

# Built to Last

## A Local Manufacturing Success Story

WRITTEN BY SHELLY WEST

For nearly three decades, Florida Patio has quietly been doing something rare in today's marketplace: building outdoor furniture right here at home.

Long before “shop local” and “sustainable sourcing” became popular phrases, this Palmetto-based company was already living it. With approximately 90 local employees and a reputation that reaches from backyard patios to major theme parks and resort chains, Florida Patio has grown into one of the area's most impactful manufacturers—without ever losing sight of its roots.

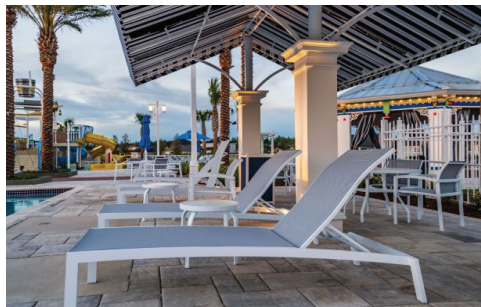
“We love the fact that all of our employees are local and that we are helping our local economy,” said Gregory Rehorn, National Sales & Marketing Manager for Florida Patio Furniture Inc. “At one point, Florida Patio was the largest non-seasonal employer in the area, and today we're still one of the top local employers.”

Unlike many outdoor furniture brands that rely on imports and long supply chains, Florida Patio manufactures its products on site. Frames are welded in-house. Finishes are applied in-house. Cushions and components are assembled in-house. That local control does more than create jobs—it allows the company to manage lead times and maintain consistent quality.

It also means their products are built specifically for Florida living.

Each piece is finished with a marine-grade polyester powder coat designed to resist corrosion from salt air and sun exposure. Stainless steel hardware prevents rust. These choices are intentional and practical, created with the Gulf Coast climate in mind.

Florida Patio isn't just a place of employment—it's a place where people learn skilled trades. New employees are trained internally and given opportunities to move into higher-paying positions such as welding and finishing.



That investment in people has created a team that stays.

“Many of our employees have been with us long-term and are considered family,” Rehorn shared. The company also contributes to local schools and businesses, strengthening its ties to the community beyond its own walls. One of Florida Patio's most unique offerings is its refinishing department. Instead of replacing worn furniture, customers can restore what they already have—for about 60 percent of the cost of buying new.

## A Sustainable Approach That Makes Sense

“Scrapped furniture is only worth pennies,” Rehorn noted. Extending the life of existing products significantly reduces waste while saving customers money.

The company also makes a point to source materials as locally as possible, proudly noting that they do not import materials from overseas when regional vendors can supply what they need. This reduces freight miles while supporting other local and regional businesses.

Florida Patio operates on a wholesale pricing model, avoiding traditional retail markups that can inflate prices by 60 percent or more. The result is commercial-grade, high-quality furniture offered at prices that remain accessible to homeowners, businesses, and hospitality groups alike.





This balance of quality and affordability has earned Florida Patio an impressive client list, including Disney, SeaWorld, Universal Studios, and major hotel and resort chains.

As the company looks ahead, growth is on the horizon. Florida Patio recently acquired another furniture company with significant property in Sarasota. The move will allow for expanded production capacity, additional buildings, and even shorter lead times.

"The goal is to increase our production power, lower lead times, and continue to grow while creating more local jobs," Rehorn explained.

Despite its growth and regional reach, Florida Patio's identity remains firmly tied to the community.

"Florida Patio has continued to grow each year because of our quality and unmatched customer service," Rehorn said. "We pride ourselves on how well we compensate and care for our employees."

In an era when so much manufacturing has moved overseas, Florida Patio stands as a reminder that local craftsmanship, local jobs, and local pride still matter—and can still thrive.

The Florida Patio Showroom is currently located in Palmetto at 2500 US-41 Business North. Check out the website at: [www.floridapatio.net](http://www.floridapatio.net)



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