

INSIDE **OUT**



**ADDING WINDOWS
AND DOORS TO
A SMALL SPANISH
BUNGALOW IN
LOS ANGELES LINKS
THE INTERIORS
WITH GARDENS AND
TERRACES THAT
MAXIMIZE ITS
INDOOR/OUTDOOR
ADVANTAGE**

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Architectural designer Robert Zamora and Bryan von Thun opened a small house in West Hollywood, California, to abundant natural light. In the living room, 1960s chrome chairs and a Holly Hunt sofa are accented with Kravet linen; the pillow is from Tim Clarke. A pier piling from Thailand was made into a floor lamp, from Trade Secrets for the Home. **above right:** Hedges screen the property from the street. **opening page:** A cherry-blossom arrangement in the master bedroom.





“WE AIMED FOR SOMETHING THAT HAS THE TRANQUILLITY YOU MIGHT FIND

in the south of France but with contemporary stylistic touches and amenities,” says architectural designer Robert Zamora. Hidden behind hedges on a side street in West Hollywood, California, the house that Zamora and Bryan von Thun recently remodeled was originally an undistinguished Spanish-style bungalow sitting in a tired garden, a shabby survivor of the Day of the Locust era. “The idea has been to find a blend of traditional and modern,” adds von Thun. “Our philosophy is that you want a sense of continuity with the past, but you don’t want to live in your grandmother’s house.”

Among the most radical changes they made to the property was the raising of ceilings throughout, in some cases to fourteen feet. “This house is less than two thousand square feet,” notes Zamora, “and raising the ceilings exaggerated the volumes and helped to create the illusion that the house is larger than it actually is.” In order to gain additional height in the rooms, a heavy air-conditioning unit and its extensive duct system had to be removed. A tall, narrow central hallway is now topped with an angular skylight that runs its entire length. “We wanted to create a gallery-like space to display art, without any hanging lights or wall sconces. The natural light also gives it an outdoor feel.”

Another key improvement involved punctuating the outer walls with vintage glazed doors imported from France, which now provide vistas of the redesigned gardens and plantings that surround the house. “Adding lots of doors enhanced the circulation through every space and brought the outdoors into each room,” Zamora explains. “When you can go outside from any room, it creates more of a Mediterranean feeling, and that’s a real luxury in a city environment like Los Angeles.” Zamora and von Thun had nine-and-a-half-foot-tall interior doors made to

above left: A French poster, leather club chairs from Brenda Antin and Ralph Lauren pillows are arranged in the living room. An antique chandelier hangs over an occasional table of Zamora’s design in the entrance hall beyond. **opposite:** Zamora designed the iron chandelier in the dining room; the dining table is from Kneedler-Fauchère. Botanical prints from Rose Tarlow hang above side chairs with Ultrasuede seats.







Vintage doors imported from France connect many of the rooms to the outdoors. **left:** In the study, which doubles as a guest room, a Baker lamp with a brown velvet shade sits on an antique marble-topped desk. The low table is from Dessin Fournir. A Pierre Cardin lamp with an orange silk shade is set on a 1960s chrome side table. **above:** Limestone countertops from Exquisite Surfaces, Ann Sacks glass tile, and a Thermador stove and dishwasher distinguish the kitchen. **right:** Artwork commissioned in the 1970s by designer Steve Chase is in the hall.





An antique French limestone fireplace from Exquisite Surfaces complements vintage doors that lead from the master bedroom to the garden. A jade sculpture by Robert Kuo, from Baker, is on the mantel. opposite: Tall interior doors that Zamora designed to match the scale and patina of the vintage doors lead from the master bedroom to the bath.





“Living in an environment with old and new elements creates exciting juxtapositions,” says Zamora. “You can have both.” above left: An antique Gothic chandelier and a Ralph Lauren metal table lamp were selected for the master bedroom. Zamora designed the round side table near the bed. A seagrass area rug and an antique bench covered in distressed linen velvet introduce subtle textures into the space.

complement the French imports, matching their rich patina through an elaborate process of distressing the wood with wire brushes, painting and bleaching it, and applying several layers of lacquer and a final coat of beeswax. But they did not have to knock down any walls. “We were lucky to have such a great floor plan,” says von Thun.

Since the tall hedges on all four sides of the property ensure complete privacy, there was no need for draperies. By day, the house is flooded with sunlight. The living room’s original arched window illuminates Zamora and von Thun’s eclectic mix of furniture, including leather club chairs from Brenda Antin, a Holly Hunt sofa and a glass-topped table on metal trestles that originally came from the Beverly Hills Hotel. The intimate dining area opens to the garden, as does the guest room and the master bedroom and its adjacent bath, with a freestanding Philippe Starck tub, custom-designed closets and a vitrine-like glazed shower. At night, the interior lighting spills out into the gardens, creating a warm glow.

“Our approach to lighting typifies the way we like to think about mixing old and new,” says von Thun. “As you walk around, you’ll see chandeliers—some of which we rescued and restored ourselves—but also contemporary theatrical lighting that helps emphasize the crisp edges of the drywall. The hallway, for example, is ultra-clean, like an art gallery. In the evening, its walls are washed with light from tiny LEDs set into the floor.”

“The other side of the coin is that many surfaces in this house are either old—recycled from other buildings—or have been



above center: A Philippe Starck tub from Duravit is paired with a Dornbracht tub filler in the master bath, which also opens to the garden. The closet doors were designed by Zamora. The shower is enclosed in glass in order to keep the space open and bright. **above right:** Zamora designed the master bath's macassar ebony vanity; the mirror is from Trade Secrets for the Home. A Lefroy Brooks sink is accented with Hansgrohe Axor fittings.

