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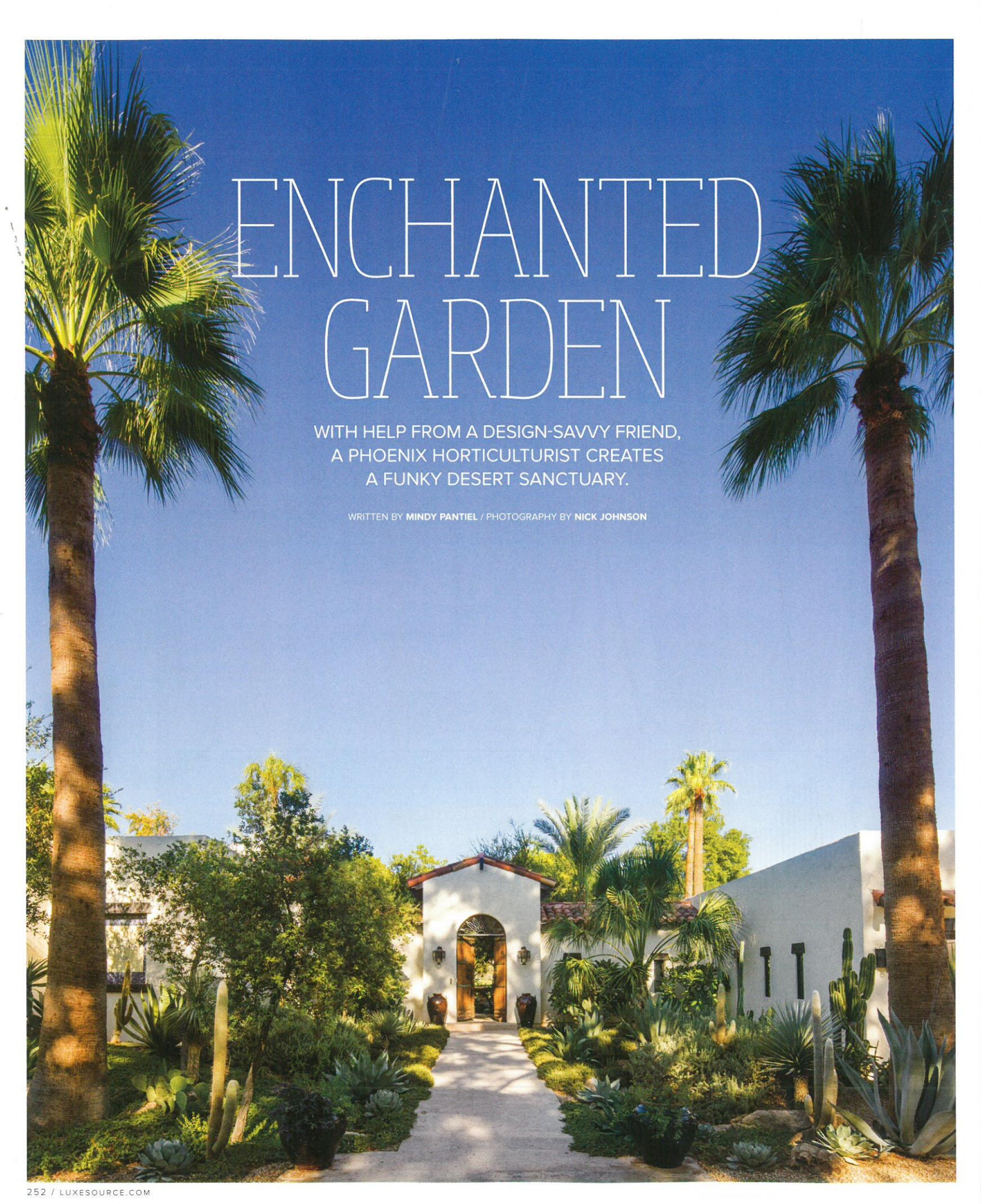


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ENCHANTED GARDEN

WITH HELP FROM A DESIGN-SAVVY FRIEND,
A PHOENIX HORTICULTURIST CREATES
A FUNKY DESERT SANCTUARY.

