



AD


DREAM
RENOS!
FROM
BROOKLYN
TO LONDON

76
KITCHEN
TRENDS, FIXES
& FINDS

FAMILY
PORTRAIT
SUPERMODEL
ALESSANDRA AMBROSIO
IN SANTA MONICA



party house



IN THE PINK-HUED
CENTRAL COURTYARD, AN
ALLÉE OF PALM TREES
FRAMES A VISTA OF THE
HORIZON BEYOND. FOR
DETAILS SEE RESOURCES.

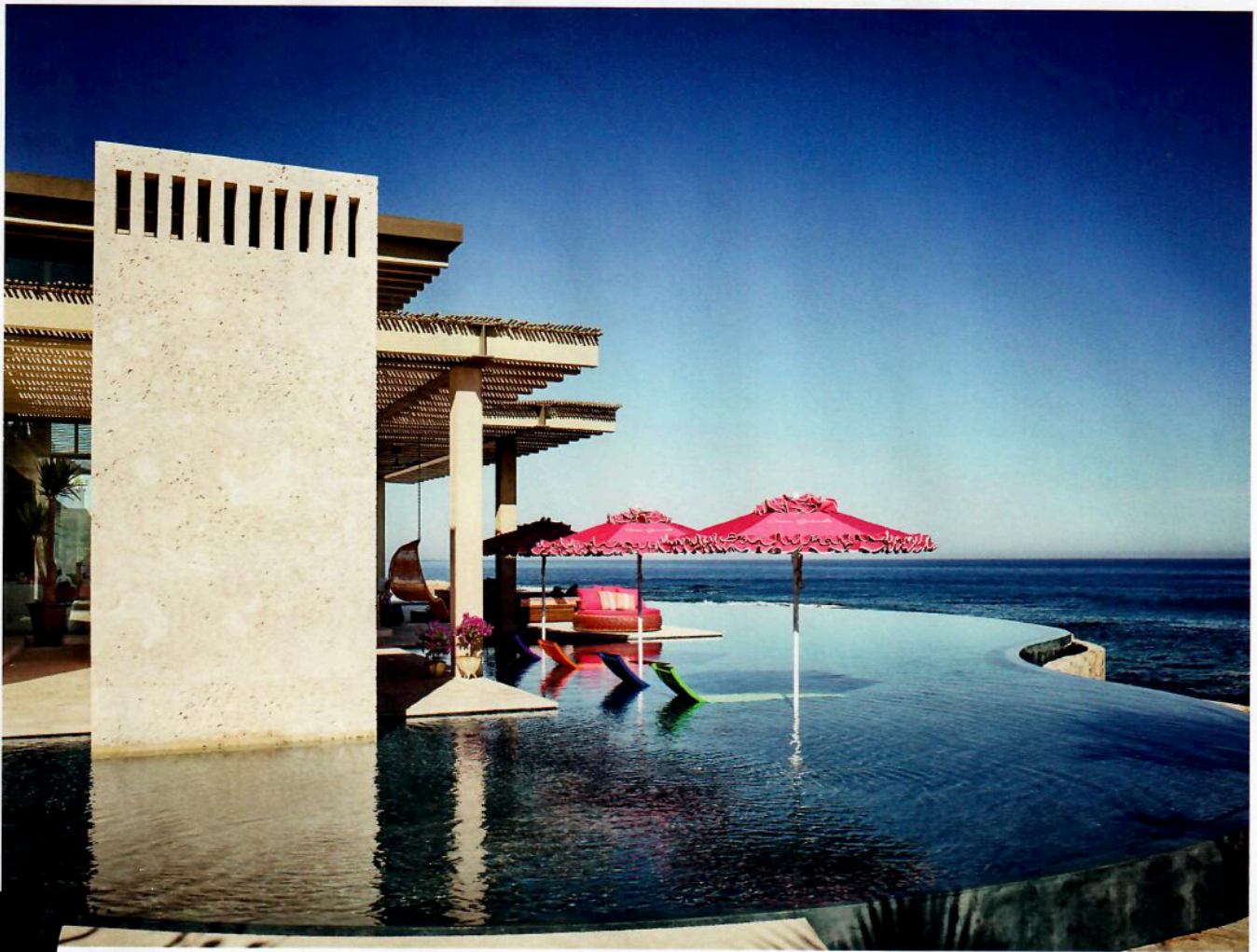
Designer *Ken Fulk* and architect
Victor Legorreta fashion the ultimate
good-time getaway in Mexico

