

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**



**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Mar-A-Lago

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 1100 South Ocean Boulevard  not for publication

city, town Palm Beach,  vicinity of congressional district 11

state Florida code 12 county Palm Beach code 099

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> In process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Donald Trump  
Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation - Mrs. Adelaide Riggs, President

street & number 4155 Linnean Avenue, N.W.

city, town Washington,  vicinity of state D.C. - NY

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

street & number

city, town  vicinity of state

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title  has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town  vicinity of state

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Mar-A-Lago is an adaptation of the Hispano-Moresque style, long popular among the villas of the Mediterranean. It is a crescent-shaped with an upper and lower cloister along the concave side of the crescent facing Lake Worth. A seventy-five foot tower tops the structure. In the tower are bedrooms and baths. The entrance is reached from a hall off the the upper cloister. There are circular carpeted stairs to the first level bedroom and they continue to the second level bedroom. From there the stairs to the tower gallery are circular iron steps.

The construction of the house is stone, a distinct innovation in Florida at that time. Three boat loads of Dorian stone were brought from Genoa, Italy for exterior walls to within a few feet of the top.

One of the particular attractions of Mar-A-Lago is the extensive use of all Spanish tiles throughout the interiors and exteriors. Some of the finest examples are the pink glaze tiles on either side of the front door.

The whole of the property comprises approximately seventeen acres of perfectly landscaped lawns, a nine-hole "pitch and putt" golf course, citrus groves, green houses, cutting garden, guest houses and staff quarters. Across the southeast lawn a stone path leads to a tunnel under South Ocean Boulevard which opens on the beach. To the left on the beach is the private cabana and pool, and to the right is the Bath and Tennis Club.

Mar-A-Lago is approached from the South Ocean boulevard through a massive arched gate, down a coconut palm-lined driveway to a porte cochere. The focal point of the main body of the house is the enormous glass arched Roannesque style window seen from South Ocean Boulevard. It is set deep in a border of carved pelicans, the glass edged with very lacy iron grille.

Entrance Hall: From the porte cochere, one enters the hall through a massive and magnificent iron grille door. Around the upper part of the wall are ten Coats of Arms, topped by coronets, of the Merriweather and Post and allied families. The beamed ceiling is hand-painted in Spanish design, using recessed blocks of the lions passants and griffins to conform to the Crests. Suspended from the ceiling are very old Spanish lanterns; four of them are the eight-pointed star, and two are the four-square. The walls are tilted stucco with niches. On the right the niches display Dresden urns. On the left the niches contain two marble busts made in Rome in the late sixteenth century from ancient Rome portraits of Cicero and Antonius Pius. The fine hooded fireplace is between the niches. On the same side are two large cloak rooms, one for the gentlemen, and one for the ladies. Straight ahead from the front door is the entrance to the living room through handsome carved double doors. Each door has thirty-four recessed panels with mounted carved and gilded cherubs. The doors and cherubs were the work of Franz Barwig and his assistant.

Living Room - This particular room is without doubt the most unusual and fascinating room to be found in a private home anywhere. The lofty gold-leaf ceiling is a copy of the famous "Thousand-Wing Ceiling" in the Accademia at Venice. The arches from the ceiling are in a mile-fleur ground with the armorial bearings of the different Doges of Venice in place of the monks as used in the Accademia. Gold-leafing is almost a lost art; it was a problem to find workmen who could apply and burnish the gold. There is another ceiling above this one, with crawl space, which was of importance to solid construction.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates**

**Builder/Architect**

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Representative of the affluent society's way of life in the 1920's, Mar-A-Lago exemplifies the baronial way of life adopted by the affluent society of the 1920's during the land boom that opened Florida to winter resort development.

History

Mar-A-Lago was intended primarily as a place of comparatively short residence. Its location is in one of our principal winter playgrounds where each day is a holiday and where people go to enjoy semi-tropical climate for perhaps two months in a year. These factors seemed a rational argument for designing a house tending toward a richness, a festive quality, and one that could be well out the ordinary.