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INTERIOR DESIGN / **SCOTT BURDICK, WISEMAN AND GALE INTERIORS LLC**
ARCHITECTURE / **LUIS PERIS, PERIS ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN**
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / **BRIAN KISSINGER, THOMAS AND TODD, INC.**



"I wanted to celebrate what the Southwest used to be," says landscape designer Brian Kissinger, who, with his partner, Todd McCandless, restored their own 1926 Spanish Colonial-style home in Phoenix. In the residence's interior courtyard, a Cantera stone patio encircles a heritage live oak surrounded by Asian jasmine and agaves. The brick stairway leads to an office once occupied by the late Senator Carl Hayden, who bought the house in 1929.

Brian Kissinger has long been captivated by hacienda gardens. The graceful arcades, fragrant blooms and soothing sounds of glistening fountains that define the inner sanctums of so many Mexican homes all resonate with the Phoenix landscape designer, who retired this autumn as director of horticulture at the Desert Botanical Garden to focus on his own design firm. "I love to enter places that can be remembered in the soul," he says. For Kissinger, the place that spoke to him personally was an ailing 1920s Phoenix property with a casita and an ample interior garden that he purchased with partner Todd McCandless in hopes of creating a memorable desert refuge of their own.

Designed by architect H.H. Green in 1926 with 18-inch-thick adobe walls and signature Spanish Colonial markings, Casa Encantada recalls the elegance and charm of a bygone Phoenix—even in the rundown state the couple found it in. "Back then, architecture had a sense of place, and I wanted to create a setting where time slows down and tranquility settles over everyone who enters," Kissinger says. Yet the homeowners didn't want to replicate the past. "Originally, the whole place was grass and, in front, oleanders blocked the house from the street," Kissinger remarks. Rather, he envisioned a lush scene that appeared straight out of Guadalajara.

Save for salvaging a few palm trees, Kissinger gutted the property's landscaping, including the water-sucking lawn and a chain-link fence in the backyard that bordered a golf course. In their stead, he introduced a 6-foot-high stucco wall, an iron fence and a small square of lawn that serves as a retention basin for the heavy rains that shower the region a few times a year. "Every drop of rain that falls on the 10,000 square feet of rooftops ends up in the gardens," Kissinger says. "The retention system aids in the additional water requirements of the palms and cycads."





The owners turned to Scott Burdick, the tenant of their guest casita and the managing partner of his design firm, to redecorate their living room. "They were looking for a sophisticated mix of old and new," says Burdick, who combined a 19th-century sabino-wood library table with Jean de Merry wing and leather tub chairs from John Brooks Incorporated. The abaca rug is from The Floor Collection Design. Architect Luis Peris worked on the renovation, which included restoring adobe walls and installing Saltillo tile floors throughout.





The mix of old and new elements continues throughout the guest casita, a fitting backdrop for Burdick's eclectic collections. The entrance, which opens onto a shady loggia, features a Chinese wine jar used for stowing umbrellas, a Sam Scott sunflower painting from LewAllen Galleries in Santa Fe and a West African Dogon door.





Burdick brought a polished, modern feel to the casita by updating furnishings with new and vintage fabrics, like the classic 1970s corduroy he found at Howe in London for the Donghia chairs in the living room. Modern artwork, such as a bronze sculpture by Mary Bates Neubauer, contributes to the overall effect.

In the casita's living room, a 19th-century dog portrait from Galerie Half in Los Angeles hangs above an Italian credenza; the antique leather cubes from Lamberty in London serve as coffee tables. Although not formally trained as a designer, Burdick shaped his aesthetic with help from his mother, interior designer Patty Burdick. "She has visited me wherever I lived, and we'd antique together for items for my house," he says. "Half of my things were acquired this way."



Commanding one side of the casita's living room is a vintage Dunbar sofa by Edward Wormley, which Burdick covered in the same corduroy as the armchairs. The pair of Moroccan jar lamps and the 19th-century English extension table, which doubles as a desk, are all from Wiseman and Gale.



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“My dining room is set up more like a library space,” says Burdick, who arranged objects and “books of current interest” on an industrial pear-wood table from March in San Francisco. Although “not much happens in the kitchen cooking-wise,” he confesses, Burdick created an inviting bar space for small gatherings using black hair-on-hide Gregorious Pineo barstools with brass nailheads.





