

VERANDA

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SPECIAL WANDERLUST ISSUE

A World of Treasures

Eclectic Interiors & Epic Design Journeys





Up in the Air

HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS OF MALIBU, ABOVE THE CALIFORNIA COAST, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT SCOTT SHRADER CREATES A LUSH MEDITERRANEAN-STYLE OASIS FOR A HOTELIER COUPLE. SENIOR EDITOR MARIO LÓPEZ-CORDERO BREATHE IN THE ENCHANTMENT.



Standard poodles Pip and Clara, and Max, a cocker spaniel mix, lounge on a built-in sofa near raised herb and vegetable beds off the kitchen. Cushions in a Perennials fabric. Finials, Inner Gardens. **OPPOSITE:** The entrance courtyard features a reclaimed wellhead repurposed as a fountain.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN BY SCOTT SHRADER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY LISA ROMEREIN
WRITTEN BY MARIO LÓPEZ-CORDERO



THE NARROW, SWITCHBACK-LADEN ROAD to “the Hacienda,” Sue and Alex Glasscock’s Malibu aerie, side-winds high into a canyon in the Santa Monica Mountains, a panorama of white-knuckle drop-offs and bony peaks, the hillsides furred in sage scrub, live oaks, and grasses gone yellow in the dry California spring. On the moody, damp day I visit, the region’s notorious marine layer hasn’t yet burned off, but still, I’m enchanted. The rugged terrain is wreathed strikingly in mist; though I have traveled only 34 miles from the relative bustle of Santa Monica, I am now worlds away.

Landscape architect Scott Shrader crunches across the gravel drive to meet me. The Glasscocks have been his clients for 16 years, and the garden Shrader devised for them gets star billing in *The Art of Outdoor Living*, his first monograph, due from Rizzoli next spring. It’s easy to see its coffee-table-book appeal. Shrader, a proponent of eco-conscious gardening, has drawn proverbial water from stone, channeling the rocky and arid coastal surroundings into a Mediterranean-style oasis that’s impossibly lush.

We pass through a rusty iron gate overhung with stephanotis into a courtyard teeming with the blue-gray-green of hardy vegetation. Monolithic agaves writhe beneath a grove of gnarled olive trees. Beds of lavender, rosemary, and westringia float amid a carpet of Del Rio gravel (a signature for Shrader, for whom lawns are anathema). Spindly cypresses stretch feathery tips into the sky.

A walkway of patinated brick in a herringbone pattern leads past a bubbling fountain toward the glass-paned front doors. The view from the courtyard spills through the living room and beyond

another pair of doors to tumble down the canyon and—in sunny weather, Shrader promises—crash into the Pacific.

Sue, luminous in riding gear, meets us in the foyer. She and Alex own the Ranch Malibu, just down the hill, a luxury wellness retreat with a plant-based menu that eschews alcohol, dairy, sugar, coffee, and gluten (and is the source, I suspect, of that glowing skin). Over a pot of tea, brewed from mint she’s plucked from stone beds off the kitchen, we chat about the gardens—apart from the courtyard, there are terraces, an allée, and a poolhouse, all lavishly planted and kitted out to accommodate indoor-outdoor living: festive dinner parties, cozy tête-à-têtes, quiet contemplation.

“The grounds provide endless opportunities for entertaining,” Shrader says. “I love the intimacy and scale of it. It feels like someone wrapping their arms around you.” Versatility and hospitality are key to the way the Glasscocks live. “If we have people coming, and it’s going to be cool, then we build a big fire up at the poolhouse or in the courtyard and bring out some blankets,” Sue says. “When it’s beautiful, we throw the doors open, so you can go out to the back terrace,” Alex says. “The plants are singing.”

Later, we stroll around the property, a multitiered idyll that reveals areas for alfresco entertaining around every corner: a wind-beaten wooden table for 12, built-in stone sofas, a half-moon arrangement of wicker furniture that seems to hang halfway into the sky. We are coming back from the poolhouse when something magical happens. The marine layer breaks, the clouds part, and there, glittering in the distance, is the cool, steely blue Pacific. Take my word for it: On a clear day, you really can see forever. □



LEFT: Homeowners Sue and Alex Glasscock, who own the Ranch Malibu, a wellness retreat on the 200-acre property. **BELOW:** *Agave salmiana* and olive trees in the courtyard garden. **OPPOSITE:** The historic Spanish-style house was built in 1929 by William Boyd, aka Hopalong Cassidy, and was later the center of the Lazy J Ranch, a sleepaway camp for the children of Hollywood stars like James Garner and Constance Bennett.





A trellis with bougainvillea shelters a table for two. Vintage chairs, La Maison Francaise Antiques.



A coop for the resident chickens is made from reclaimed wood.