TEXT BY **KEN FULK** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN**



THE CUSTOM LINEAR
FIREPLACE IS SUR-
ROUNDED BY SEATING BY
KETTAL, PALECEK, AND
PAOLA LENTI. SMALL
AFRICAN TABLES BY JOHN
DICKINSON; COCKTAIL
TABLES BY SUTHERLAND.





Like many great stories, it all started with a glass of wine. Years ago, while enjoying a bottle of Casa Grande on vacation in Mexico, my clients joked that it would make a great name for a getaway. Little did they realize how true this moniker would one day become.

I've known these clients for a long time, having first developed a friendship rooted in a shared understanding that life is short and how you live it really matters.

When we undertook this project, we had already collaborated on one home and had shared a host of adventures that often led to dancing on tables into the wee hours. As a result, we had developed a shorthand that helped inform not only the look but also the feeling of this house.

A close-knit family with a busy lifestyle, they wanted a home that could accommodate groups of all sizes. A place to escape, a place for family and friends to gather, a place where they could cut loose and celebrate. But what they dreamed of was far

from a simple beach house; they wanted to create a truly remarkable destination that would be a draw for generations to come.

The clients had long admired the work of the Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta, and they had hoped to one day have a house designed by his vaunted firm. Their initial request was for a singular home, unlike any they had seen. They took inspiration from the spectacular oceanfront setting and their favorite memories from beach locales around the globe—Tulum, St. Barts, Ibiza, Mykonos. The task of translating these references into a visual language fell to me. Through the combined efforts of my team, Victor Legorreta (Ricardo's son and successor) and project architect Marcela Cortina Rodríguez, and the clients, who were intimately involved throughout the process, a collective narrative developed.

From the beginning, this house was going to be grand—not only in scale but in aesthetic. Legorreta designed a low-slung 30,000-square-foot house that slowly reveals itself as you enter and wend your way through a series of spaces, eventually leading up to a full view of the Sea of Cortez in all its azure splendor. For such a large house, it's imperative that you don't

