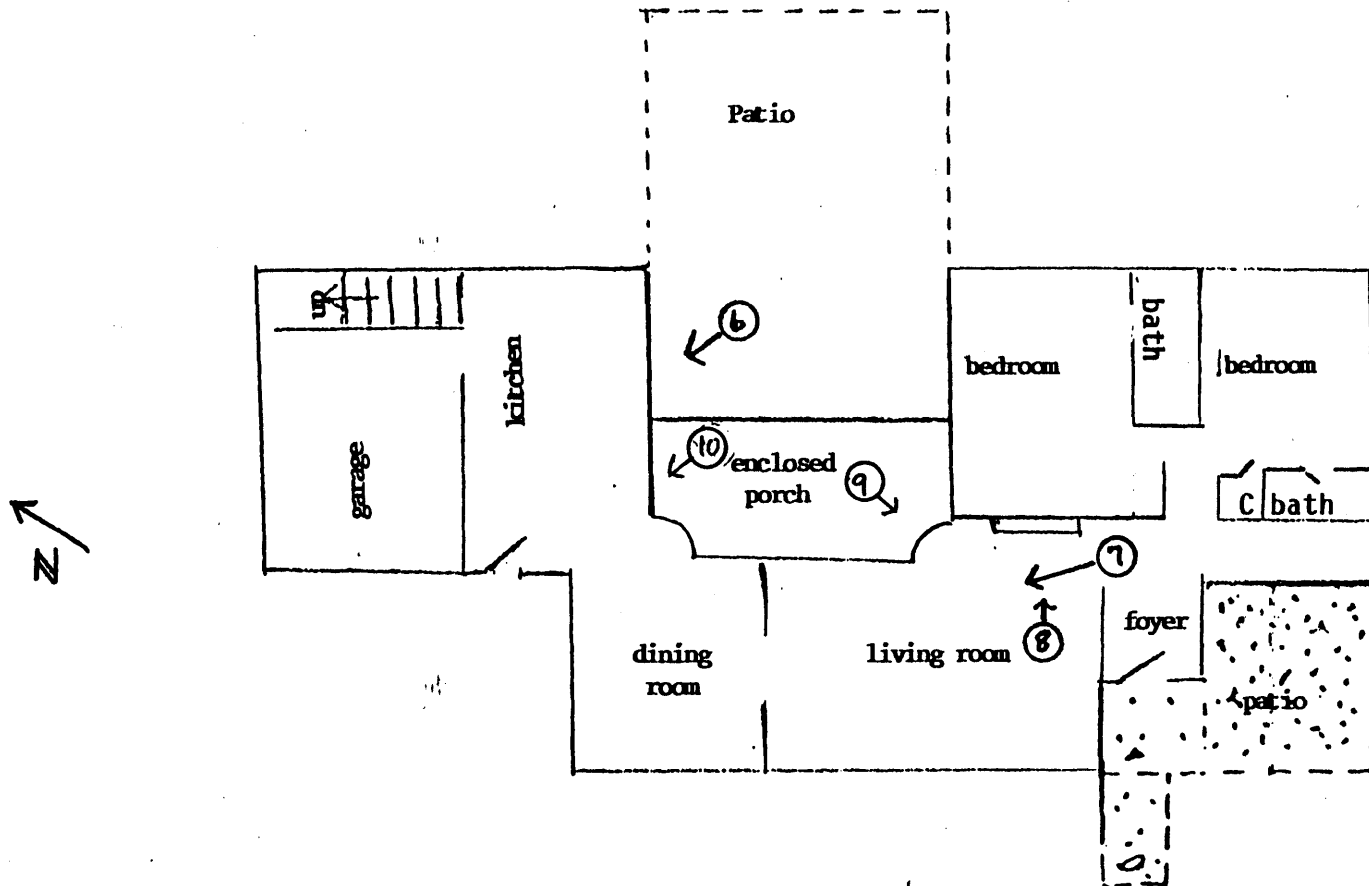


SARASOTA BAY



South Washington Drive

**CASA DEL MAR**  
25 South Washington  
Sarasota, Sarasota Co., Fl.  
Contributing  Non-Contributing   
SITE PLAN  
Photo Direction   
Boundary - - - - -  
Approx. Scale: 0.5" = 15'



**CASA DEL MAR**  
 25 South Washington  
 Sarasota, Sarasota Co., Fl.  
**FLOOR PLAN**  
 Photo Direction   
 Approx. Scale 1" = 15'