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State's most popular building? It just might be here

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Is Floridians' favorite building here in Palm Beach County?

There's a good chance, says the Florida chapter of the American Institute of Architects, which kicked off a contest last week called "Florida Architecture: 100 Years, 100 Places" in an attempt to find the most popular building in the state.

In contention are 13 sites in Palm Beach County, more than any other county except Miami-Dade.

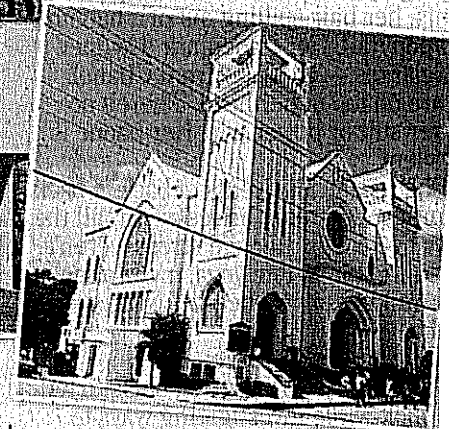
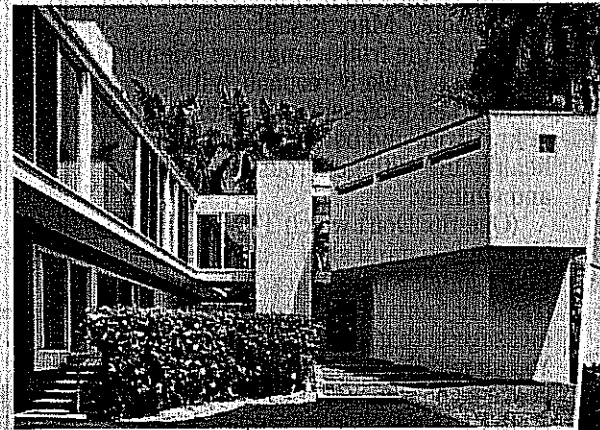
The list of 100 churches, schools, homes, office buildings and museums reflects more than a century of Florida's architectural styles. Heavy on tourism fantasy, the statewide compilation ranges from the Moorish turrets of the 1891 Tampa Bay Hotel to Disney World's 1971 Cinder-

Florida's architects have a list of 100 buildings that could be named the top structure.

ella's castle, to 1111 Lincoln Road in Miami Beach; a daringly beautiful parking garage built in 2009.

Mar-a-Lago and The Breakers are on the Palm Beach County list, of course, but so are the Payne African Methodist Episcopal Church in West Palm Beach, designed by the city's first black architect, and the Courtenay house, a Delray Beach residence designed by mid-century modernist master Paul Rudolph,

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TOP CONTENDERS: The Courtenay house in Delray Beach (above) and the Payne African Methodist Episcopal Church in West Palm Beach (right) are two of the 13 sites in the county in a contest to be named the state's most popular building.

Staff file photos

Architect happy to see modern, not just Mizner, make the list

► BUILDINGS from LE

who lived in Sarasota.

The buildings were suggested by a committee of local architects, with a final list compiled by the state chapter in Tallahassee.

Bob Currie, a Delray Beach architect and committee member, was pleased to see that modern buildings by Rudolph and Richard Meier make the local list.

"Mizner did romance, so for a while, everybody wanted that, but we also have examples of modern architecture here, which people tend to forget," said Currie, who designed an addition to the Rudolph house.

West Palm Beach architect Deborah Nichols, another committee member, said the 13 selected buildings "are reflective of where we were at certain times in our history. These buildings are the history of our communities and are part of what makes us unique."

Both architects and the general public can vote for their favorites until April 6 by going to www.aiafla.org.

