



Ryan Seacrest's HOLLYWOOD IDYLL

THE BUSY HOST PUTS HIS OWN SPIN
ON A VILLA IN THE HILLS

Interior Design by Jeff Andrews/Text by Peter Haldeman
Photography by Mary E. Nichols



"I wanted it to feel like I was away from the hustle and bustle of the city," television and radio personality Ryan Seacrest (above) says of a Hollywood Hills villa that was remodeled by interior designer Jeff Andrews. LEFT: At the front entrance, giant palms, agave and other plantings, by Agua Landscape, provide a lush, welcoming atmosphere. "You feel like you're at some kind of resort," says Seacrest. French terracotta urns, at door, Exquisite Surfaces.

There are hosts, there are consummate hosts, and then there is Ryan Seacrest. The cherubic emcee of *American Idol*, the most popular show on television, also anchors E! News and the globally syndicated radio program *American Top 40*. He cohosts the Walt Disney Christmas Day Parade and *Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve*. He presided over the 2007 Emmy broadcast and will do the honors in early February for the Super Bowl's new, expanded pregame show. "I'm trying not to appear in too many more places in the near future," says Seacrest, sounding almost apologetic, during an early-morning phone call from Omaha, Nebraska, where he is auditioning talent for *Idol*'s next season. "Right now I'm very much looking forward to coming home."

Home is a rambling Mediterranean villa in the Hollywood Hills known as Casa di Pace, or the House of Peace. It is not an old house (circa 1970s), but it has a stately, Old Hollywood feeling, with city-lights views, lots of palm trees, a pool and a tennis court, a screening room, a wine cellar and a sterling celebrity pedigree (previous residents include Kevin Costner and Richard Dreyfuss). It is the entertainer's hard-won sanctuary. "I looked for the right property for years," he relates. "It was really tricky to find something that had the convenience factor—I wanted to be at work in 10 minutes—and at the same time the escape factor. In my head I was seeing



The living room's sofa and celadon pillow fabrics are from Holly Hunt. Club chair velvet, Fabricut. Paisley pillows, Ralph Lauren Home. Floor lamp shade and crimson pillow fabrics, Jim Thompson. Table by fireplace, 145 Antiques. Edelman suede on armchair. Stools, in foreground, Baker. Tile on fireplace surround, Walker Zanger.

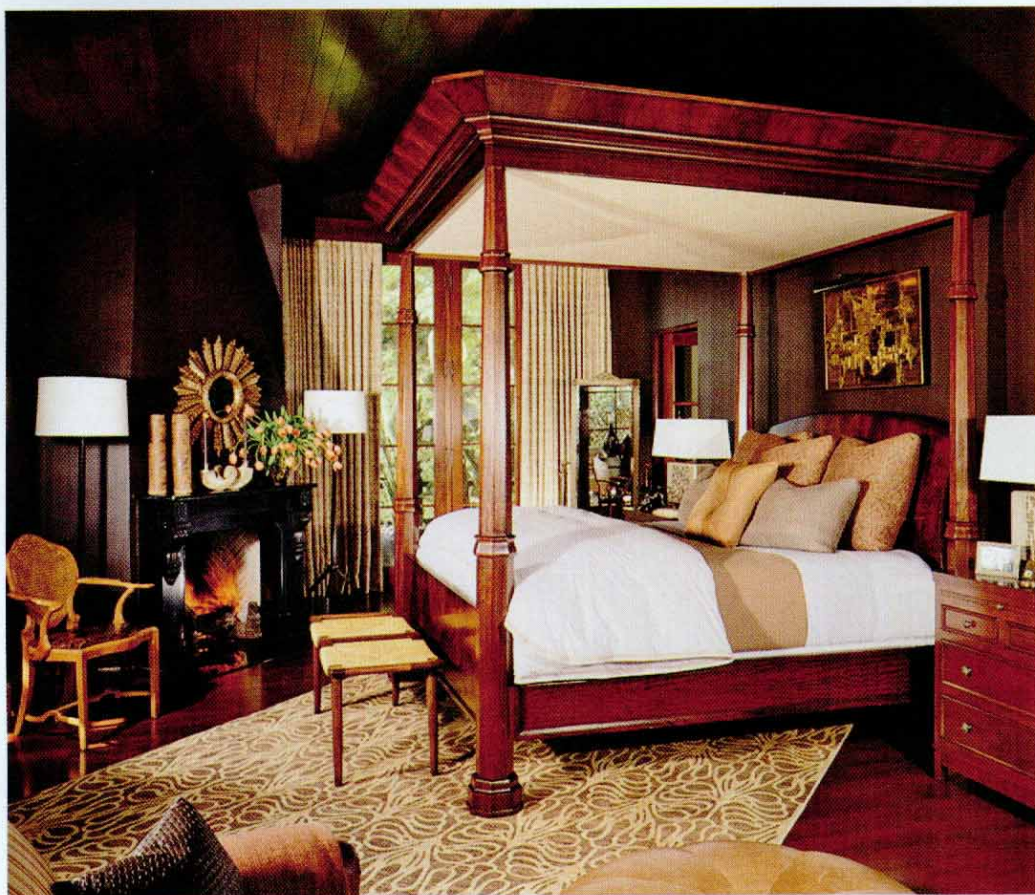
the sort of villa you might see in Spain or Italy. The day I saw the house was the day I made an offer."

