

**Renaissance Vinoy Golf Club
600 Snell Isle Boulevard NE
Designated 1993, HPC #93-08**



The Sunset Golf and Country Club is an exotic Mediterranean Revival building at the eastern end of Snell Isle Boulevard, the focal point of C. Perry Snell's signature development, Snell Isle. At the time of its construction in 1926, there were few homes actually built on the island. However, the area was planned as an upper class residential neighborhood and more than \$7 million in lots in were sold 1925 to people wanting to live on the island. The Clubhouse represents the Boom-time architecture that was experienced in Florida during the 1920's. Its Romantic Revival style with the onion dome, tile detailing and minaret reflect the desires of the wealthy tourists to experience an exotic escape while vacationing in the Florida sunshine. The architectural style represents Snell's love for romantic Eastern architecture, a fact shown by the Mediterranean Revival style exemplified in many of his neighborhood developments and buildings. The Sunset is actually a combination of romantic interpretations of Moorish and Islamic style of architecture which is very rare in St. Petersburg.

The clubhouse is irregular in shape and is constructed of masonry finished materials, common construction materials for Romantic style buildings. It features one and two story masses, punctuated by a large tower with a cantilevered cloister walkway. The building also features a towering minaret and other fanciful details such as an onion dome, Islamic horseshoe arches and mashrebeeyeh balconies. The Islamic architectural style is carried throughout all aspects of the building design. This is included in the small details of the structure as exemplified in the pierced work and fretwork (ornamental banding) detailing of the vent covers reflecting Islamic patterns. Pierced work and fretwork are also prevalent in the tile detailing and frescos of the interior of the building.

The Islamic architectural style is carried through to the interior of the three leveled clubhouse structure. The main room on the first floor is reminiscent of the Alhambra, a fortress and palace built by Moorish kings. This room, originally used as the ballroom, includes horseshoe arches with stucco and tile ornamentation (see post cards for original appearance and use of Sunset). Secondary rooms include a marble fireplace with marble console brackets supporting a marble mantel, arched recessed niches and decorative fretwork. The tower and Minaret as well as the main structure contain balconies which offer impressive views of the St. Petersburg skyline and views out to Tampa Bay.