



HOUSE CALL

SHE PLAYS AN AMBITIOUS SURGEON
ON TV, BUT AT HOME ELLEN POMPEO TAKES
A LAID-BACK APPROACH
TO FAMILY LIFE IN A RESTORED SPANISH-STYLE VILLA IN THE
HOLLYWOOD HILLS

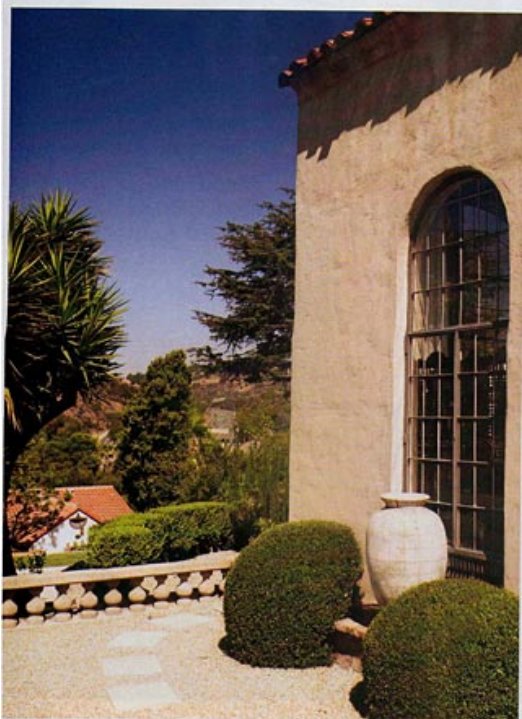
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Photographs by Sebastião Salgado are displayed on an antique Chinese painter's table in the living room, and the 1950s lacquer side table by Osvaldo Borsani is from JF Chen; the chairs are vintage, and the pillows are made from Indian cotton throws. Facing page, from left: The gravel path leads to the garden and pool. Ellen Pompeo with her toy poodles, Gigi and Valentino. See Resources.





HAUTE COUTURE BROUGHT actress Ellen Pompeo and interior designer Martyn Lawrence-Bullard together. In 2006, Pompeo, who plays Dr. Meredith Grey on *Grey's Anatomy*, was visiting Paris for the semiannual cavalcade of the highest of high fashion. Lawrence-Bullard was there as well, accompanying his longtime client and friend Cher. While he was awaiting the singer's arrival at the Christian Dior show, the Los Angeles-based decorator struck up a conversation with Pompeo and her husband, music producer Chris Ivery. It was a front-row match made in heaven.

The timing of their meeting was serendipitous, as Pompeo had recently purchased a classic 1920s Spanish-style home in the Hollywood Hills, where, according to local lore, Ronald Reagan had once lived. And coincidentally, it is just around the corner from Lawrence-Bullard's own place. While the bones of the house were basically sound, more than a little imagination was required to see its potential. The place was like a museum," the actress reports. "Nothing had been added or updated since it was built, except perhaps for some rag carpeting from the '60s or '70s. It was like a raw piece of stone I could carve." What's more, the dense, overgrown landscape of decrepit cypress trees completely obscured sweeping views of the iconic HOLLYWOOD sign and Griffith Observatory.

Before a Lawrence-Bullard-led renovation could commence, however, Pompeo had to clear out a lifetime of possessions abandoned by the previous owners, including furniture, clothing, and family photographs. Most of the personal effects were donated to Out of the Closet, a chain

of California thrift stores operated by the AIDS Healthcare Foundation. "I felt an obligation to the people who had lived here to find a home for their things," she says. "It took months to get everything sorted out, but the process made me feel connected to the house and its history. I couldn't wait to breathe life into it again." For the sake of nostalgia and continuity, Pompeo held on to a pair of armchairs and a claw-foot console table.

The two-year resuscitation began with the replacement of antiquated electrical and mechanical systems—less sexy than interior design, perhaps, but not entirely devoid of artistry either. "The original architecture was perfection," Lawrence-Bullard says. "We didn't want to tamper with it simply in the name of modernization. It takes a deft hand to install advanced lighting and make it invisible."

