

DESERT ROMANCE

A COUPLE DRAWS ON AN ALL-STAR ROSTER OF DESIGN TALENT TO CREATE A PALM SPRINGS OASIS THAT'S AT ONCE PRIVATE AND GLORIOUSLY OPEN TO THE DRAMATIC LANDSCAPE.

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INTERIOR DESIGN / PAUL VINCENT WISEMAN, LUIS ALVES AND KRISTI CARRÉ FREELAND, THE WISEMAN GROUP INTERIOR DESIGN INC.
ARCHITECTURE / JAMES SCHMIDT, SCHMIDT ARCHITECTURE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / STEPHEN SUZMAN, ZETERRE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



It started with the pool. "I love to swim," says Kirk Perron, a former triathlete and entrepreneur who founded Jamba Juice. "My dream has always been to have my own lap pool." Combine that vision of a dazzling pool with a passion for modern design and midcentury style, and Palm Springs became an obvious destination for Kirk and his husband, Humberto Rossini Perron, to build a home together.

Kirk saw his opportunity when the storied Jack Warner estate in Old Las Palmas came up for sale. He bought two-thirds of the property, sold off one-third, and kept a long rectangular plot for himself—the perfect size to build around a 25-meter lap pool. Kirk then turned to

San Francisco-based designer Paul Vincent Wiseman, along with senior designer Luis Alves and Kristi Carré Freeland, formerly an associate design principal and LEED green associate at the firm. Architect James Schmidt and landscape designer Stephen Suzman, another San Franciscan, rounded out the team. Kirk acted as his own general contractor, assisted by project manager Michael Wilhelm, during a two plus-year process to design and build a home with sleek lines and organic materials that speak to its desert surroundings.

Wiseman's design vision came while shopping in New York and from an extensive collection of 1960s-'70s Danish pepper grinders in deep honey-toned wood found in San Francisco.

Designer Paul Vincent Wiseman and his team incorporated splashes of green into Kirk Perron and Humberto Rossini Perron's Palm Springs house. A custom pendant executed by John Wigmore Lighting hangs above living area sofas, which wear a Sanderson fabric. The sofas were fabricated by Thomas Sellars Furniture and upholstered by J.F. Fitzgerald Co., both of San Francisco.



The living area's pair of mid-century Sergio Rodrigues chairs (above, top) hails from R & Company in New York. The custom coffee table (above, bottom) is wood with a bronze finish by Jafe Custom Finishing in San Francisco. Beneath it, an ottoman wears Holly Hunt leather applied by Richard Andronaco, also of San Francisco. The grouping stands on a custom Stark carpet.



Opposite: A Caesarstone kitchen island holds a Wolf microwave, a Bosch dishwasher and a Lacava sink with a Dornbracht faucet, all from Ferguson. Stainless-steel countertops from Lasertron in Miami add an industrial element. The polymer-based overlay flooring is from Pacific Concrete & Design.

Below: Cabinetry with a Douglas fir veneer by Design Line Cabinets runs along the back of the open kitchen. Crate & Barrel side chairs flank a pair of Design Within Reach dining tables. S. Therrien Cabinetmakers in Sonoma crafted the custom solid-walnut barstools.



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Right: Architect James Schmidt designed generous overhangs to shield the home from the sun. The structure shades a pair of custom chairs, in a Nomi fabric, and a daybed, in a Donghia fabric, on the terrace.

Below: Light spilling across a gate creates a dramatic shadow on the adjacent travertine wall by Landmark Masonry. In the distance, the nearby mountains provide for a dramatic vista.



"It happens often in our world where an object tells the story," Wiseman says, explaining that the grinders set an earthy, modern vibe for the project. And because the pool figures so prominently, Wiseman told Kirk that the home should resemble "his own private Aman resort," referring to the worldwide hotels where each is designed specifically for its local terrain and culture. Here, Wiseman says, "It was a desert house. It had to feel like it was in the desert."