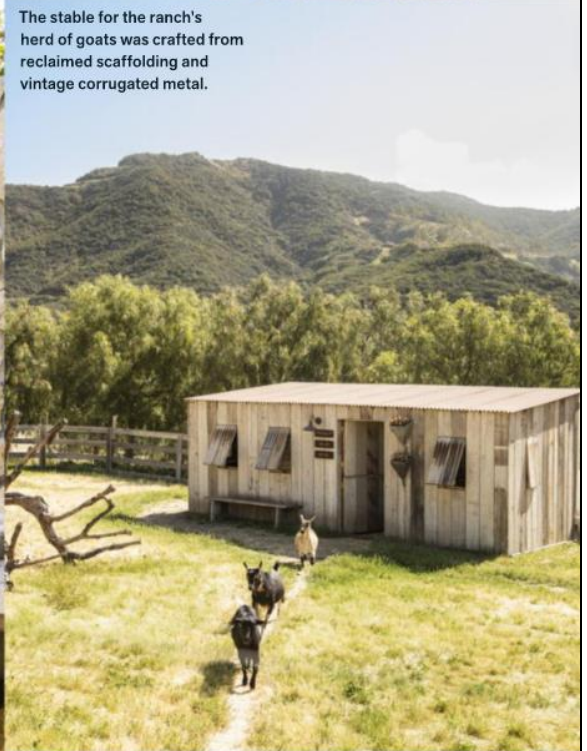
An outdoor fireplace is nestled under the eaves of the courtyard. Vintage sofa and daybed with cushions in a Perennials fabric.



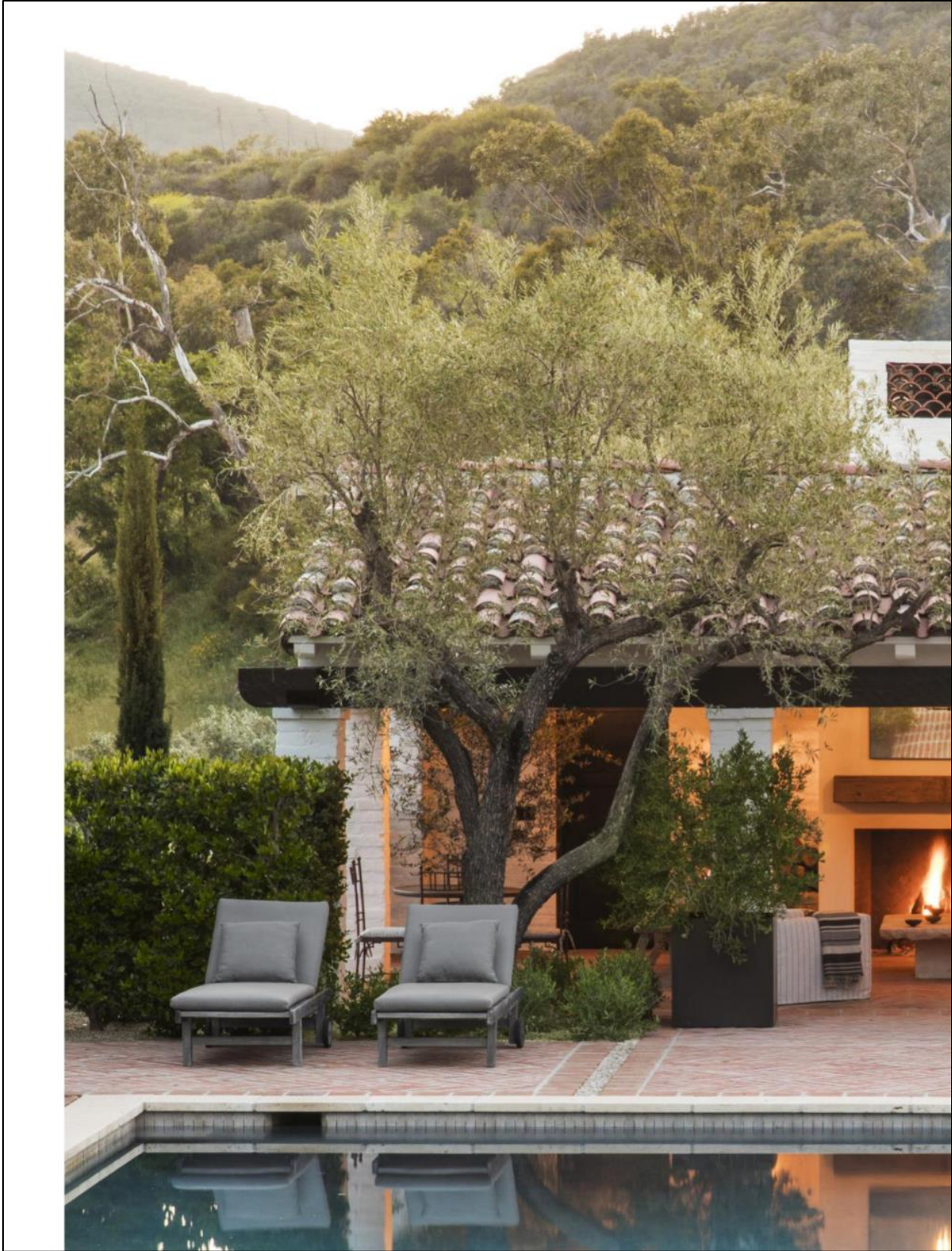
For a large party, the courtyard doubles as an open-air dining room. Vintage tablecloths and Spanish benches.



The built-in potting area off the kitchen does double duty when the Glasscocks entertain. Custom countertops and shelves.



The stable for the ranch's herd of goats was crafted from reclaimed scaffolding and vintage corrugated metal.



The poolhouse, designed by Shrader and architect Jesse Castaneda, is a recent addition to the property. Custom lounge chairs with cushions in a Perennials fabric. Custom planters. Antique stone table. For more details, see Sourcebook.