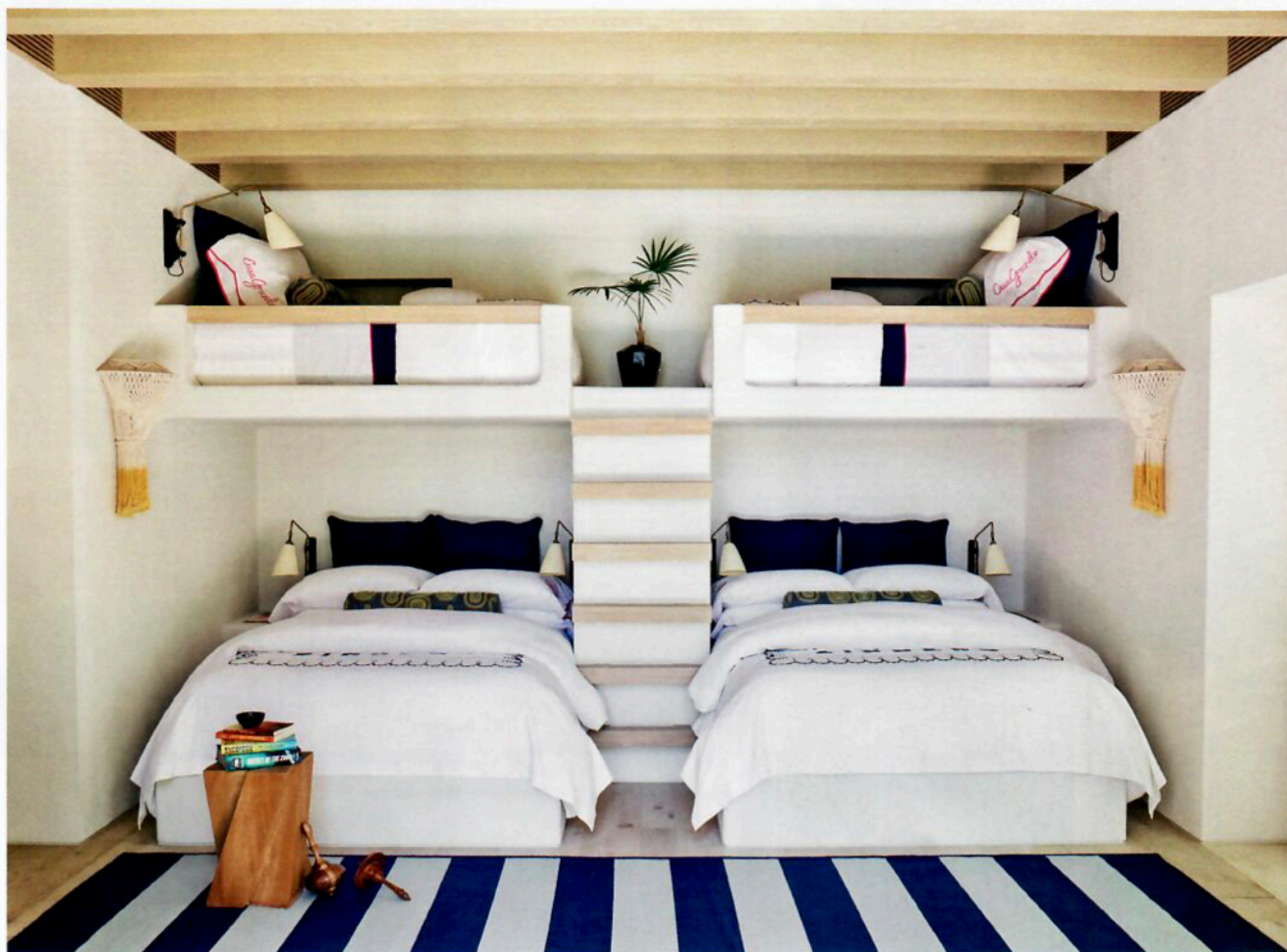


FOR COURTYARD
DINING, A SUTHERLAND
TABLE IS SET WITH
CHAIRS BY ROOMS AND
CHRISTIAN ASTUGUEVILLE.
OPPOSITE IN THE POOL,
UMBRELLAS BY SANTA
BARBARA DESIGNS SHADE
COLORFUL LEISURE CRE-
ATIONS CHAISE LONGUES.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE CUSTOM ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILE FROM OAXACA, MEXICO, ADDS WHIMSY TO BATHROOMS THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE. **OPPOSITE** CUSTOM BUILT-IN BEDS IN THE ZIPPER SUITE WEAR LEONTINE LINENS, SWING-ARM SCONCES BY OBSOLETE; CUSTOM DIP-DYED COTTON SCONCES BY ALEX RANDALL; RUG BY MARK D. SIKES FOR MERIDA.





A vacation home is about the memories we create, the moments that leave an imprint and keep us coming back year after year.

experience it all at once, but instead there's a sense of exploration when you aren't quite sure what's going to come next.

"We wanted to create a big surprise as you entered the house," says Legorreta of the unassuming entrance that leads to a two-story central courtyard painted in the hot-pink hue that has been synonymous with his family name since his father started the firm in 1965. "This sense of mystery is very common in Mexican architecture. It is an architecture about emotions, one that keeps you discovering as you wander through it. From there you go to smaller courtyards and gardens of even smaller scale that create special atmospheres for the more intimate spaces."