The plan, unusual in itself, was partly the result of the owner's desire for a house disposed in small units to avoid the massive appearance that would be required to incorporate all the household requirements under one roof, and also due to the use to which the house is put. The period during which the house was to be occupied was the height of the season's entertainment. This fact made it desirable to have a house for the use of the family and guests in common, with more or less isolated apartments to which the family and guests could return when quiet was desired.

Cognizance was taken of the climatic conditions, and since a large portion of the time was spent outside a generous semi-circular patio was provided which acts as a connecting link for the other units of the house and in turn gained their protection from the fresh breeze from the ocean. Climatic conditions also governed the selection of semi-tropical plants for the landscaping executed by Lewis and Valentine, landscape architects.

Mar-A-Lago was designed to take advantage of the ocean view and lake view. To this end the boulevard on the ocean front was depressed so as to obscure the view of all passing traffic, and the use of walls and planting which might obstruct the view of the ocean were avoided.

The stucco walls possess a warmth of color, and the judicious use of the Doria Stone adds dignity and strength to the wall surfaces. Sculptured designs of plants and animals indigenous to the semi-tropical climate were designed by Joseph Urban and modeled by Franz and Walter Barwig. Native cypress has been extensively used in the form of carved beam ends, columns, beams, and corbels, sand blasted and aged to a warm driftwood gray, or where required for effect, decorated in soft greens, vermillion and gold. One of the unique features of the house is the use of old Hispano-Moresque tiles. The roof tiles were brought from old Cuban houses and are laid in white cement. Furnishings were selected to maintain the atmosphere created by the exterior.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

"Mar-A-Lago" - Irvin L. Scott  
HABS Survey

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 17

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

### UMT References

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

C 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

D 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

E 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

F 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

G 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

H 

Zone	Easting			Northing					

### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cecil N. Mckithan - Landmark Coordinator

organization NPS-SERO date August 31, 1981

street & number 75 Spring Street telephone 221-2651

city or town Atlanta, state Georgia

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

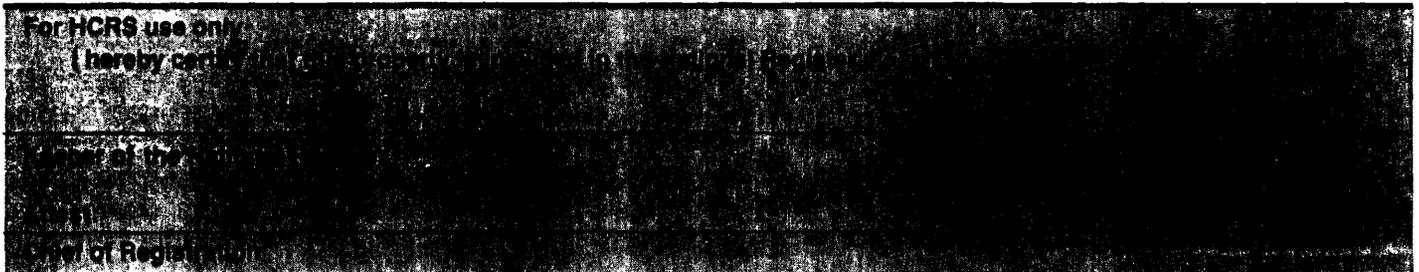
national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title \_\_\_\_\_

date \_\_\_\_\_



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On the walls are seven extremely rare silk-needlework panels from an old palace in Venice. There are, in all, even large archways. Suspended in the archways are fine old Spanish lanterns. One arch leads from the entrance hall, and (going around the room to the right) an arch leads to the dining room, the next one to the patio, and then one into the library. Just beyond the fireplace another leads to the "Money Loggia," a small room leading to the modern "tent room" for glassed-in or outdoor dining on the terrace. The monkeys are very amusing in this area. They are carved stone, set into the walls of thier loggia, where "Plus Ultra" tiles are also used. The monkeys are in various amusing positions. Two of them, on the wall of the library window, are wearing glasses, reading a book.