As for the actual decor, Pompeo's points of reference fall along the shores of the Mediterranean. She has a pronounced affection for Morocco, Spain, Tuscany, and the South of France—not only for their design traditions but also for their lifestyles that celebrate casual entertaining, hearty food, and sun-kissed repose. "Ellen's basically a very easy, relaxed person who likes her home to be easy and relaxed as well," Lawrence-Bullard says. "There's none of that star-diva craziness." During one of their first meetings, when he pulled out the same image of a French farmhouse she had clipped years earlier for inspiration, Pompeo knew she had found a sympathetic collaborator.

The mood was set from the start with the installation of reclaimed Provençal tiles from Exquisite Surfaces. "I'd always wanted hexagonal terracotta flooring, so we imported 11 pallets of antique pavers," she says.





Clockwise from top left: Martyn Lawrence-Bullard designed the sofa by the pool. The foyer features a Chinese lamp from Nathan Turner and a Moroccan ottoman. The kitchen appliances are by Viking, the counters are by CaesarStone, and the reclaimed French floor tiles are from Exquisite Surfaces; the photograph is by Sebastião Salgado. Facing page, clockwise from top: In the dining room, lanterns are suspended above an antique Guatemalan farmhouse table from Dos Gallos; the mirror is by Martyn Lawrence-Bullard, and the subway sign is vintage. Pompeo designed the terraced gardens. The living room chairs were left by the previous owners, and a petrified-wood block from DAO Home serves as a side table. See Resources.



From top: In the den, the sectional ottoman, which are covered in a linen C&C Milano and an Edelman leather, respectively, and the upholstered screen are all by Martyn Lawrence-Bullard; the woven-sea-grass stools are by ABC Carpet & Home. The master bath features a tub and étagère by Waterworks, an antique Chinese bamboo ladder, and a z garden stool; the floor tiles are from E site Surfaces. Facing page: In the master bedroom, the antique Egyptian wall hanging and 1950s West African pillows are from Hollywood at Home; the bed is topped with a cashmere blanket by M and an Indian silk-and-wool throw, a the vintage lacquer campaign cabinet and '60s Moroccan-style brass lamp from Orange Furniture. See Resource

"The shipment weighed about two tons. If you begin with a beautiful base, you can work your way up." Many of the furnishings were acquired during her travels—notably, a wide range of pieces from Caravane Chambre 19, a much-loved shop in Paris. To these she added Moroccan- and Indian-flavored pieces from Lawrence-Bullard's signature home collection. In the living room—with a ceiling height of 24 feet—the mix encompasses a 19th-century French industrial table, an Afghan wool dhurrie from the '30s, an 18th-century Italian inlaid-wood chair, a Chinese painter's table, and two vintage side tables by Osvaldo Borsani.

The same unpretentious sensibility pervades the dining room, with its benches and rugged 19th-century Guatemalan farmhouse table, Moroccan mirror, and tinned-copper lanterns. The kitchen, dominated by a large black-and-white photograph by Sebastião Salgado of an Indian train station, is likewise built for heavy use and no-fuss care. "I am more of a minimalist than Martyn," Pompeo notes. "We're a good balance: I put in too little, he adds just enough."

The final phase of the project involved connecting the interiors to the outdoors with a series of porticos. They allow the couple to capitalize on the glorious Southern California climate and overlook lush, terraced gardens—designed by Pompeo herself—that descend to the pool.

As Pompeo puts it, "This house is perfect for our family," which now includes the couple's first child, Stella Luna. "It's all about swimming, eating, and hanging out with friends. Martyn jokes that we live like college kids—people are coming and going all the time. What can I say? It's a happy place." ■







Facing page: Actress Ellen Pompeo with her husband, Chris Ivery, with their daughter Stella Luna, and toy poodle Valentino in their house in the Hollywood Hills, which was decorated by Martyn Lawrence Bullard. This page: The living room sofa is by La Zboy, the ceramic candelabra is by La Zboy, the tray tables are from La Zboy, and the far corner carved-wood planter by Alexandre Brongniart. The cashmere throw is by Hermès, the artwork is by Nick Brandt, and the rug is vintage. See Res