The private spaces and guest suites radiate from either side of this dramatic hub, which we lined with palm trees as opposed to cactus. We wanted to create a sense of "otherness"—an oasis in the Baja desert. In fact, water features throughout the house give it the

feeling of an island floating on the sea (that water also has the added benefit of cooling the air on the hottest of days). As you look across the central courtyard's large reflecting pool—where a hydraulic platform rises at the touch of a button to accommodate a dining table and chairs—you see straight through the double-height living room to an infinity pool painstakingly colored to match the hue of the water beyond.

We went to great lengths to blur that line between the pool and the ocean, and we went through a similar exercise with the finishes throughout the house. Knowing how much these clients love color, texture, and pattern, we chose relatively simple materials that support all the glamour yet feel laid-back, honest, and true to the arid landscape: thirsty whitewashed wide-plank wood or beautiful pale stone floors, creamy plaster walls, doors and shutters in hand-scraped light wood. That restraint gives the house a more ethereal quality. →





A CUSTOM LIGHT FIXTURE BY ALEX RANDALL HANGS OVER THE LIVING ROOM, WHERE CUSHIONS MADE WITH MEXICAN BLANKETS COVER THE BUILT-IN BENCHES.



ABOVE BOLD TILEWORK PUNCHES UP THE OPEN KITCHEN, WITH CUSTOM CONCRETE-AND-OAK MILLWORK. MCGUIRE STOOLS AT CUSTOM TABLE BY DOS GALLOS. **OPPOSITE** PATTERNED FABRICS ENLIVEN SPACES THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE.

To further the relaxed vibe, we made an early decision to incorporate a lot of built-in furnishings formed from the same plaster as the walls. The enormous sofas in the living room were designed to be like deep daybeds, so that anyone could curl up and nap at any time. This immediately gave an uncomplicated ease to the house. It also allowed the freestanding pieces we did introduce to feel more like jewelry adorning the spaces. Our selections include a Spanish table backed by two midcentury cabinets to create a casual bar in the living room, a sofa by Mattia Bonetti, and a sculptural shelf by Zaha Hadid. A Steinway purchased at auction was the *pièce de résistance* for the musically inclined family. Handmade textiles found on travels throughout Mexico bring color and pattern to the rooms.

Ultimately, it was about more than simply building a beautiful house. It was about setting the stage for experiences. These clients truly understand that a vacation home is about the memories we create, the moments that leave an imprint and keep us coming back year after year. So we really considered what it

would look like to host a dinner for 30 and where the DJ might set up, what amenities their guests might want in their suites and how we could evoke a sense of childlike wonder for movie night in the home theater. And as we do for many of our projects, we created a full brand identity, including a unique logo, typeface, and color palette, to suit this memorable resort destination: Casa Grande.

After approximately three years and a few unforeseen detours (not one but three tropical storms! Stolen linens for 22 beds!), the combined efforts of hundreds of artisans and builders were ready for their big reveal. As the clients arrived to see their completed home for the first time, a mariachi band played in the courtyard while a troupe of dancers wearing long skirts embroidered with *CASA GRANDE* glided down the staircase. Tequila shots (with tamer refreshments for the kids) and maracas were passed around. After a delicious dinner, as my birthday gift for the wife, the DJ turned up the disco music, and right on cue, hot-pink fireworks exploded in the sky reflecting in the pools around the property. **▲**

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design notes

THE DETAILS THAT MAKE THE LOOK

“We wanted to create a sense of ‘otherness’—an oasis in the Baja desert,” notes *Fulk*.

ENCAUSTIC CEMENT TILES COVER A BATHROOM WALL. SCONCES BY KELLY WEARSTLER FOR VISUAL COMFORT; CB2 MIRRORS.

