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House Beautiful

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OF SURPRISES
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RITA KONIG
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“IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF COLLECTING BEAUTIFUL THINGS.”

It took 15 years to decorate this historic Los Angeles home. Now, Madeline Stuart is finally ready to share it with the world.

COURTYARD


Bougainvillea spills over the facade of the 1928 house, which is attributed to architects Wallace Neff and John Byers. Agave plants anchor the entryway.

>

ENTRY

Stuart designed a custom arched front door to resonate with the architecture of the Spanish Revival home. **Rug:** antique Malayer, [Aga John Rugs](#). **Table:** 17th-century, [John Gredler](#). **Chair:** antique Savonarola, [Revival Antiques](#).





THE WHITE-OAK
DOOR WAS
STAINED TO APPEAR
EVEN HEAVIER.

interior designer MADELINE STUART / writer KAITLIN MENZA
photographer TREVOR TONDRO / producer ROBERT RUFINO



DIANE KEATON, ONE OF THE HOME'S FORMER OWNERS, ADDED VINTAGE TILE TO THE POOL.

THERE'S CALIFORNIA DREAMING, AND THEN there's *this* next-level madness: A couple moves to Los Angeles to buy a circa 1928, seven-bedroom Spanish Revival house surrounded by agave plants, which was previously owned by Orson Welles and Diane Keaton. Does it get more Cali than that? They then hired Los Angeles design royalty—Madeline Stuart—to make the place their own.

"It's just a period and an aesthetic that I have a real passion and enthusiasm for," says Stuart, who has been working with the clients on this property "on and off"

for 15 years. "It's a marvelous thing to get to go back and see how I've evolved, see how the house has evolved, and see how they've evolved in terms of their taste and style and aesthetic." A few added-on accents—Keaton's collection of vintage tiles, installed throughout the home and even in the pool, for example—were preserved.

But over the years, Stuart has layered in her own flourishes and world-class antiques. **"For me, it's about creating an environment that's cohesive,"** she explains. **"Everybody is part of a concerto, and everyone has a note."** In the living room, a wall covered with reproduction Batchelder tile came down ("It felt a little bit like a waiting room in a train station"), and up went wooden beams and an antique stone fireplace. "The room is massive, and they gave it form and texture and weight," Stuart notes. In the master bedroom, a custom bed *appears* to be antique Italianate—because "there are certainly no antique beds in a king size." The client's Scottish coat of arms was painted on the headboard by artist Jean Horihata, who also created a night-sky mural on the dining room ceiling.

In-between are palette cleansers. Creamy-white walls in Benjamin Moore's White Dove, "And all the woodwork in the house is painted a brown-black. I call it obsidian," says Stuart. "It makes all the other features pop." ■

(From top left)

DINING ROOM

Stuart's direction for the painted ceiling by artist Jean Horihata was clear: "It's not whimsical and it's not cute. The colors are very muted." But it brought "so much more depth to the room." **Art:** *Studio Blackboard #4*, Norman Lundin. **Chandelier:** antique Italian. **Chairs:** antique Spanish, [Lief](#).

KITCHEN

Black tile from California-based [Mission Tile West](#) provides contrast in this white room. **Range:** [Viking](#).

BACK YARD

As is traditional in Spanish Revival architecture, rooms open to the house's back courtyard, where there's an

extensively landscaped yard and pool. **Chairs:** [Janus et Cie](#).

STUDY

A 17th-century Spanish table stands in as a desk. **Lighting:** custom by Madeline Stuart Associates. **Lamp:** [Revival Antiques](#).

LOGGIA

Just off the kitchen, a partially covered lounge area includes Monterey Colonial seating from the 1920s (the owners' main inspiration for the home), sourced from [Revival Antiques](#). **Art:** vintage tile mural, installed by Diane Keaton.



GREAT ROOM

"A room of this size needs objects of weight, because otherwise things just tend to kind of float away," says Stuart. She considers her affinity for antique shopping not just a talent but an obsession. **Coffee tables:** antique Spanish, **Lucca Antiques**. **Gilt benches:** 20th-century, **Dragonette**. **Settee:** early 1900s, **Revival Antiques**, upholstered in **Rogers & Goffigon** brown velvet. **Sofas and blue chairs:** custom, **Madeline Stuart Associates**, the latter in linen velvet by **Lee Jofa**.

STUART paneled the ceiling in stained white oak to keep the space from feeling cavernous.



"The couple has a passion for creating something authentic. These are not people who do whatever is trending that year."

MASTER BEDROOM

An existing arch "felt a little sad the way it had been," says Stuart, so Horiata was called in to stencil a silver-and-gold motif inside—and paint the wife's coat of arms on the custom bed. **Bedding:** [International Down & Linen](#). **Pillows:** in [Fortuny](#) fabric. **Sofa:** custom, in [Pierre Frey](#) mohair. **Rug:** Bessarabian, [Aga John Rugs](#). **Iron sconces:** [Paul Ferrante](#).

BATHROOM

Stuart developed a line with [Mission Tile West](#) that replicates tile styles from the 1920s and '30s. **Mirror:** [JF Chen](#). **Tile:** Revival series, [Mission Tile West](#). **Vanity:** custom by [Madeline Stuart Associates](#); granite, [Stoneland](#). **Brass:** [Palmer Industries](#). **Sconces:** [Remains Lighting](#). **Art:** [Dragonette](#).



INSTEAD OF USING ONE SINGLE MIRROR IN THIS SINK NICHE, STUART OPTED FOR ANTIQUE PANELS TO CREATE EXTRA VISUAL INTEREST.

