

Casa Coe da Sol
510 Park Street
HPC #86-06 - Designated June 1986



Casa Coe da Sol was the last building designed by Florida architect, Addison Mizner, to be constructed and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. This Mediterranean Revival structure, completed during the 1930s also has the distinction of being the only Mizner-designed building erected on the west coast of Florida. The residence was designed for the W.J. Williams family, founders of the Cincinnati-based Western Southern Life Insurance Company, to serve as their winter residence. Oscar Steinert, Jr., was the builder.

Designed after the failure of Mizner's proposed restricted residential community for the rich (Distrito de Boca Raton), Casa Coe da Sol reflects the style and grandeur of his earlier residences. Shaped in an irregular H-plan, the two-story stucco structure is considered Mizner's smallest residence. Mizner incorporated into his new building a small house located on one of the two lots on which the house was to be sited. The original owner requested this house be embodied with the new design to preserve the elaborately domed and muraled bathroom. Mizner lifted the smaller house to serve as the second story of the northwest wing of Casa Coe da Sol.

Many of Mizner Industries' products can be seen throughout Casa Coe da Sol. The bright light fixtures in the cloister, livingroom and at various entrances on the exterior were manufactured at the plant. "Mizner blue" floor tiles serve as the floor covering for the rotunda and cloister area. Stonework produced for the house consisted of busts above the window openings on the exterior of the house and the cast quarrystone fireplace in the livingroom. Wrought iron detailing is found throughout the house. The most prominent exterior feature created by Mizner is the red barrel tile roof. Several pieces of Mizner's "antique" furniture can be found in the rotunda and cloister areas.

Entrance into Casa Coe da Sol is obtained through a series of bronze sliding sashes. Mizner designed the bronze sashes because of the impracticality (steel and iron sashes rusted, wood rotted in the ocean spray) of wood and metal sashes in Florida. With the openness that Mizner tried to obtain with his heavily fenestrated rooms and cloisters, he decided to create and manufacture a new window framing system which was then, weather resistant and operable. Door and window sashes were designed to slide by overlapping frames or to disappear into the floor or walls when open. Not only is the entrance of Casa Coe da Sol furnished with these sashes, but also the cloister and entrance to the north and south terraces. This provides much natural lighting to the rotunda area, and when the bronze sliding sashes are open, creates an interior courtyard, a feature prominent in all Mizner residences.