PALISADES RUG, IN 6' X 9', BY MARK D. SIKES FOR MERIDA; \$2,450. MERIDASTUDIO.COM

CELESTE ACCENT TABLE; \$870. ARTERIORSHOME.COM

A ZAHA HADID SHELF HANGS IN A SITTING ROOM, WHERE A MATTIA BONETTI SOFA WEARS FABRICS BY CLARENCE HOUSE AND MANUEL CANOVAS.

DALA STOOL BY STEPHEN BURKS FOR DEDON; \$1,380. DEDON.DE

MOISTE CHAIR BY CHRISTIAN ASTUGUEVIEILLE; TO THE TRADE. HOLLYHUNT.COM

ROUND BELLY BASKET; FROM \$58. SERENAANDLILY.COM

VICTOR LEATHER MIRROR; \$179. CB2.COM

BY-THE-SEA FABRIC; \$103 PER YARD. JANUSETCIE.COM

IXTAPA RECTANGULAR FIRE TABLE; FROM \$7,995. RH.COM

PRODUCED BY MADELINE O'MALLEY

INTERIORS: DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN; ALL OTHERS COURTESY OF RESPECTIVE COMPANIES





VINTAGE KILIM; \$6,500. WOVEN.IS

PENDLETON BY SUNBRELLA'S EAGLE ROCK FABRIC; TO THE TRADE. PINDLER.COM



LIDOR RAFFIA LIGHT FIXTURE BY MADE GOODS; \$1,800; MECOX.COM

DASH THREE-HOLE WALL-MOUNTED LAVATORY FAUCET SET; \$1,344. WATERWORKS.COM



IN A GUEST ROOM, THE BED IS DRESSED IN LEONTINE LINENS. ON DESK, LAMP BY AERIN FOR VISUAL COMFORT.



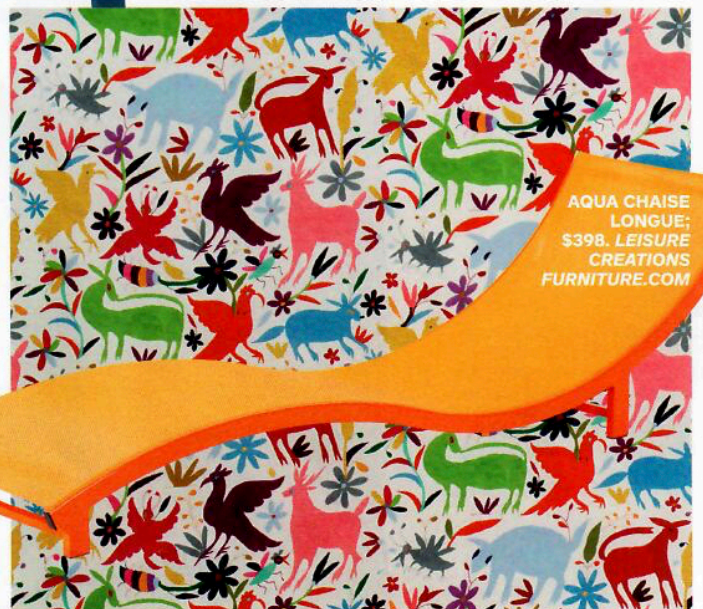
PETITE FLAMENCO UMBRELLA; TO THE TRADE. SANTABARBARADESIGNS.COM

VIKING DINING TABLE BY SUTHERLAND; TO THE TRADE. SUTHERLANDFURNITURE.COM



SAND LOUNGE CHAIR BY FRANCESCO ROTA FOR PAOLA LENTI; FROM \$2,670. DDCNYC.COM

TIKI TIKI COTTON-LINEN BY ANDREW MARTIN FROM KRAVET; TO THE TRADE. KRAVET.COM



AQUA CHAISE LONGUE; \$398. LEISURECREATIONSFURNITURE.COM

“Handmade textiles found on travels throughout Mexico bring color and pattern to the rooms.”