



Marrakesh Makeover

JOHN CIALONE OF CHICAGO-BASED TOM STRINGER DESIGN PARTNERS, CREATES A COLOR-INFUSED RESIDENCE IN PALM DESERT

TEXT BY VANESSA KOGEVINAS | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JORGE GERA

NESTLED IN THE EXCLUSIVE Palm Desert enclave of Marrakesh Country Club, sits a newly renovated, cheerfully elegant home that offers a perfect respite for a couple and their extended family.

While Marrakesh's notoriously pink Hollywood-Regency-style residences can not undergo exterior transformations—architect John Elgin Wolf's design, as well as the community's integrity as a whole, are highly regarded—the interiors can be customized and played with.

"We took it down to the studs, and the walls and partitions were reconfigured to suit the client's needs," says interior designer John Cialone of Chicago-based Tom Stringer Design Partners, who worked with Los Angeles-based architect Steven V. Harrel and La Quinta-based contractor Tom Kennedy to achieve those goals.

"We wanted a 'playhouse,' where we could enjoy the desert with our family and friends," says the client. The 2,500 square-foot, two-bedroom,

three-bathroom sun-drenched residence, which is the second of two adjacent houses that the couple owns, is colorful and lively, yet refined. "We chose to play up the natural light that comes in," says Cialone, "and the color scheme is all about bringing hues found outside in—like bold and leafy greens, corals and oranges."

"I love the green kitchen," says the resident. "It's an outrageous color that makes me laugh every time I enter the house. Of course, my husband loves the media room—a fine place for him and his buddies to watch their Super Bowl." The media room actually being a third bedroom converted.

The client's directive of 'crisp, light and bright' was anchored using bleached oak flooring, reflecting the brightness versus absorbing it. To the same end, almost everything in the house is painted allowing for the abundant natural light to bounce around. Tile selections are vivid white and mirrors are maximized where possible.

The floorplan prioritizes privacy with the master

Furnishings from Restoration Hardware with Sunbrella fabric cushions adorn the back patio. Sunbrella fabric-covered pillows featuring Samuel & Sons trim are used as accents. **PREVIOUS PAGE** A three-panel art installation by Steve Smith and a rush-seat bench anchor the hallway to the living room. A Michael S. Smith chair from Jasper to right.