The transformation of the garden took eight years. Now, at the entrance to the house, a paved walkway bisects a front yard filled with agaves, succulents, palms and oak trees. "This is the welcome mat to the neighborhood," says Kissinger, who also surrounded a stone receptacle filled with water with three substantial Plumeria that infuse the air with an intoxicating scent.

A whole other layer of magic awaits behind the Moroccan doors that lead to the cool protected courtyard that is the essence of a hacienda garden. "I wanted to create a sense of surprise here," Kissinger says. Drawing on his vast knowledge of desert plantings, he brought in varieties from around the world. "I tended to veer away from the native options," he says. "I have plants from South Africa, Mexico, Australia—places with a similar climate and rainfall. I like unique things, and I like to push the limits." A total of 191 trees—Australian *Syzygium*, Medjool date palms and live oaks among them—establish a canopy that keeps even the worst summer heat at bay while protecting lower-lying plants. Come evening, a collection of white blooming and silver reflective plants shimmer in the moonlight.

As Kissinger created meandering walkways and air tinged with the aroma of crinum lilies, he and Todd also undertook the arduous task of renovating the failing infrastructure of the main house and guest casita. Working with architect Luis Peris, they restored the damaged adobe, laid Saltillo tile floors and installed new windows as well as designed a master-suite addition for the primary structure. "We brought it back to its original splendor," Peris says.

When the owners moved into the renovated main house, they asked their friend Scott Burdick for recommendations for a tenant to rent the casita. He already had one in mind: "What about me?" he suggested. The couple were elated by the idea of having the managing partner of one of Scottsdale's most venerable interior design firms living on the property. "We told him we were looking for someone just like him, and we were thrilled to have a designer-in-residence who could advise us," Kissinger says. Burdick—who has no formal training but inherited the keen eye of his mother, interior designer Patty Burdick, a partner in the firm—promptly took on the renovation of the couple's living room. Here, a sophisticated blend of old and new pieces "makes the room feel modern yet appropriate for the historical nature of the home," he says.

Right: For the wood beams in the covered outdoor spaces, including this vestibule that opens onto the courtyard, the homeowners copied the brown-bronze shade the original architect, H.H. Green, used for the living room ceilings. Here, a rustic trident, chair and bench interspersed with potted plants create a welcoming tableau.

Opposite: A large 19th-century Peruvian painting in a pine frame from Holler & Saunders Ltd. hangs in the loggia, where the 18-inch-thick width of the original adobe walls is apparent. The late-19th-century Mexican bench is from Wiseman and Gale.





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For the casita's master bedroom, Burdick customized a channel-tufted headboard touting C&C Milano linen from John Brooks Incorporated; complementing it are a Kuba cloth-covered pillow from Wiseman and Gale and an antique Moroccan textile that serves as a bedcovering. The watercolor is by William Lumpkins, and the bedside table is a Native American antique.



Below, left: In the casita's master bedroom, an antique English chair with whimsically carved wood arms is upholstered in leather from Howe. Next to it, a chest of drawers displays a collection of found objects—a piece of driftwood, a saguaro boot and a South American entada seed pod. The abaca area rug is from The Floor Collection Design.

Below, right: Personal touches in the casita's master bathroom include an antique English shelf used for storing towels, toiletries and a collection of small antique boxes. Saltillo tile floors are in keeping with the rest of the interiors.

