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From its Monterey Colonial veranda to its artfully rough-hewn floors, Hank Azaria's Bel Air residence is where the actor concentrates on what really matters: family, outdoor life, and poker

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Trip Haenisch decorated the Bel Air, California, home of actor Hank Azaria (above left), his partner, Katie Wright, and their son, Hal. **PAINT:** Honeysuckle climbs the trellis of the outdoor living room, which is furnished with Haenisch-designed seating upholstered in Perennials outdoor fabrics; the cocktail table is by Holly Hunt. For details see Sources.

The 1932 house was built in the Monterey Colonial style, distinguished by gracious proportions and a second-story veranda. The landscaping was done by GDS Designs.



THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO LIVE IN BEL AIR.

You might do it grandly, in one of the neighborhood's noble mansions, with 20-foot ceilings, gilt balustrades, and furniture too important to sit on. Or you might do it the way Hank Azaria does—comfortably, in a 1932 house somehow both modest and major, in the foothills of the Santa Monica Mountains and with both the ocean and the sparkling lights of Los Angeles in full view.

It helped that Azaria inherited a designer who calls himself an anti-decorator. Trip Haenisch, whose Hollywood clientele includes Courteney Cox and

Edward Norton, had been enlisted by the previous owners of the house to decorate an elegant barn addition off the kitchen. The barn went up just as the couple's marriage came down, and when Azaria bought the property, he hired Haenisch to reimagine it as a place the actor could share with his partner, Katie Wright, a former actress who is now studying to become a family therapist, and the couple's two-year-old son, Hal.

"The house was a bit slick," Haenisch says. "We decided we had to organic it up." →

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Magnolia trees shade a gravel path lined with boxwood, camellia, and azalea. On the poolside loggia, the upholstery and throw pillows are of Perennials fabrics; the hurricane lamp is by Formations. David Sutherland lounge chairs are grouped on the flagstone pool deck.





An unvarnished aesthetic suits the home's Monterey Colonial architecture, a style developed in the mid-19th century by Thomas O. Larkin, who moved from Boston to Northern California and re-created there the proportions of a typical Federal residence in adobe brick; he also popularized a signature second-story veranda. The Azaria house's veranda is just one of many outdoor spots the family uses—the property includes two terraces, a pool, a gazebo, a sports court, and a playhouse. Though the actor asked Haenisch to rework the open-air seating areas, the designer's imprint is felt most keenly inside the house.

"Trip has his own style, but he also knew how to be accommodating to us," says Azaria of the collaboration. "He could steer us in the right direction or compromise when we had different ideas."

The Kansas-born Haenisch worked in the office of Waldo Fernandez—one of L.A.'s established masters of interior design—for almost two decades after moving to the city. Fernandez taught him, among many other things, that before a single object crosses the threshold, the threshold itself must be perfect. The Azaria house already possessed beautiful millwork and a graceful flow. Its 8,500 square feet encompass vast public spaces on the ground floor and five cozy bedrooms above; there is one more bedroom in the barn annex, along with a family room, gym, and screening room. But there was the matter of the floors to deal with. The previous owners had attempted to unify four different materials by ebonizing them all. Haenisch persuaded Azaria to move toward the more natural look of rough-hewn planks, replacing the floors in the bedrooms and

ABOVE: A Samsung flat-screen television is mounted on a flagstone-clad chimney breast in the barn. Serving as a table is a vintage bench from Maison au Naturel; Haenisch had sofa pillows made of printed fabrics from Claremont. The Beni Ouarain carpet is from Jamal's Rug Collection.



ABOVE: In the kitchen, barstools by Hollywood at Home face an island Haenisch designed of reclaimed wood with a Carrara-marble top; the pot rack is by Ann-Morris Antiques. The stainless-steel range and hood by Viking and the Sub-Zero refrigerators complement the counters and back-splash of dark-gray Basaltina stone and the French-oak floors. **LEFT:** A Zimmer + Rohde velvet covers custom-made sofas in the living room. The Danish cocktail tables are vintage, the side table is by Holly Hunt, and the floor lamp is by Waldo's Designs; the Kilim ottomans are by Horchow.



Azaria keeps his Emmys and memorabilia in his home office, where Eames chairs by Herman Miller surround the custom-designed poker table and pendant lamps. The bespoke metal cabinet at left is by Bourgeois Bohème Atelier, and the curtains are made of a plaid alpaca fabric by Sandra Jordani.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Chairs by Hollywood at Home with cushions in fabric by Jasper are paired with a Paul Ferrante metal dining table in the breakfast area. In the barn, cels from *The Simpsons* feature characters voiced by Azaria. Hal's playroom, with a Danish farm table, 18th-century French benches, and an Enzo Mari apple print. A Jean de Merry chair meets a French bookcase from Mecox in the living room.



the barn, stripping the remaining French-oak boards back to blond, and opening the grain throughout with wire brushes. "They went from floors you had to tiptoe on to floors you can beat up," Haenisch says, "which just looks more charming."

Though the kitchen is the soul of the house—friends often gather around the island as Wright cooks with vegetables from her impressive garden—Azaria's favorite room is his office. Its focal point is a made-to-order poker table surfaced in dove-gray felt and framed in black, nail-studded leather. By day it is strewn with scripts; at night crystal old-fashioned glasses slip into the table's pockets, and Azaria's poker buddies file in. There is a galley kitchen nearby, so that no one has to wake the whole house when glasses go empty.

Elsewhere the spirit of young Hal prevails. For the centerpiece of the playroom, Haenisch took a pine farm table, shortened the legs, and painted its surface to look like a giant checkerboard. That same pattern is picked up in a Moroccan tribal rug that runs the length of the room. (Haenisch calls the current vogue for all things Moroccan "what the Santa Fe look was to the '80s," but he's not afraid to transgress if it's for the perfect Berber carpet.) To organize the trove of games and toys

and keep the space uncluttered, the designer stenciled wicker baskets from Pottery Barn with random red numbers and tucked them onto shelves.

"The house is very kid-friendly," says Azaria, whose pleasure at the poker table is surpassed only by time spent playing with his son. "For example, Trip had the idea to cover the sofa in the family room in teddy-bear fabric, which I still get a kick out of." Despite Azaria's many stage and screen credits—he currently appears as Gargamel in *The Smurfs* movie and will star in NBC's *Free Agents* this fall—he may be best known for his work on *The Simpsons*, the animated TV series on which he has been the voice of countless characters, from Apu the convenience-store proprietor to Moe the bartender, for more than 20 years. Haenisch mounted a collection of vividly illustrated cels from the show on a wall in the barn, where reclaimed-wood beams and a massive flagstone fireplace were added to give the space a rustic air.

With the designer's help, Azaria and his family have carved out a corner of Bel Air that privileges comfort over dazzle, the essential over the superfluous. Nothing collects dust in this house. "It's easy to make something pretty," says Haenisch. "The challenge is to bring logic to a home, to create rooms that are actually going to be used." □

ABOVE: A custom-made bed upholstered in a Holly Hunt leather is flanked by sconces from Bourgeois Bohème in the master bedroom. The 18th-century Belgian commode at right and the zinc-top oak desk are both from Lucca Antiques. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Wright's master bath, lined in a Carolina Irving wallpaper and furnished with custom-made George Smith armchairs; the coral is from J. F. Chen. Azaria's dressing room, with a chair from Paul Marra Design and vintage lockers from Bourgeois Bohème. A guest room, brightened by a Phillip Jeffries wall covering, a bolster made of a Kathryn M. Ireland fabric, and an Hermès throw.