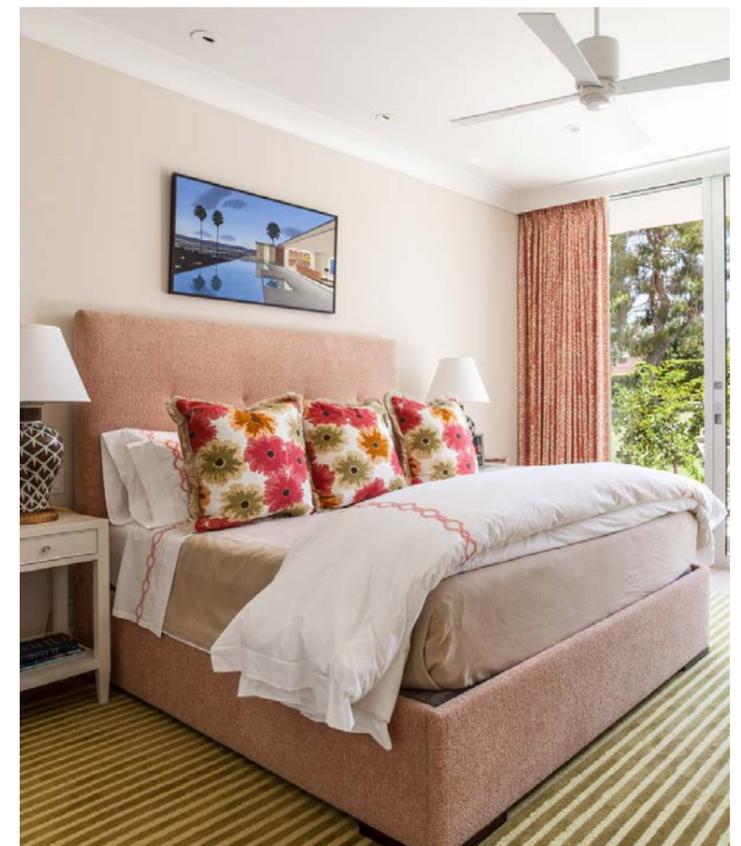
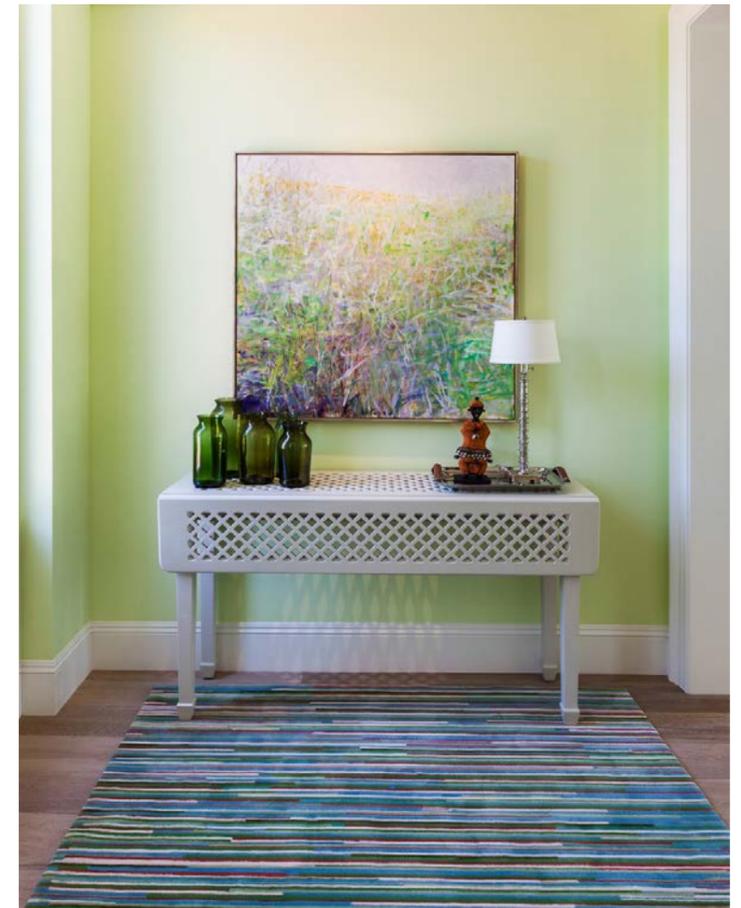
ABOVE A Holland & Sherry fabric-covered sofa, McGuire lounge chair, Tom Stringer Design Partners coffee table and Baker side tables—all set on a Watson Smith rug—make up the living room seating area. Tom Stringer Design Partners chairs are pulled up to the kitchen bar. Galbraith fabric with Samuel & Sons trim drapery. **LEFT** A McGuire lounge chair, Kenton Nelson painting, Ralph Lauren lantern and Jamie Young woven leather basket offer a cozy living room vignette.

suite and media room at one end of the residence and the guest bedroom and its full bath, which doubles as a powder room, at the other end. The open-plan living room, kitchen and dining area form the heart of the house and a front courtyard and back terrace expand the living spaces to the outside.

Most of the furnishings are new, but carefully curated to appear collected over time. Patterns, solids and textures are artfully combined to

create movement and whimsy, while keeping the overall tone calm and relaxing. Striking art pieces complete the spaces.

In the end, the Marrakesh residences and this renovation has provided a family exactly what they need—a place to play and a place for both intimate and large gatherings. “They are the perfect size,” notes the resident. “Open and airy, high ceilings and access to the outdoors.” **CH**



ABOVE A Rose Tarlow dining table and Thibaut chairs grace the dining area. **ABOVE RIGHT** An abstract landscape by Wolf Kahn and a Royce Silk & Wool Carpets rug infuse the front entry with color while a painted Paul Ferrante console offers a cool counterpart. **RIGHT** A Tom Stringer Design Partners bed upholstered in a Jacques Bouvet et Cie boucle is coupled with a Watson Smith Carpet rug in the master bedroom. Bunny Williams Home lamps are set atop painted Century Furniture side tables. James Dunlop Textiles-covered pillows and Quadrille fabric drapery complete the space. **OPPOSITE** McKinnon and Harris outdoor furnishings were selected for the entry courtyard.