From the outside in—and back out again—the house is a reflection of materials that feel right at home: Stone, wood, concrete, and weathered Cor-Ten steel mix and mingle, while floor-to-ceiling windows make a seamless connection to the landscape. The designers also stayed true to the desert palette while furnishing the home—much of it with pieces that Freeland designed. "We left nature to express the color and the pattern," Alves says.

Nature, it turned out, was full of surprises. The designers took color swatches on one of their first site visits, expecting to go with muted hues, "but we realized that we needed to go brighter and stronger with the color. We saw this beautiful desert green on the landscape—and that was it," Alves said, referring to the chartreuse that pops from nearly every room in the house.

Wiseman breathed more life into the house through art, ranging from ancient stone pots from Java to the modern metal sculptures of Adam P. Gale and bronze casts of tree branches by Larry Luchtel. "Art is the long body of our consciousness," Wiseman says. "We brought in some old things as well as things that are new to represent that continuum."

A Cor-Ten steel wall by Isaac Correa Design encloses a courtyard outside the master suite and provides a backdrop for the gracefully minimalist tableau of succulents and stones that landscape designer Stephen Suzman planted. Dunn's Desert Landscape installed the grounds.





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Left: Visible through a window, shiplap Douglas fir installed by Palm Desert Door & Hardware graces the master bedroom’s ceiling. The chair and ottoman are from RH.

Opposite: In a guest bedroom, glimpsed through Fleetwood sliders from Palm Springs Mirror & Glass, vintage lamps from Duane in New York top Ted Boerner tables. Above is a work by Todd Friedlander; the carpet is from Stark.

Paul Brayton Designs' Almost Suede covers the headboard, fabricated by Hilde-Brand Furniture in San Francisco, in the master bedroom. Design Line Cabinets crafted the cantilevered night tables; the custom light was made by John Wigmore Lighting.



He also used nature as art to personify the desert: Witness the Javanese log hollow standing sentry by the pool and the Indonesian strangler vine hanging in the outdoor great room.

From an architectural standpoint, Schmidt capitalized on the skinny lot. "Think long and narrow, so as many rooms as possible could get a view of the mountains," he says. Because the mountains face west, the design required abundant shading to protect against the strong afternoon sun. Large eaves extend from the house, therefore, and the outdoor great room is tucked into a covered niche that connects the house with one of the guest rooms.

Rather than making the main house one long rectangle, Schmidt designed a meandering series of them, so only one section reveals itself at a time. "The house should unfold, and there should be a sense of mystery," he says. "It's a journey to walk through these different spaces, and there are different experiences to get there."

Suzman answered the minimalist architecture and interiors with a desert interpretation of a Japanese garden,

where meticulously raked gravel flows around large rocks and multiple varieties of agave and cactus. He also planted stands of lacy palo verde trees, interspersed with more succulents, to balance the home's angularity. "We were creating a painting," says Suzman. Additional plantings, some existing, hide a nearby chimney and power lines. "We wanted it to be very private," he adds.

Kirk purchased an Airstream trailer so he could live on-site while overseeing the home's construction, but he largely stayed out of his team's design decisions. "I was like a kid in a candy store," he says. "Everything they showed me, I loved." His personal favorites are the bold references to Humberto's native Brazil: The entry features a huge photographic mural Wiseman commissioned of the beach in Ipanema where the two met 11 years ago. And crowning the living room are two midcentury Brazilian chairs. "They tell a story about Brazil during the 1940s and '50s," Alves says. "It completes the house so well, and it feels like they have been there all along." ■

Custom sconces in Japanese paper with a nickel-plated steel finish light the master bathroom's vanity, featuring a Lacava sink. It is topped with Caesarstone from Tomalak Tile & Stone, which also encases the Versailles tub. Heath Ceramics tiles line the shower. All of the faucets are from Dornbracht, via Ferguson.

The multilevel terrace and covered outdoor great room look onto a 25-meter lap pool by Stoker Pools. The custom teak daybeds support California-king-size mattresses upholstered in outdoor fabric by Donghia. A&D Plastering was responsible for the home's hand-troweled plasterwork.

