



## NICHIHA CASE STUDY

# Nichiha Cladding Again Adorns Homes in Renovation Competition

## Designs Balance Coastal Looks & Durability

Part of what makes HGTV's "[Rock the Block](#)" such an alluring show is its location variety. The first and second seasons took place in Santa Clarita, CA and Atlanta, GA, respectively. Charleston, SC hosted the program's third season. Season four, when Michel Smith Boyd [used Nichiha to take home the top prize](#), moved to Berthoud, CO, about an hour north of Denver. When season five was being planned, producers wanted to mix things up.

Because all previous locations were inland locales, producers explored a more coastal location: Florida's Gulf coast. The show initially explored properties that abutted an inland lake. But eventually, the show settled on Treasure Island, which sits a stone's throw from Florida's famous beaches and just 10 miles west of St. Petersburg.

A pair of twin townhomes sandwiched between Capri Boulevard and the intercoastal waterway served as the perfect blank slate for the show's fifth season. With the location settled, four pairs of contestant teams made their renovation and décor plans.

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## PROJECT DETAILS

### LOCATION

Treasure Island, FL

### PRODUCTS

**VintageWood** - Spruce

**Novenary** - Opal

**Novenary** - Slate

### TIMELINE

July 2023 – November 2023

### TYPE

Multifamily

## CHALLENGE

On a pair of matching townhome structures, install a contemporary cladding solution that offers standout protection against severe weather, salt water, pest intrusion, rot, and more.

## SOLUTION

"Rock the Block" designers specified Nichiha to provide a blend of wood and stucco aesthetics without the pitfalls associated with these traditional materials. The design would serve as a modern exterior to set the stage for their interior design vision.

## RESULTS

Nichiha's VintageWood and Novenary cladding were installed to provide a pleasant, modern exterior that can withstand Florida's volatile climate.

“The product was perfect. It can easily withstand the elements, which was important since this location is alongside saltwater.”

PETER BENNETT, PRESIDENT OF BLAKE BUILDING

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### High Value Looks Complement the Competition

As a competition, “Rock the Block” is a straightforward concept. Designer teams are each allocated a budget of \$250,000 to renovate identical properties. The winning team is the one that’s able to add the most appraisal value. The prize? Bragging rights and having the street named in their honor.

This season, the show departed from its usual format of allowing contestants full control over the home’s exterior. Since the four townhomes were grouped together in a pair of standalone buildings, designers sought an exterior that would offer a more cohesive aesthetic. For that, designers turned to Nichiha Architectural Wall Panels (AWP). Peter Bennett, president of Tampa-based [Blake Building](#) assisted with the cladding installation.

“We went over the product and thought it might be a good fit for the project,” said Bennett. “It really helped with the design. It brought a lot of texture in. Before, it was just a stucco box.”

The structures use the same cladding products but in different ways. Both utilize Nichiha’s [VintageWood](#) in Spruce, but each orients panels differently; the western home has horizontal while the eastern one has vertically installed cladding. Both homes also share the brand’s [Novenary](#) products, in Opal on the western home and Slate on the eastern home.

“I think you’re getting a premium product that’s nothing like anything else on the market for the location,” said Bennett. “The product was perfect. It can easily withstand the elements, which was important since this location is alongside saltwater.”

The consistent exteriors brought a unique level playing field to the competition, allowing designers to focus on the home’s interior and outdoor living areas.

### Elegance & Resilience

In the end, Lyndsay Lamb and Leslie Davis took home [the show’s top prize](#). Their unit had natural tones inside and out, an indoor sauna, and an ultra-luxurious pool and hot tub area. But their win is not to imply that the other contestant designs were in any way “losers.” Each of the curated designs offer contemporary looks that do well to accentuate the Nichiha exterior. Lamb’s and Davis’ design in particular carried the wood accents from the VintageWood exterior throughout the house.



“The design is really contemporary. You have the natural aesthetics in VintageWood and the stucco alternative in Novenary.”

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Regardless of which design viewers personally prefer, the townhomes are up to the task of occupant and property protection. Nichiha cladding is comprised of fiber cement, thicker than the traditional wood and stucco cladding options that the Nichiha cladding mimics. And unlike real stucco and wood, Nichiha AWP is approved for use on buildings in Miami-Dade County, an industry benchmark for products that [can withstand hurricane-force winds](#). But to the consistent throngs of tourists and locals who regularly stop by the property, you might never know.

While performing some post-finale touch-up work, Bennett noticed just how much the design attracted admirers. “I’m still shocked at how many people stopped by to take pictures,” said Bennett. “Every day, there’d be maybe one or two an hour. It’s crazy.”

Nearby John’s Pass, a shopping mall and tourist hotspot, has a variety of tour agencies. Following the finale of season five, the “Rock the Block” homes were added as a stop on their aquatic loop.

“Of course, a fair amount of attention was because it was seen on TV too,” said Bennett. “But the design is really contemporary itself. You have the natural aesthetics in VintageWood and the stucco alternative in Novenary.”

Season five of “Rock the Block” aired on HGTV in 2024.



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Nichiha USA, Inc., a subsidiary of Nichiha Corporation, was established 1998 and is headquartered in Johns Creek, GA. Nichiha Corporation, an international leader in fiber cement technology for more than 35 years, has 13 plants worldwide and markets distinct patterns of fiber cement siding products in the U.S. In 2007, Nichiha opened its first U.S. manufacturing plant in Macon, GA, responding to an increase in demand for fiber cement products in the Southeast market. For more information, call 1.86.NICHHA1 or visit [www.nichiha.com](https://www.nichiha.com).

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