

Family finds its 'wow house'

Rio Villa starts its final stage of development

By Lyn Dowling
For FLORIDA TODAY

Mike and Karen Maddox knew what they were looking for when they moved to Florida from the suburbs of Atlanta last year.

They knew they wanted to be near Orlando and its airport, but not too near. They knew they wanted a neighborhood close to schools and filled with children for the sake of their trio of kids. And they knew they wanted a "wow house."

"A 'wow house' is one in which you walk in the door and say 'wow' right away, and we found that here," Mike Maddox said. "We didn't look any more after we saw this."

"This" is the Windsor, the Maddoxes' home at Rio Villa on Riverside Drive in Indialantic, a house that is typically Floridian and unusually traditional in a neighborhood first developed in the 1970s.

Construction has begun again at Rio Villa's fifth phase, a revival started by the purchase of 20 of 33 remaining lots by locally-based Riverside Builders. The homes there are well-suited to the oak-studded neighborhood, which is blocks from the ocean: spacious, luxurious and well thought out.

"We looked at all of them," Karen Maddox said, referring to communities of custom and production homes throughout Brevard County. "We felt like if we lived in Florida, we should be living near the beach. And we had kind of a good idea of the style of house we were looking for."

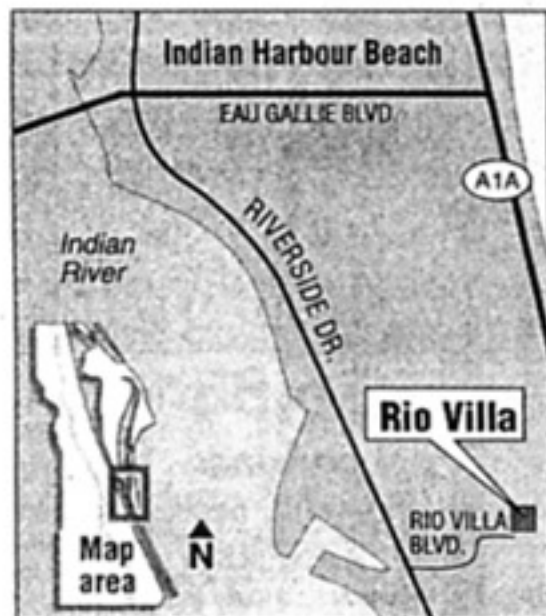
According to Mike Maddox, the search led them to realize they would need to custom build. They came upon Rio Villa and the house that was to be theirs by accident.

"We were looking for property, and then we saw this house. We knew from the start that this was the house." It is a three-bed-



Photos by Craig Bailey, FLORIDA TODAY

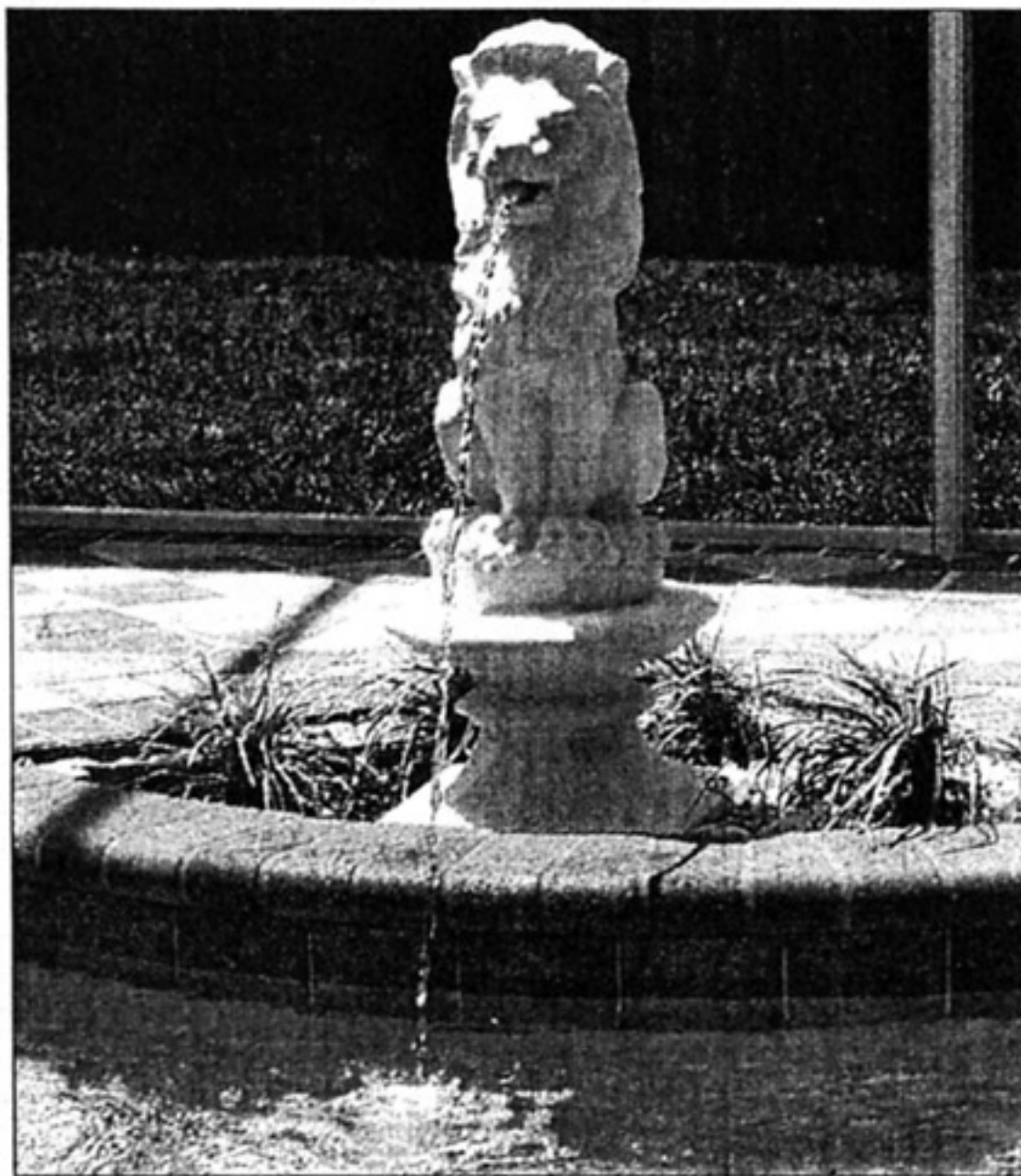
TYPICAL MODEL at Rio Villa in Indialantic has three bedrooms, including master suite, three bathrooms and large family room.