On the ocean side of the room is a triple arch leading to the small loggia with the Great Window. It is approached by four wide marble steps flanked by North Italian Romanesque columns resting on lions carved by Franz Barwig. Here in the small loggia are frescoes copied from those by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Riccardo-Medici Plazzo in Florence. Gozzoli's frescoes on the walls of the Medici Chapel depict the long procession led by the your Lorenzo de'Medici who represents the first of the Wise Men. Another of Gozzoli's frescoes is of the Byzantine Emperor, John VII Paleologus, representing the second of the Wise Men, as he rides melancholy and solemn over the wall of the Medici Chapel. Barwig imported two fine artists for the frescoes in this loggia, accurately adapting and fitting the famous scene to the area available here.

The very large hooded fireplace is of Italian Gothic inspiration and was designed by Joseph Urban to carry out his ideas of a harmonious focal point for the room. The screen in front of this fireplace is a notable example of antique Gothic.

In the center of the room is a large Italian Renaissance table with the original owner's Coat of Arms. There are other examples of late Renaissance and eighteenth century furniture in the room. Against the wall between the entrance hall and the dining room, is an eighteenth century cabinet of greenish hue from an old Spanish sacristry. The living room rug is a very large and fine one from an old monastery in Spain. The chandeliers are Bristol crystal glass.

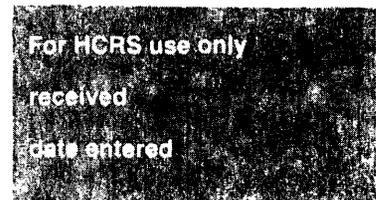
To the right of the fireplace is the entrance to the library. In this entrance way is a Grandfather Clock which was the property of Ms. Post's father. The clock is quarter-sawed oak, with sculptured figures in red oak, all finished in a very dark mahogany tone. The "works" are the original Higgins and Seiter movement. The clock is typical of the Victorian era and was acquired by C. W. Post in that period. The library is English, dimensioned to fit very fine old English walnut panelling. The room is a small one which lends itself nicely to quiet conversation or study.

Dining Room - Here is a room adapted from one in the Chigi Palance in Rome. The chandeliers are of Spanish design in carved wood, gilded and rubbed to a soft finish. The chairs are Venetian with a rubbed green and gold finish. Among them, one is the original from which the others were copied. It is not possible to tell the difference without removing the upholstery.

The most amazing thing in this room is the dining room table. Joseph Urban designed the table, using the motifs of the antique tables in the Pitti and Uffizi Galleries in Florence. The marble top, with inlaid patterns of different semi-precious stones, was made in the Old Medici Marble Works in Florence. This famous school was started by

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Lorenzo The Magnificent in 1500; it is the same school which made the tables in the Pitti and Uffizi Galleries. This table is the only marble top extension table in the world. There is a separate side table, and six leaves, which can be used to extend the principal table to approximately twenty-nine feet without interrupting the intricate design of the inlaid marble top. The main table is about twelve feet in length, weighing approximately 4,000 pounds, mounted upon a steel frame covered by carved wood. The legs are ball bearing to facilitate moving. The side extension table, and a round table of different design, remain in the room for use when dining in small groups.

The design of the inlaid marble should be carefully examined. Concord grapes form the border; peaches of blush cheeks and fruits abound in profusion. It seems incredible that marble and stone could have been found to reproduce faithfully the various blushes or dewey skins of fruits. The general background is of yellow marble from Sienna, Italy. The blue is lapis lazuli from Persia, the pink is "peachstone" from Carrara, Italy, and the red stone was from the Pyrennes Mountains in Spain. There are red jasper from Sicily, white Oriental alabaster from Egypt, and white shell from the Pacific area. There is also yellow chalcedony from Italy, blackstone from Belguim and green jasper from the Arno River near Florence. Each stone was selected for its coloring in duplicating the fruits or background needed. In one end of the table is inlaid the Arms of the School of the Medici, and the Arms of the Hutton family.

