



MAKE A SPLASH
AD'S GUIDE TO
CREATING
THE PERFECT BATH

HAPPY 100TH
BIRTHDAY, I. M. PEI

HOUSE PROUD

TODAY'S TASTEMAKERS ON THEIR OWN TURF

ASHLEY HICKS IN LONDON

TINO ZERVUDACHI ON HYDRA

MARTYN LAWRENCE BULLARD IN PALM SPRINGS

BATHS

THE MASTER BATH AT
A HAMPTONS HOUSE
BY CHRISTOFF:FINIO
ARCHITECTURE.



Great baths shouldn't just soothe the senses—they should make a splash.

As part of our inaugural *Great Design Awards*, we've selected the best new products—from stunning *surfaces* to statement *tubs* to sculptural *fixtures*—and gathered expert tips for even the smallest of spaces

t seems a bit crazy in retrospect, but before Joanna and I were married, I suggested we buy this property together and build on it someday. She thought it rash and was not initially keen on the idea, but I told her not to worry, that even if our relationship didn't work out, it would be a sensible real-estate investment. I'm pleased to say that, in the end, both have proven successful.

After a 40-year career as an architect, designing houses for many clients, I was finally confronted with designing one for myself and my family—surprisingly, something I had avoided all this time. Joanna and I both love Mediterranean architecture, our common ground, so the house I devised is a mixture of northern Italian and southern French influences, a farmhouse compound pretending to be a country villa. I like to think it looks like an architect had nothing to do with it, that it is and has been “of its place” for a long time. We called it Villa Corbeau, in jest, after the resident crows of the neighborhood.

The garden at Villa Corbeau follows suit and was designed to look like a Mediterranean garden gone to seed. About a half acre in size, it was accomplished over a year of Sundays in 2008 with help from friends and dedicated gardeners Pat Omweg and Alfredo Garcia. It's laid out with vistas and pathways connecting various destinations and outbuildings, including a rose garden, pool pavilion, fountain, arbor, pergola, and potting shed. The pathways are decomposed granite with steps of local sandstone. Their axial geometry lends order to the whole, but the vegetation has been left to overgrow its borders, intruding here and there, crowding the paths and creating a slightly unkempt, older-looking landscape, an effect that became apparent just a few years after the garden was planted.

Although some Italian cypress and a couple of California pepper trees were added, the property was already dignified by several dozen mature California live oaks. These, along with bay laurel and *Pittosporum undulatum* (a.k.a. Victorian box tree), create a dense background, screening us from neighboring properties and making for a secluded private setting.

Because rain can be an infrequent event in Southern California, the palette of plant material is reasonably drought-tolerant. There are gravel terraces rather than lawns, and although occasional volunteer seeds are left to take root and some gift plants from friends have made their way into the mix, there are few water-hungry species in the garden. The sweet-dry fragrances of lavender, rosemary, jasmine, and other Mediterranean regulars, however, fill the air with rich memories of European travels.

Another part of the landscape is devoted to agricultural produce, with a walled vegetable garden that is planted year-round and changes seasonally, an orchard of citrus- and stone-fruit trees, and several

RIGHT MARC APPLETON AND HIS WIFE, ACTRESS/DIRECTOR JOANNA KERNS, SIT BENEATH A WROUGHT-IRON ARBOR OF HIS DESIGN. SOFAS AND COCKTAIL TABLE BY JANUS ET CIE. **BELOW** A BOUNTY OF RIPE WHITE PEACHES.



hens that help our compost and oblige us with just enough fresh eggs. When the white-peach tree ripens—and it does so all at once, with a vengeance—we are overrun with hundreds of sweet, juicy fruits, forcing us to give most away to friends and neighbors or make more ice cream than we should ever eat.

Thomas Jefferson, a far better architect than I (even in his spare time), who also loved his garden, once said, “Though an old man, I am but a young gardener.” As I grow older, the challenges of tending the garden constantly remind me of this, but it is nevertheless our favorite place to relax, unwind, entertain, and dine. Joanna and I still enjoy traveling to Italy, Spain, France, and beyond, but sometimes, now, after a few days on the road, we look at each other and wonder why we ever felt the need to leave home and this small “California Mediterranean” paradise. **▲**



RIGHT A TEAK TABLE BY APPLETON IS LAID UNDER THE ARBOR'S ANTIQUE LANTERNS. DINNERWARE BY JULISKA; TABLECLOTH FROM WILLIAMS SONOMA. **BELOW** THE ROSE GARDEN'S BEDS ARE BORDERED WITH HEDGES OF DWARF MYRTLE. A GREEK OLIVE JAR SITS UNDER A CANOPY OF CALIFORNIA LIVE OAKS.



The sweet-dry fragrances of lavender, rosemary, jasmine, and other Mediterranean regulars fill the air.

