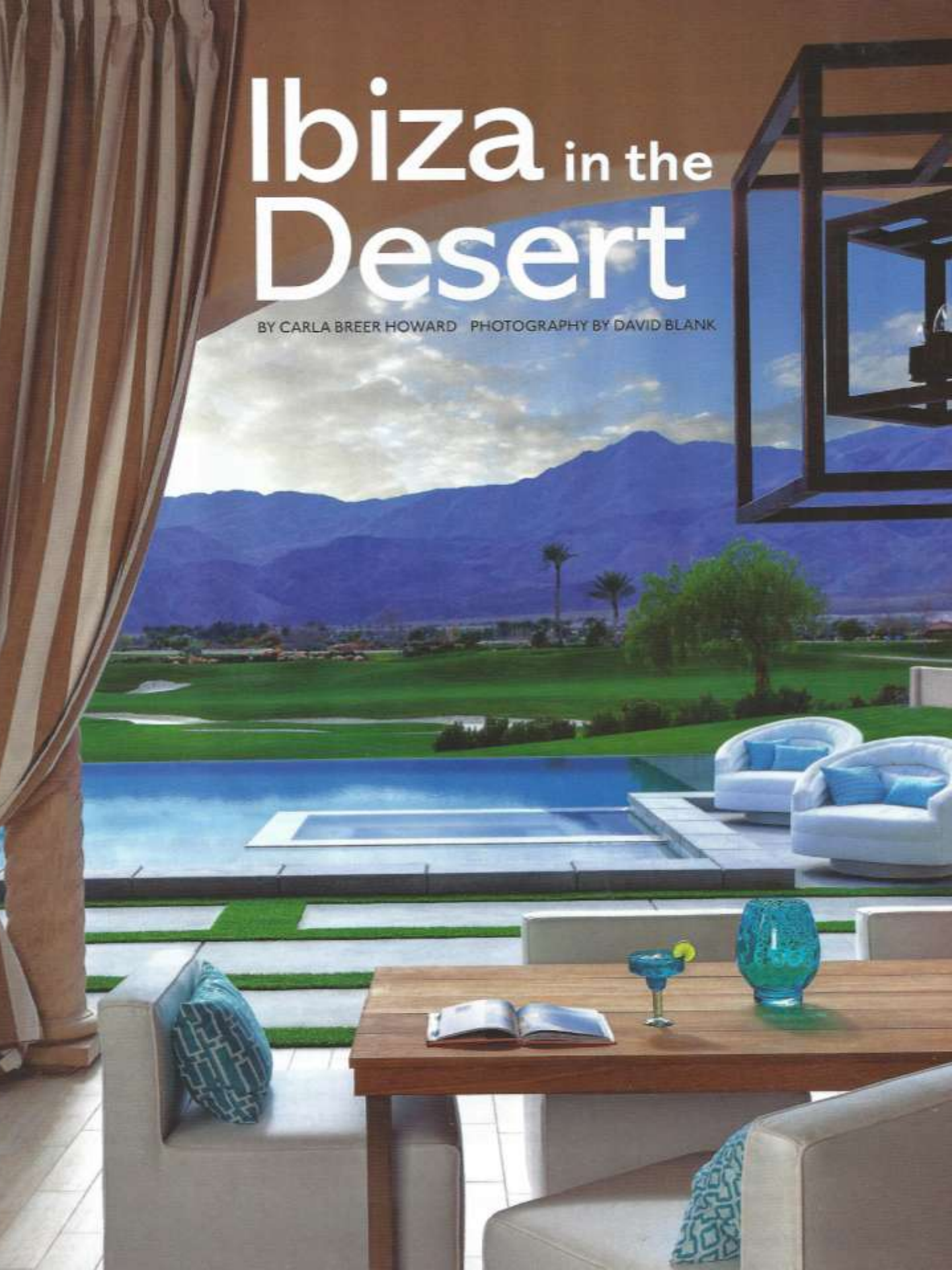


Ibiza in the Desert

BY CARLA BREER HOWARD PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID BLANK





PREVIOUS PAGE:
The outdoor patio's dining area.

THIS PAGE: Dramatic architectural details warm the home's romantic entry.

OPPOSITE: The intimate living room offers a touch of exoticism with a Moroccan leather tufted and deep teal accents that reminded the designer of the Mediterranean Sea.

Behind the high terra cotta walls surrounding Andalusia at Coral Mountain in La Quinta is an elegant, private country club of manicured gardens. Gently winding roads lead to homes inspired by the traditional architecture of southern Spain. The club's setting affords spectacular vistas across lush fairways of the nearby mountain for which it is named.

Andalusia's owner, Drummond Company of Birmingham, Alabama, asked Los Angeles-based interior designer Beth Ann Shepherd to infuse two of their classically-detailed home plans with her take on contemporary glamour. After stints with the Ritz-Carlton at its flagship property in Boston, followed by Christie's auction house in Beverly Hills, Shepherd possesses a sure knowledge about the tastes, needs and passions of the luxury market.