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room, three-bath model with a formal dining room, large family room and huge kitchen.

See WOW, 2F



LARGE POOL at model is flanked by pair of water-spouting lions.



RIO VILLA is in its fifth and final stage of development.

At a glance

- **Community:** Rio Villa, Phase V.
- **Location:** On Riverside Drive, between Melbourne and Eau Gallie causeways, in Indialantic.
- **Builder:** Riverside Builders.
- **Number of lots:** 33.
- **Lots available:** 10.
- **Lot sizes:** 100 to 110 feet by 125 to 140 feet.
- **Average lot price:** \$60,000 to \$62,000.
- **Average home size:** 2,900 square feet.
- **Price range:** \$170,000 and up.
- **Association fee:** \$200 a year.
- **Typical home:** "Sterling" model has three bedrooms, including master suite, three baths, large family room, formal dining room, breakfast nook, large kitchen, laundry room, large covered lanai, pool and three-car garage.
- **Features:** Ceramic tile and carpet, high ceilings, some multiple-coffered or barrel vaulted; summer kitchen; storage areas, built-in entertainment center in den and pool bath and shower. All exterior doors are Fiberglass-coated, home has built-in insect control program, security program, tumbled marble vanity tops, Corian countertops and built-in computer desks.
- **Amenities:** Close to shopping, restaurants, schools, municipal sports and recreation facilities and medical offices.



KAREN AND MIKE MADDOX moved to Florida from Atlanta.

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DW, From 1F

The home is entered through a room-size foyer with a wood-paneled study the Maddoxes have transformed into a bedroom. Wood paneling also is used in the dining room, which is set apart by classical columns, and the nook overlooks a pool with a decidedly Mediterranean look, set in a large covered porch.

The master bedroom features an alcove which Mike Maddox, the Florida and Puerto Rico district manager for Mack Truck, has aptly transformed into an office.

The den overlooks the pool and features a built-in entertainment center. The children's bedrooms have spacious closets and built-in shelves.

It is a typical, sturdy, upper-end home. But the touches present in the Maddoxes' home are what set it apart.

Over that large foyer is an elegant, faux-finished coffered ceiling,

and over the Maddoxes' dining room table is a rare barrel-vaulted ceiling. Crown molding is everywhere in the home, as is custom woodwork.

The entertainment center in the den takes up the entire south wall, beneath gently arched transoms and is formal-looking enough for anyone used to Georgia traditional. Its centerpiece is a gas fireplace.

The master bath is painted forest green, with vanities on either side of the room and the tub, raised and set into earth-tone tile, in the middle. It is framed by two small columns between which has been set a panel of antique cut glass. Behind the tub, in front of two clear windows and made private by a flower-and-plant-lined wall, is the shower.

Still, it is not the decor or design of the home but what living in it and the neighborhood has meant to their family that has so satisfied the Maddoxes.

Their 12-year-old twin daughters, Amy and Ashley, have their

own rooms, as has brother Keaton, 6. They love the pool and the tree-studded yard, and the house has become a magnet for other children.

The family has bought new bicycles and in-line skates because the activities are popular in the neighborhood. "You should see the bus stop in the morning," Mike Maddox said. "There must be 20 kids."

More are likely to move in. Only 10 lots remain available in what will be the last phase of Rio Villa, according to developer Glen Outlaw. To the surprise and joy of those who have bought them, Riverside's principals, Chris Perry and Bill Reid, are among the workers, swinging hammers and checking details.

"That means something," Maddox said, emphasizing the "means." So does having the home you want, where you want it, with all going well.

"Our home is only a block from Paradise Boulevard, so our kids like to tell everyone we're only two blocks from Paradise," Maddox said. "I like that."



STERLING MODEL in the Rio Villa development in Indialantic has a large kitchen.

Craig Bailey, FLORIDA TODAY