



The boardwalk widens as it delivers guests to the shaded veranda, furnished with chairs from Phil and Regina Carpenter's home decorating store.

Entry-level Position

These homeowners took a unique approach to the front entrance of their Winter Park house.

If you think you have a tough job, just imagine being a real estate agent for Phil and Regina Carpenter. For more than a year, the couple turned Winter Park, Florida, upside down searching for the perfect house. The trouble was, both of them grew up in military families, moving all over the world. Phil spent his childhood in Hawaii, Japan, and Central Florida, while Regina grew up in Bermuda, Hawaii, and Key West. With each place they lived, they garnered new experiences and took away visions of lush tropical landscapes and ideas they wanted to incorporate into their own dream home.

"Regina and I shopped around for a house in this area for a while, but we had the hardest time agreeing," Phil says. "Finally someone told us about this gorgeous wooded lot that could be subdivided, so we decided to build instead. We've seen the best of tropical landscaping all over the world, so the idea of a wild, natural landscape intrigued both of us."

The main reason the lot had not



The boardwalk takes this couple from their front door to a mulched landing, edged with palmettos and bromeliads. The stone lantern was carved in Bali.

been snatched up was that it presented a drainage dilemma. The property slopes down from the road, and water flows across it in a gentle swale filled with native saw palmettos (*Serenoa repens*). During the home's construction, Phil roped off the thick stand of palmettos and doggedly protected them from trampling. The path to the front door would have to cross this soggy patch, which had a substantial flow of water during rains.

As owners of Island Collection, an interior design business and