

Our House in the Hills



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Beverly, that is. A well-appointed swimming pool. A steady stream of movie stars. And a driveway so long, the city required us to install our own fire hydrant. In year four of the Great Esquire Design Experiment, we set up residence in California and invited fourteen renowned designers to create the ultimate bachelor pad--even more ultimate than the previous ones. Here, a guided tour.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Grand Entry

Designer: Porta Bella Design for TAG Heuer **Vibe:** Modern safari

Items manly enough for Steve McQueen, the room's

inspiration: Eight black leather ottomans pressed to look like crocodile skin, a Marilyn Monroe--themed collage and an eight-photograph sequence of a man being tossed by a rhino (both by Peter Beard), and an elliptical leather sofa intended to suggest a racetrack. **Biggest potential issue for McQueen:** The sofa is

technically called a "poof." **Best argument for drinking on the job:** Porta Bella Design's Elaine Culotti initially sketched out the eighty-bulb chandelier on a cocktail napkin at the bar at El Cholo.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Terrace

Designer: Michael Lin for DKNY **Vibe:** Padded Zen **Best product placement:** The pillows are made from DKNY Pure linen. **Most comfortable trompe l'oeils:** What look like large rocks are actually plush cushions called Livingstones. **Priciest patchwork:** Salvaged

antique pieces were refurbished and combined into three full rugs that run about five grand apiece. **Why you'll forget about the price of the rugs:** The ten-foot quartz-and-bronze water sculpture was custom-made for \$40,000.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Home Theater

Designer: SFA Design for Intel **Vibe:** Hollywood plush **Quickest way to spend a hundred grand:** JBL Synthesis 7.1 THX surround-sound system, Sony Qualia 1080p projector, top-notch soundproofing, and three-tiered leather seating for fourteen. **Only reason to agree to a screening of *The Notebook*:** Each of the eleven armchairs reclines into a bed. **Most absurdly scientific explanation for having a throw rug:** The Nepalese carpet is special-made to eliminate the sound bounce from the walls.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Great Room

Designer:

Woodson & Rummerfield's House of Design for Versace

Vibe: Black-and-white cookie **Three things that suggest that "great" can also mean "really expensive":** \$4,000 worth of Venetian plaster on the walls, two \$6,000 lamps made of semiprecious rock crystal, and an \$8,000 backlit fireplace made of onyx. **Why the fireplace is extra "great":** Three onyx slabs (\$1,500 each) were broken during construction. **Last place you want to spill your merlot:** The two Versace black-and-white leather sofas, which run twelve grand apiece.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Bar

Designer: Rockwell Group for St. Pauli Girl **Vibe:** Alien chic **Why this bar is topped with grass:** Rockwell wanted it to look as if it were rising from the ground. **Proof that beer's not a good fertilizer:** The original wheatgrass had to be replaced with a synthetic after it kept dying. **Most intricate detail:** Small pieces of glass were fused to the laminated front to create a look of condensation.

Concept every public golf course should adopt:

Uplit bottle holders are built into the turf.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Loggia

Designer: Woodson & Rummerfield's House of Design for Versace

Vibe: Holistic bistro **Safest seating for the drink-spillingly**

inebriated: Any of the five wicker chairs, whose damask-print cushions are made of a fabric designed to repel liquid. **Three**

elements that give this room an international feel: Roman columns, bonsai trees, and the Jerusalem-stone floor. **View to the west:** Pacific Ocean. **View to the east (and slightly down):** Sly Stallone's house.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Office

Designer:

Idea Space Design for Montblanc **Vibe:** Beach detritus **Best**

rationale for pairing a room and a sponsor:

On a clear winter day, the window provides a view of the snowcapped San Gabriel Mountains, reminiscent of a certain logo.

Evidence of the designer's signature blend of sensual and

industrial: The sofa pillows are silk or suede on one side and burlap on the other. **Elements most likely to be found washed up on the beach:**

A driftwood sculpture in the corner, a large piece of coral below the desk, and river stones beneath the wet bar.