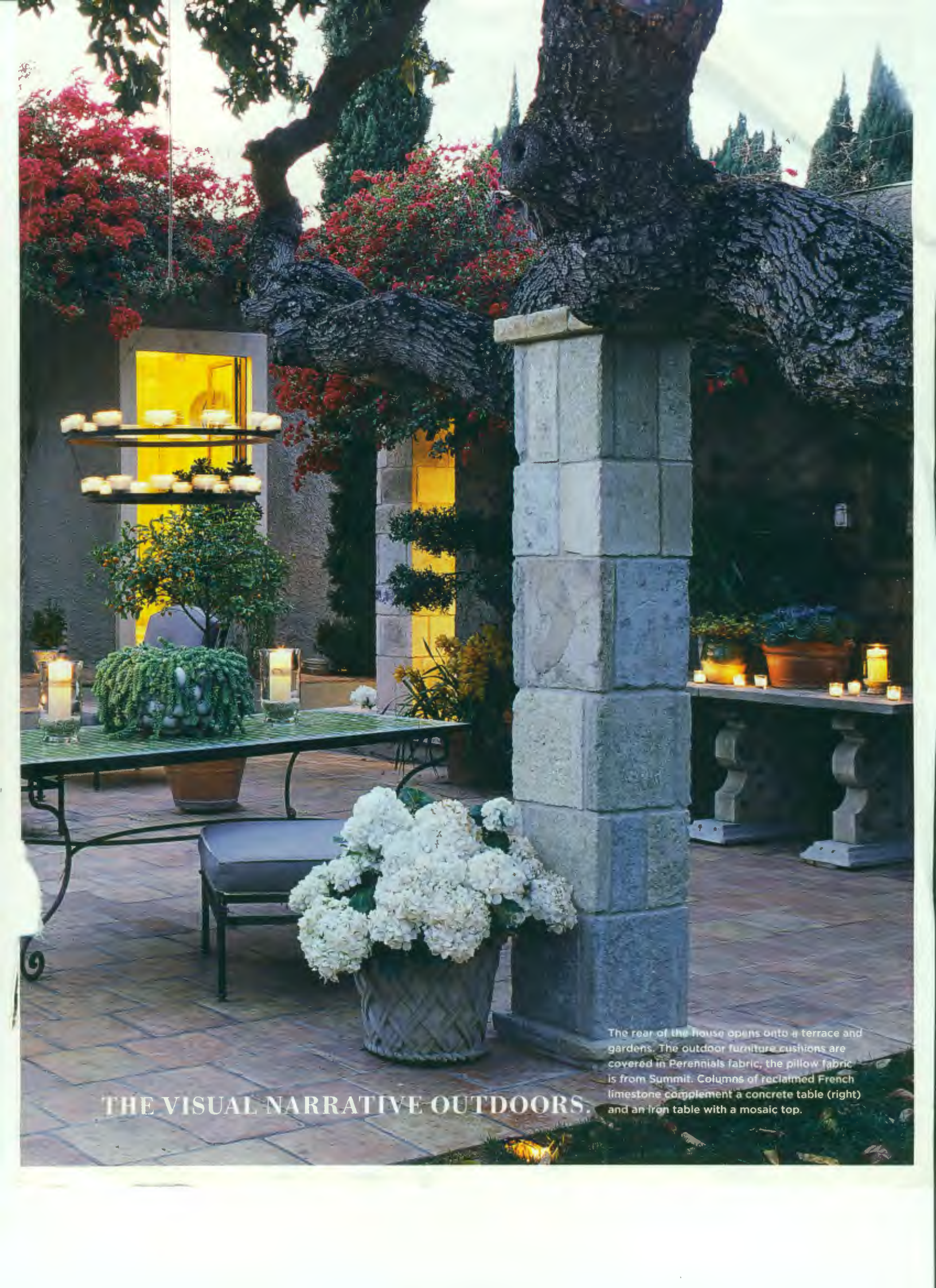
deliberately distressed," says Zamora. "In the kitchen, for example, we have counters that you can spill wine on and it doesn't matter. In fact, they're all the better for it!" The backsplash behind the kitchen's Thermador range conforms to a traditional pattern but is fitted with modern, low-maintenance glass tiles from Ann Sacks.

The interiors, however, are only part of the story, since the gardens have been orchestrated to extend the visual narrative into the outdoors. At the front of the house there is a small, serene gravel garden, overlooked by a quartet of cypresses and a lone olive tree, that sets the tone for the property as a whole. The much larger garden at the back of the house is a gracefully landscaped retreat that can serve as an alfresco entertaining area, where murmuring fountains mask any hint of noise from a nearby boulevard. At the sides of the house are microgardens, each with its own distinctive character. All of these varied outdoor areas are knit together by integrated plantings dominated by white blossoms—including calla lilies, azaleas, hydrangeas and star jasmine—that appear at different times throughout the year.

"This isn't a large house, but it's the perfect scale for two people," notes Zamora. "We're probably outdoors eighty percent of the time, and the indoor/outdoor features we've introduced make it feel much larger. Less is more for us, and when we design, it's in a kind of minimalist way. Things just don't need to be overly complicated. It's not about extravagant materials, it's about the sense of scale, soothing colors and attention to detail." ↵



THE GARDENS HAVE BEEN ORCHESTRATED TO EXTEND



THE VISUAL NARRATIVE OUTDOORS.

The rear of the house opens onto a terrace and gardens. The outdoor furniture cushions are covered in Perennials fabric; the pillow fabric is from Summit. Columns of reclaimed French limestone complement a concrete table (right) and an iron table with a mosaic top.