The floor of the room is of black and white marble blocks from Cuba, covered with a very large Oriental rug. The painted cloud effect of the ceiling, bordered in relief, with carved beams, is particularly interesting.

Deenie's House - These quarters began as a nursery when daughter Deenie was little more than an infant. The first room entered is a sitting room redecorated by the daughter after she outgrew childhood; it is now in modern decor. The bedroom remains as it was originally designed. It is here that the idea and workmanship of the "nursery" are distinctive.

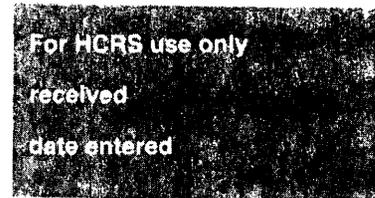
The room is oval to accommodate a beehive fireplace at one end. In plaster relief, a rosebush grows across the dome of the fireplace and continues over the windows on either side, across the ceiling almost to the other side of the room. There are blossoms and leaves in tinted polychrome the entire length of the trailing bush. At the very end, on either side, are two little canaries in bright yellow peering toward the bed. The bed is a fairy story too. It is a canopy bed with four openly carved bedposts continuing through the canopy, topped by carved squirrels. The whole of the wood carving is silvered, giving the effect of a silver bed; all of the work was done in West Palm Beach.

The elaborate hinges on the doors of the room are designed as roses; the handles are small squirrels with the tails for the levers, all in wrought iron and silvered. The rug is particularly fascinating. It was woven for this room from a design in a fairy story illustrated by Joseph Urban. The motif is of the Middle Ages, turreted castle with a moat and drawbridge. The ladies are in long gowns with high peaked hats with trailing veils; the men are in doubtlet and hose, true to the attire of the Gothic period.

The bathroom wall is tiled with two rows of illustrated nursery rhymes, full color, and thoughtfully placed for the eye-level of a child, none too high for a child to read

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"Tom, Tom, The Piper's Son," or other popular nursery rhymes. The rugs for the bath were woven from scenes of childhood.

It is not difficult to imagine what fun the youngsters had in this "house." The suite is just as enjoyable to the "oldsters" of today.

Cloister and Patio - This area may be reached from each section of the lower floor of the house with the exception of the dining room. The cloister follows the contour of the house in crescent shape on the concave side facing Lake Worth. The general design is similar to Old World monasteries. In the area of the patio are some of the finest carvings by Franz Barwig. From the lower cloister, the upper one is reached by several stairways. Particularly enchanting is the open-air stairway done in the Gothic manner with a central motif as the stairway curves. Dorian stone was used for the vaulted ceiling and arches. The stairs wind toward the upper level level to open onto the cloister, from which the various guest suites and tower are reached.

The arches and columns of the lower cloister are carved in the Dorian stone. Most of the exterior stone sculptures were carved by Barwig from a platform scaffold after the outside stone was in place. The extensive use of the old Spanish tiles on the walls of the cloister should be noted. In the cloister-patio area arrangements of chairs and tables are amid a veritable greenhouse of plants. There are fish-tail palms, blooming and colorful plants, all in pots for ready removal in event of sudden storms.

Upon stepping out of the cloister-walk there is a particularly unique patio. It is "round," an original idea for patio design. The intricate carving above and around the arches should be studied closely. This particular carving was Barwig's special pride. The entire time he was working here his primary aim was to design something special for Majorie Post. His theme was the mother bird feeding her young. (Perhaps Barwig was a good psychoanalyst, or prophet). All of this carving was done from a scaffold after construction was placed. His pains were infinite to achieve a design in relief that would especially please her. He began the design on the arched wall nearest her suite. When that was achieved to his satisfaction, he continued with the same design throughout the patio.