Did the place come with any drawbacks? "The price."

But seriously, folks. For all its charms, Casa di Pace was a little choppy inside because of earlier renovations and add-ons. It needed technological updating and of course lacked its latest owner's personal touch: "I wanted to put some of myself into it without changing the bricks and mortar," he explains. Toward that end, Seacrest's wardrobe stylist introduced him to a young Los Angeles designer named Jeff Andrews. "Ryan wanted the house to be warm and inviting, but he also wanted a certain sense of drama," says Andrews. "We decided to play up some of the ethnic accents throughout the house and bring in a little more Old Hollywood glamour. He's a big traveler, and we wanted the place to almost feel like it could be a resort anywhere in the world."

With the house's name in mind, Andrews sought to bring harmony to its diverse interiors. Envisioning "a contemporary Mediterranean mélange," he refinished and applied dark stains to pine-colored wood beams and floors, selected rich, masculine colors for the walls and used a deep burgundy trim around doorways and arches to visually connect the rooms. While they're not huge, the rooms are generously scaled, and the designer filled them with substantial custom and vintage pieces that evoke the Old World—but in a clean and distinctly modern way. Mexican and Spanish lanterns and hemp draperies provide "that undertone of ethnic influences without getting too much like a set."

Casa di Pace is more cohesive now, but its various rooms retain their unique personalities. The living room, with its 17-foot vaulted ceilings and



ornate stone fireplace, is formal and dramatic, anchored by oversize walnut floor lamps and heavy bronze-framed mirrors. The former guesthouse is now a funky club room, inspired by the Hôtel Costes in Paris. And a downstairs rec room was transformed into a 4,500-bottle wine cellar and tasting room with brick-colored walls trimmed with Honduras mahogany and antique French terra-cotta tiles. "It's kind of impractical," says Seacrest, "but I wanted to be able to taste inside the actual cellar, and we have the ability to move a table in there."

Seacrest counts among his favorite rooms the Indonesian-flavored master bath and a state-of-the-art gym whose treadmills have hotel-style TV monitors. Some of the resort touches are quite literal, including mattresses from luxury hotels and bathrobes bearing the Casa di Pace logo. Such attention to detail is precisely why Seacrest hired Andrews,

and it is all the more impressive considering that the designer reconceived the entire house in seven months. "I thought it should take a month," Seacrest quips. "Jeff would not let me into a room until every coaster and candle was in place."

When Seacrest is in residence, he's up at four every morning to do his radio show—but he insists that he's trying to "schedule my life so that I can use the house on the weekends." His parents fly out often from Atlanta to celebrate birthdays and holidays; he hosts round-robin tennis on Saturday mornings; and he's "a big fan of the dinner party." It seems culinary school was once Seacrest's fallback in case his broadcasting career didn't pan out, and he likes to put together long, lazy meals around the massive stone table in his dining room or out on the patio: "I love to have people over. I love to share food and wine and just literally sit there until I fall asleep." □

"I went with rich, warm, deeper, more masculine colors throughout," says Andrews, who was also careful to create a unique identity for each space. **OPPOSITE:** In the breakfast room, he used art and furnishings, such as high-back chairs, that match the proportions of the tall fireplace.

ABOVE: The master suite "feels large, but it's not, really," says Andrews. Canopy fabric, Cowtan & Tout. Bedside lamps, Baker. Starburst mirror, 145 Antiques. "Jeff understood the feeling of peace I wanted to have," says Seacrest. **FOLLOWING PAGE:** The lap pool.