"I thought of the seaside residences in Ibiza," she recalls, upon first seeing the four-bedroom Fiñana model at Andalusia. "It's one of the most high-profile, most glamorous over-the-top destinations in Spain," she says of the Mediterranean island situated about 50 miles off that country's eastern coast. "It's the play-

ground of the rich and famous, where the homes are contemporary and the lunches are more important than the dinners.

"Outdoor entertaining there is paramount. These lunches go on for four or five hours," she continues. "When I saw La Quinta, I saw the opportunity for outdoor living. It's the fantasy. It's the dream."

But successfully merging a traditional-style home with a contemporary sensibility takes a knowing eye. "I was walking through the house and realized that there are certain things here that I'm not going to change. I'm not going to tear out the arches. Instead, I'm going to utilize it. I kept thinking, 'How can I energize it without making it like everyone's idea of a Spanish house?'"

Working on this project without any homeowners' input, Shepherd could respond solely to the siren call of the space, asking herself, "What's the best mood I can give for this place? How would I want to live, if money was no object and I had a third home? How would I want it to feel?"

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To hold its own against the stunning outdoor views, the family room's neutral palette is enhanced by the custom lighting, artwork and lush textures like the Mongolian lambskin-covered Lucite stools.

A photograph of a modern outdoor patio. In the foreground, a white sectional sofa with teal patterned pillows sits on a dark, textured rug. To the right, a wooden coffee table is partially visible. In the middle ground, a swimming pool is surrounded by a deck with patches of artificial green turf. In the background, a golf course and a range of blue mountains are visible under a clear sky. A large window with light-colored curtains is on the left, and a modern geometric light fixture hangs from the ceiling on the right.

The covered patio invites
lounging after a languid swim
in the pool beyond. Cutouts
of artificial turf keep the
poolside deck as green as the
fairways beyond.





LEFT: The kitchen area, in full view of the family room, maintains the same level of sophistication, and features an attached bar where guests can enjoy the chef's company without being underfoot.

OPPOSITE: The designer brings sparkle to the otherwise restful palette and furnishings of the master bedroom through the use of a large framed mirror and gold accents.

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To that end, she made the most of the natural daylight which floods this space, especially in the afternoon. She also restricted the palette to predominantly warm and bright whites, with accents of neutral beiges, browns and occasionally blues—all hues to be found in the glorious views.

Following her own instincts, Shepherd also asked, "Would I need a comfortable room? If I've already been playing outdoors for eight hours (on the golf course, tennis courts, shopping and dining in nearby Old Town), at the end of the day, I'd come in with a cocktail or a book and sink down into a mushy sofa."

In designing the resulting living room, Shepherd employed textures and shimmering surfaces as accents, which she did throughout the house, as well as certain exotic elements. A Moorish influence is subtly part of the part of the mix because, as she notes, "In Andalusia, at the southern tip of Spain, there are Moroccan influences." Here, a Moroccan leather tuffet adds a romantic note to the warm contemporary furnishings.

If the intimate living room invites cocooning, the family room contrasts as an expansive, airy gathering place, one that's directly connected to the outdoors through the opening made by the 12-foot-high glass panels that slide back out of the way.

Further underscoring the indoor-outdoor connection was Shepherd's selection of porcelain tile flooring that emulates fine driftwood planks, yet is durable enough for outdoors. It leads from the home's entry across the public areas of the house to the covered patio.

On the outdoor patio and beyond—all within direct view of the family room, kitchen and dining areas—Shepherd covered the cossetting chairs, lounges and swivel chairs made by her company in a brilliant white that surely looks doomed to take a beating from the desert's ubiquitous sandy dust and hot sun. "Yacht-grade fabric," she says of her secret weapon, "the kind that you would see on yachts on the Mediterranean, but can be easily hosed off." Accent pillows, also covered in a practical outdoor fabric, are done in a mix of patterns expressed in aquamarine blue and white, drawing the shimmering hues of the pool right up to the family room.

The pool, itself, is worthy of a fine international resort. Blessed with the beauty of an infinity edge and accented with white iridescent mosaic tiles, it has a semi-submerged spa area, as well as a shallow shelf that accommodates four chaise lounges. "We worked diligently to make sure the plaster on the pool bottom would reflect the sky with an effect that was as warm and moody as the Mediterranean," says the designer. "We went through a few runs on the plaster finish to capture the sea. It was worth it, as it takes you straight into that fantasy, even if just for a moment."

» DETAILS

Interior design by Dressed, Inc., (310) 556-0418; dresseddesign.com. Andalusia at Coral Mountain, (760) 777-1000; AndalusiaAtCoralMountain.com. Styling, Carla Breer Howard; Photo assistant Jorge "Wolf" Villalobos