On the far side of the patio, toward Lake Worth, is the distinctive little pool for the goldfish and water lilies, perhaps best described as the "parrot pool." The parrots, modeled and sculptured by Barwig, are quite amusing. The wrought iron cat-tails were made in West Palm Beach iron works. From this little pool the view is perfect. There below lies the lovely lawn with the Royal Palms, citrus groves, golf course and a view across Lake Worth to West Palm Beach. By turning back toward the house, the whole of the main body of the structure is clearly defined. The upper and lower cloisters of the crescent, the tower and general contour of the house come into focus for an overall picture. From here can be seen the carved wood eagles with swept-back wings under the soffits of the cornice and on the rafter ends. The eagles were carved from aged cypress by Barwig.

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From the parrot pool, stone steps lead down from either side of the patio to the lawn below. At the base, between the two stone descents, is a fountain. It starts with a shallow pool at the top, into which three stone parrots send water from their breaks, the water then falls below to another basin which is supplied with water from the large carved swans. From the Lake side, when looking back to the house, it becomes apparent that the intricate stone sculpture, the wonderful old tiles, the general workmanship, the whole artistry could not be duplicate in the foreseeable future. It is truly one of America's Treasures.

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Mar-A-Lago

Being all that part of the north 610 feet of the south 1170 feet of Government lot 2 of Sec. 35, T. 43 S., R. 43 E. in the town of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Fla., lying West of Ocean Boulevard (S.R. 1A) Right-of-Way and more particularly described as follows to wit: Beginning at a point in the west face of an existing seawall on the east shore of Lake Worth, which point is 500 feet North of, measured at right angles to, the southline of Government lot 2, of said sec. 35: thence north 6°69'22" west along the west face of said seawall for a distance of 77.32 feet: thence north 10°23'23" east along the west face of said seawall for a distance of 100.50 feet to a point in the south line of Bingham - Copp Tract, a subdivision recorded in Plat Book 18, Page 6, Palm Beach County Public Records; thence run south 88° 12'07" east along the south line of said Bingham-Copp Tract for a distance of 1134.10 feet to a point in the westerly R/W Line of Ocean Boulevard (State Road 1A); thence run south 0°09'07" east for a distance of 82.59 feet to a point of curvature; thence run southerly along the arc of a curve concaved to the southwest having a radius of 1412.60 feet and a central angle of 3°03'00" for a distance of 75.20 feet to a point of tangency: thence run south 2°50'53" west for a distance of 176.28 feet to a point of curvature: thence run southwesterly along the arc of a curve concaved to the northwest having a radius of 2809.03 feet and central angle of 2°32'30" for a distance of 127.27 feet to a point of compound curvature; thence continue southwesterly along the arc of a curve, concaved to the northwest having a radius of 158. feet and a central angle of 85°26'30" for a distance of 239.39 feet to a point of tangency: thence run north 83°12'07" west along the north line of Southern Boulevard (State Road 80) for a distance of 1040.43 feet to the point of beginning containing 10.0793 acres, more or less.

AND the West one-half ( $W\frac{1}{2}$ ) of lot 20 and the south 15 feet of the East one-half ( $E\frac{1}{2}$ ) of Lot 20 and the South 15 feet of the West one-half ( $W\frac{1}{2}$ ) of lot 21, all in Bingham-Copp Tract, a subdivision in the town of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida, as recorded in Plat Book 18, Page 6, Palm Beach County Public Records. Containing 0.1891 acres, more or less.



View of Mar-A-Lago looking northwest at Mrs. Post's private quarters, "Owners House (Suite)."



View of main entrance (Porte-Cochere) looking west showing guest house at right with arched bridge connecting it to main house.



View looking northwest from beach tunnel beneath Ocean Boulevard showing main house. Flagstone path leads from tunnel to entrance next to "Baby's House."



Mar-A-Lago , 1967

Palm Beach, Palm Beach Cty, FL

Courtesy of HABS