



A Power Couple Shining Bright in a Big Little City

West Palm Beach can be said to really come alive at night, with many distinct areas catering to its community. But the city's lifestyle goes beyond its nightlife, where locals enjoy meandering down Clematis Street during the evening hours. Day or night, it has become a playground for both inland folks and islanders.

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BY MARITZA COSANO
PHOTOS: ADDIEL PERERA

For all its grandeur, West Palm Beach is remarkably *petite*. In the past, the big little city west of Palm Beach, best known as America's first resort destination, used to be outdone by the glamour and glitz of the island. But lately, things have changed. "We love the lifestyle, we love the food scene, we love the integration between different age groups and cultures," says Jonathan Duerr, a Compass real estate agent and influencer.

Duerr likes beautiful things. And Palm Beach County clearly captivated him. Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, he attended business school at the University of Miami, where he quickly found his niche in real estate.

With its European and Latin flavors, West Palm Beach has become not only his home, he

observes, but a city of love and elegance. It is also one of the major centers of finance, innovation, diplomacy, commerce, gastronomy, science, the arts, and culture. "It's sort of a small melting pot where billionaires hang out with bartenders," he says.

His girlfriend Naiomy Vasquez is equally smart, with a sense of business. An Ecuadorian native, she works for ASD Surfaces, a company that ASD Surfaces, a company that provides all materials for local architects, contractors, designers, builders, and homeowners. She has made a home with Duerr in this modern quaint town. And though they don't have kids yet, she loves that it is a family-oriented city with a tight community. You will often find this local power couple at Avocado Grill on Datura Street in West Palm Beach, which is where they met seven years ago.

To the left, Jonathan Duerr and Naiomy Vasquez at the Rooftop of the The Ben, Autograph Collection, one of the most visited spots downtown West Palm Beach.

“Naiomy was working there. She was a bartender at the time, and I was a very close friend of Julian’s and an avid patron. I came in a lot and sort of connected that way. And I think I chased after her for a while before she gave me the time of day,” explains Duerr. Naiomy listens with a Cheshire cat smile masked on her face. “I finally took her out, and we’ve been together ever since.”

Vasquez and Duerr enjoy living downtown. With old-world charm and historical buildings, the downtown area is home to a thriving local population who likes to live in high-rise condos built around our picturesque parks, restaurants, shops, and water views.

The couple enjoy attending galas, supporting charities, relief efforts, festivals, clubs, and church events, as well as traveling to far-off lands around the world like Egypt and Vietnam. To follow them on Instagram is like reading an adventure-packed love story. “From camel riding in the Sahara Desert, climbing pyramids, kissing the Sphinx, and walking hundreds of feet below the surface to enter a 4,600-year-old tomb, it is nothing short of magical,” Duerr posts about their recent trip to Egypt.

Back home, Duerr and Vasquez like to get up early in the morning and go for a run along the intercoastal. On any given Saturday, they like to stroll down to the West Palm Beach GreenMarket and meet

The Palm Beach Food and Wine Festival attracts hundreds of people to West Palm Beach. Food is on the table, the best place for chefs and foodies to connect. In the photo, Chef Julien Gremaud, Jonathan Duerr, and Naiomy Vasquez with friends at PBFWF 2021 Chillin’N’Grillin’ at Eau Palm Beach Resort & Spa (Photo by Michael Pisarri)





up with the people that make this city so attractive and comfortable.

“You’ve heard the slogan, West Palm is a city where you can live, work, and play, and that’s so true,” says Naiomy, who can’t think of another place on earth she’d rather be. “Here, everybody knows each other and helps each other,” Jonathan adds. “It’s more about community than competition, which I think is fantastic.”

The small size of the downtown area alone makes it very walkable, Duerr points out. At a leisurely pace, with stops at retail stores, coffee shops, first-rate restaurants, and bakeries, plus a stylish nightlife scene,

the city offers a romantic and exciting lifestyle. There’s so much more that makes West Palm Beach one of the most beautiful cities in South Florida, Duerr notes. And to hear more about it, I posed a few quick questions. You’ll find that their answers reveal as much about them as about this big little city.

What do you love most about West Palm Beach?

Duerr: The integration of different communities. I think you’re seeing sort of a changing of the guard, obviously getting a little bit younger down here than it ever was. The pandemic shined a big light on West Palm Beach. Palm Beach



As a general rule, bars and clubs in Downtown West Palm Beach start filling up around 10 pm and begin to picking up around midnight. Jonathan Duerr and Naiomy Vasquez are usual patrons of Avocado Grill downtown West Palm Beach who is owned by his dear friend Chef Julien Gremaud.





The Meyer Amphitheater, located at 104 Datura Street and Flagler Drive, has the perfect view of the WPB waterfront. The 10,000 sq. ft. amphitheater hosts all kinds of special events throughout the year including the all-so-popular 4th on Flagler and Sunfest. Jonathan and Naiomy make this area part of their daily route for walks and early morning jogs.

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JONATHAN AND NAIOMY
ARE A UNIQUE COUPLE WHO
COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER'S
STRENGTHS AND SUPPORT EACH
OTHER'S INDIVIDUALITY.



and West Palm, from a real estate perspective, are more merged together now than ever.

Best places to live in West Palm Beach?

Duerr: Downtown along the waterfront.

Vasquez: Same

Places to see and things to do in West Palm Beach?

Duerr/Vasquez: There's so much! You will have no problem at all finding places to see and things to do in the city.

Best attractions in town?

Vasquez: Clematis by Night on Thursdays. All the families and kids are out. Live bands play on the Green Lawn or movies are screened. And of course, the GreenMarket.

Duerr: Sunfest. I sit on the board for Sunfest, so I'm actually part of the planning for that event. We're

doing a lot of new things while keeping it a small-town event for everybody.

Palm Beach or Lake Worth Beach?

Vasquez: Palm Beach.

Duerr: Palm Beach

Ice cream parlor?

Duerr/Vasquez: Sloans

Social clubs?

Duerr: Young Professionals of the Palm Beaches has been really great for both of us, meeting people personally and professionally.

Vasquez: They're great! They provide professional development and networking opportunities for emerging business leaders under the age of 39.

Favorite restaurant?

Duerr/Vasquez: Buccan, Avocado Grill, Rocco's Tacos . . . but we go to restaurants every night of the week so it is difficult to name them all.

Favorite food?

Vasquez: Hispanic food and Italian food.

Duerr: I love Japanese food. As you can tell, I'm just a food enthusiast, and I think we both are.

Arts place?

Duerr/Vasquez: The Norton.

Movie night or dancing night?

Vasquez/Duerr: Movie night. We are big movie people.

Most romantic spot in the city?

Duerr/Vasquez: The waterfront, hands down.