How actually found:

By paying distributors more than \$1,300.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Den

Designer: Sami Hayek for Louis Vuitton **Vibe:** Amazon cave (with sofa) **Three signs that cows were involved in the creation of this room:** One wall is covered in Epi leather, another is covered in suede, and the handmade boxes are linked by leather belts. **One reason not to feel too bad:** The cows that became belts were massaged daily to create a more supple material. **Most spontaneous tchotchke:** A framed lipstick kiss, which Hayek

requested from a "very cute girl with delicious lips" who walked by while he was setting up the room. **Biggest incentive to learn a second language:** Hayek embroidered a Spanish phrase across the six silk couch cushions to make proper arrangement easier.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Pool

Designer: Michael Lin for Tommy Bahama **Vibe:** Panoptic oasis
Number of decorative items found by the designer's mother: Two--the tropical-flower candles and curved accent dish from Thailand. **Technology most likely to be appropriated by Elton John:** Water-resistant velvet used on the sofa cushions. **Farthest-traveled element:** A ceramic jug fountain that Lin brought back from Shanghai. **Best argument for shopping closer to home:** The jug cost more to ship than it did to purchase.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Cabanas

Designer: Natalie Addis for Ray-Ban **Vibe:** Persian nightclub **Ratio of koi to sunglasses submerged in each of the two aquariums:** Ten to seven. **Ratio of koi to sunglasses lost due to tank acclimation:** Six to none. **Trick you can use:** Addis fashioned the coffee table from four end tables, which can then be easily arranged to suit the event. **Movies that play on the four built-in plasma TVs during parties:**

Walk the Line, The Blues Brothers, Risky Business.

Movie that would be playing if someone hadn't stolen the DVD:

Easy Rider.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Master Bedroom

Designer: Porta Bella Design for Ferragamo **Vibe:** Imperial sanctuary **Most marked sign of opulence:** The seven-foot-tall silk-

velvet quilted headboard. **Second-best nickname for a light fixture:** The Cocoon, the room's resin-sheathed Flos chandelier.

Best nickname for the same fixture: "It's been called the Condom Candelabra," says Porta Bella Design's Elaine Culotti. **Furniture so soft you might not even make it to the bed:**

The two faux-ostrich tea chairs in the corner. **Trick you can use:** Culotti made inexpensive carpet look expensive by cutting it into stripes.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Library

Designer: Champion Platt for Hugo Boss **Vibe:** Lusty eggplant **Most obvious sign that this library isn't meant for reading:** There are two bookshelves but only fourteen books. **Second-most obvious:** Nine James Houston photographs, two vases, and two sculptures feature distractingly naked female forms. **Best use of once-liquid minerals:** The three-foot-tall, two-inch-diameter solidified-magma flute and two vases made of rehardened lava. **Most fortunate mistake:**

The manufacturer intended the stingray-skin table to be brown, but the dye turned it lavender--perfect for this room.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Guest Bedroom

Designer: Annette English Interior Design for Bally **Vibe:** Rustic opulence **Three elements that bring the outside in:** Leafless branches carved in relief into the white walls of the entry, bedside lamps made of birchwood, and a floor lamp made to look like a knotted stick. **Best use of sponsor products:** The armchair is upholstered in Bally herringbone and corduroy and uses Bally belts for arms. **Biggest deterrent to headboard-rocking intimacy:** Made up of 204 handblown glass bulbs, the sculpture hanging above the headboard costs \$6,000.



Photograph by Robert Trachtenberg

Wellness Room

Designer: Chimera Interiors for Asics **Vibe:**

Blanched serenity **Most tranquil aspect:** An aerated water garden provides a constant trickle of running water. **Invitingest ablutions:**

The silver-marble-tiled shower has six concurrently running showerheads. **Best use of sponsor archives:** The walls are decorated with classic red-and-white Asics posters from the fifties, sixties, and seventies. **Thought most likely to get you through your workout:**

"When this is over, I'm going straight to the adjacent massage room." **Thought least likely to get you through your workout:**

"I'll quit as soon as I get to that TV."