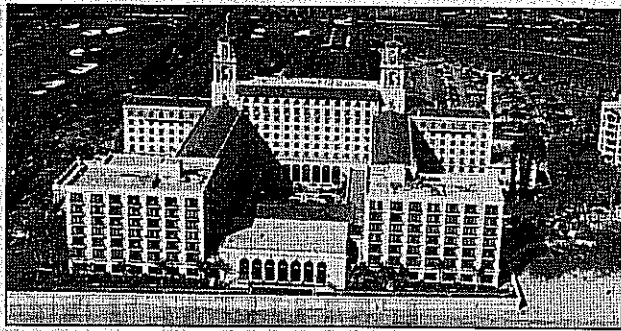
Here's a look at the local buildings that made the list:

■ **Grace Episcopal Church, West Palm Beach**, a hexagonal building with a steeple like a rocket ship, was a shocker in 1957 when it was designed by Miami architect Robert Bradford Brown. The church was demolished in the early 2000s.

■ **Payne Chapel A.M.E. Church, West Palm Beach**, is a 1924 Gothic Revival building designed by Hazel Augustus, the city's first black architect. The church remains a cornerstone of the historic Northwest District neighborhood.

■ **Temple Beth El Synagogue, West Palm Beach**, a graceful modern building designed in 1967 by Alfred Browning Parker, a famous mid-century modernist from Coconut Grove and professor emeritus at the University of Florida.

■ **Bethesda-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church, Palm**



RICHARD GRAULICH/Staff file photo

The Breakers in Palm Beach is on the list of 100 buildings.

Beach, was designed in the Gothic Revival style in 1927 by Hiss and Weeks, with an addition by Marion Sims Wyeth in 1931. The building's cast-stone walls were constructed on-site; its cathedral-like interiors include a Tiffany window.

■ **The Breakers, Palm Beach**, one of the country's last remaining grand hotels, was built by Henry Flagler's family, which still owns it, in 1925. Designed by Schultze and Weaver in an Italian Revival style, the architects' group calls it an "architectural marvel" for its history, enhanced with constant upgrades, particularly its lovingly preserved original 1920s interiors.

■ **Concha Marina, Palm Beach**, was designed by Addison Mizner in 1921 for himself. The house was later altered and enlarged by two other famous Palm Beach architects, Marion Sims Wyeth and Maurice Fatio.

■ **Mack residence, Palm Beach**, a white linear structure, was modern architect Richard Meier's first Florida house and only Palm Beach house, built in 1979.

■ **Mar-a-Lago, Palm Beach**, the last of the grand 1920s Palm Beach palazzos, was designed by Marion Sims Wyeth in 1923 with an interior by theater designer Joseph Urban. Built by cereal heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post, the mansion today is a private club owned by Donald Trump.

■ **St. Edward Church, Palm Beach**, designed by Mortimer Dickerson Metcalfe in the Spanish Baroque style, cost \$500,000 to build in 1926.

Col. E.R. Bradley, owner of Bradley's Beach Club casino, was one of 291 people who donated most of the cost of construction. "St. Ed's" was the Kennedy family's church whenever they visited.

■ **Gulf Stream Golf Club, Gulf Stream**, designed by Addison Mizner in 1923, was once declared the most beautiful Mediterranean building in the U.S. John S. Phipps commissioned the building after deciding that Palm Beach was too crowded for the golf-and-polo club he envisioned. Although the polo fields are gone, the club remains one of the most exclusive in the country.

■ **Courtenay residence, Delray Beach**, a simple modernist box elevated on steel I-beams, was designed by Paul Rudolph in 1955. At the time, louver windows took the place of air conditioning.

■ **Colony Hotel, Delray Beach**, built in 1926 by Martin Luther Hampton. The sun-colored building with its distinctive striped awnings was one of eight original hotels in Delray Beach, and is the last one standing. The Atlantic Avenue landmark still has many of its original features, including Dade County pine floors, a lobby decorated with shields and galleons, and a manual elevator.

■ **Boca Raton Town Hall**, with a plan by Addison Mizner, completed by Delray Beach architect William Alsmeyer in 1927. The Mission-style building was constructed with ironwork, tile and woodwork from Mizner Industries. It's now the home of the Boca Raton Historical Society.

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