JOHN W. & CONSTANCE K. SALUSTRO
Salustro Partnership Architects

John and Connie Salustro met at the esteemed School of Architecture at the University of Miami. Right away, they knew that a passion for the built environment wasn't all that they shared. They quickly became partners in life and work, aspiring to one day have their own architecture practice.

They opened Salustro Partnership Architects in 1984 and today provide a full range of architectural and interior design services — from design/build expertise to custom interiors, additions to new home construction — for both residential and commercial projects. Together, John and Connie have a combination of talents that makes for a creative whole, developing all of their projects together, giving their clients the benefits of their broad range of talents.

With a staff of just five, the Salustros have kept their practice small because they like to be involved in every part of a project, beginning with the site design. "Architects are often thought of as simply building designers," John says. "But you don't just design a house in your office, at your desk, then plop it down on a plot of land. You have to consider how the house will be oriented on the site.

ABOVE: The entrance to the home shown at left.
Photograph by Michael Cook

LEFT: A living room with a palette blending a mix of wood, shingles and brick.
Photograph by Michael Cook
how the winds will affect the house, where the sun rises and sets.” Such are the things that subtly alter the experience of being in a house.

However, for a small firm Salutro Partnership does some pretty ambitious work. The firm takes on about 45 jobs a year, half of which involve giving clients a version of their dream homes. “We focus on turning out stand-alone, one-of-a-kind, custom structures, and we have developed our office with the purpose of producing this kind of work,” Connie says. A dedicated staff of skilled individuals, who work with the Salutros not for them, makes that possible.

When it comes to design, John and Connie truly listen to what their clients ask for. They recall one project, 15 years ago, in which they were the third architects brought in for a job (one of their first custom-home clients). The client's first two architects didn't give her what she wanted, so her builder finally sent her to Salutro Partnership. To this day, the client still beams when she talks about her experience with the Salutros and her wonderful home.

Additionally, the Salutros like to surprise and educate their clients. In the area in which they practice — New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania — most people fall on the conservative side of architectural preferences, and though that's not the architect's personal choice, they do accept a hint of traditional — with a twist. With an eye toward originality, John and Connie mix styles for a fresh perspective with historical influences. People recognize their designs as something different — indeed, special — right away.
more about john & constance...

When they aren't working, where will you find the architects?
John and Constance have two girls, ages 11 and 15, who are involved in lots of extracurricular activities. As parents, they're their children's biggest fans and spend their time supporting their endeavors.

What's the greatest compliment that they've received professionally?
"It is very gratifying to have a client tell you that what you have designed is perfect for them," Connie says. "To repeatedly hear that kind of feedback lets you know that you have accomplished something for that person and that he or she truly appreciates and enjoys it."

If they hadn't become architects, what profession would they have chosen?
Connie's mother encouraged her early on to pursue a career as an architect. She found that she loved the work and devoted herself to it. Architecture is her true calling and Connie has never given much thought to other professions. John also realized at a young age a keen interest in architecture, but he is also a gifted guitar player, given his determination and dedication to whatever he does, he would likely have been a successful one.

What's the most impressive home they've ever seen?
Hands down, John says, it's Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater. He admires the way that the famed architect constructed the house over the waterfall instead of across from it — an example of the kind of out-of-the-box thinking to which Salustro Partnership aspires.

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