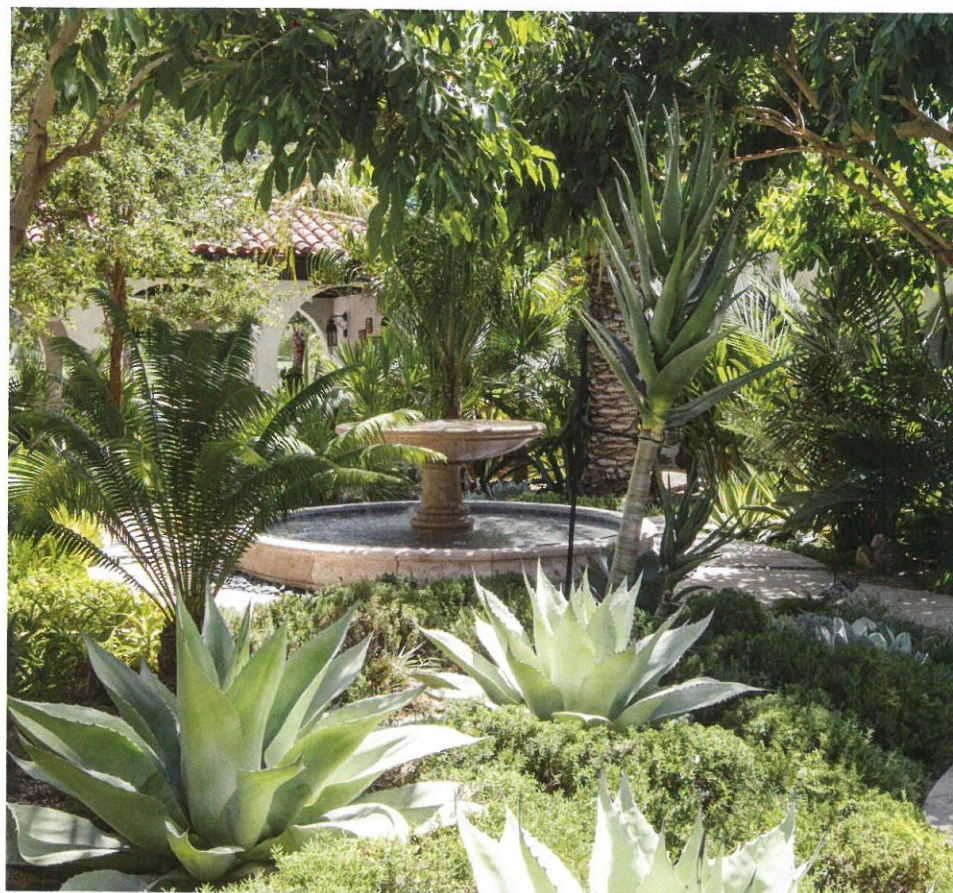




Right: Around a carved Cantera stone fountain, which is the centerpiece of the lush courtyard, *Syzygium* trees from Australia, date palms and live oaks all provide a cooling canopy for a blend of ginger, aloe and Chinese fan palms. "Homes were built like this to protect people from the environment—from heat and sun," Kissinger notes. "I wanted to recreate that."

Opposite: A Monterey oak, mass plantings of agave and a cycad garden surround the pool, which is lined with cobalt tiles. "The wide steps are meant for sitting and enjoying cocktails," Kissinger says. "It's a place to cool off, not swim laps." The Richard Schultz 1966 Collection furnishings are from Inside/Out.

Below: Irregular stone pavers lead to a small sunken lawn designed to hold water overflow from heavy rains. The Cantera stone bench from Oaxaca, Mexico, is surrounded by aloe and agaves.



When it came to the casita, Burdick brought his self-proclaimed eccentric style to the fore. "I have a huge mixture of extreme modern art, ancestor paintings, antiques and flea-market finds I carry with me from house to house," he says. His knack for combining disparate items is immediately evident: In the living room, for example, an Edward Wormley sofa upholstered in vintage 1970s corduroy found in London is grouped with an Italian credenza purchased from Calvin Klein's Hamptons estate and a pair of leather channel-tufted stools. Between two vintage Donghia chairs is an antique African bowl raised on three curved legs that serves as a side table. Nearby, in the kitchen-dining area, a pair of benches sporting a contemporary striped fabric flanks an antique French pearwood table. A small African Ashanti stool perched atop the kitchen cabinets ups the funkiness factor.

In the casita's walk-in closet, Burdick placed an industrial metal desk topped with a French confit pot repurposed as a lamp—"to give the space character," he explains—and lined the walls of the laundry room with antique Guatemalan and Mexican dancing masks for the same reason. "When you move into someone else's guesthouse, you have to add things that warm it up and make it your own," he explains.

With its eclectic vibe, the guest casita is a perfect complement to the serene surroundings and the overall feel Kissinger sought for his desert paradise. "Impeccable detail is the key to creating beauty," he says. "Hopefully, friends and family who come to visit will be catapulted into another time and place." ■