

# SLEIGHT OF HAND

Intentional symmetry prevails in this Movie Colony home, where doorsteps below mirror the roofline above and even tracks for glass pocket walls lend a sense of architectural balance.

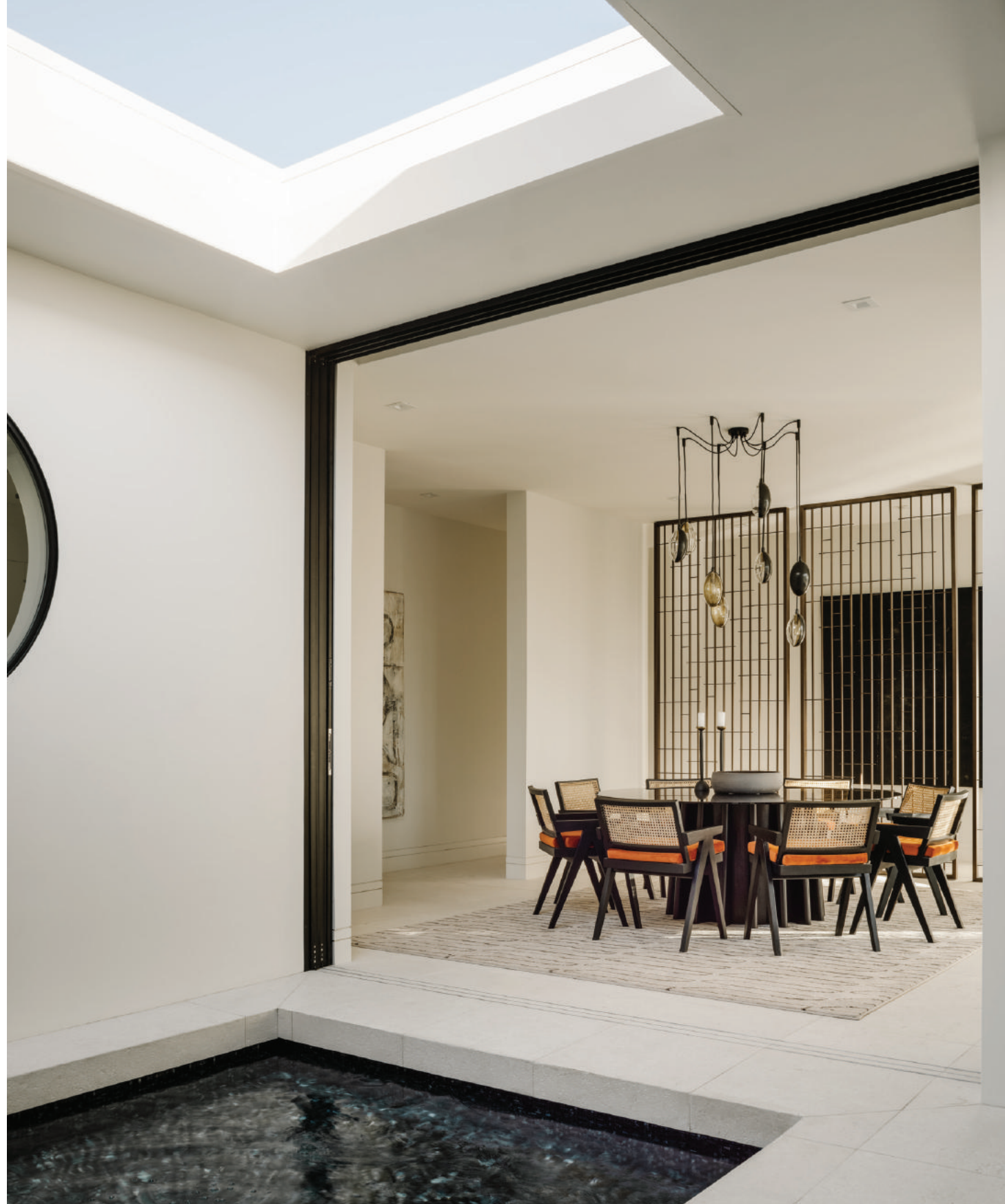


FOR HIS FIRST HOME IN PALM SPRINGS,  
THE PRINCIPAL OF A DESIGN-BUILD FIRM  
MAKES THE WALLS DISAPPEAR.

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“Come on, I’ve got to show you this!” Steve Bouwman calls out.

He glances back over his shoulder and motions to follow as he traipses through the yard, past a conversation seating area, a fire pit, and an off-duty dining table lazing beneath the canopy of an acacia. A sage garden encircles the foot of the tree, and there are rosemary and citrus planted just beyond that — Mexican lime, Meyer lemon, and tangerine. He stops when he reaches the rear of the swimming pool and spa and spins around to take in the view. This spot at the back of the Movie Colony property



A RAINY DAY BECOMES AN INDOOR WATERFALL IN AN ATRIUM BUILT TO WITHSTAND THE ELEMENTS.



opposite: Adjacent to the entryway, a 6.5-foot smoked glass dining table and bronze-finished stainless steel shoji screens, both designed for the space by Bouwman, take center stage. "Wherever you're seated, you have something interesting to look at," he says. That sense of discovery is true throughout the home. left: Artwork peeks through distant doorways. below: The chandelier was handmade for Bouwman by Chicago-based artists Lake + Wells.

affords one of the best vantage points of Bouwman's open-air architectural feat. He looks proud.

The idea of indoor-outdoor living so permeates the culture of Greater Palm Springs that it's easy to forget the world outside these mountain surrounds doesn't experience this much sunshine. Coming from Chicago, Bouwman seldom considered it. So, when the principal of design-build firm redüHOME relocated to the desert in 2019 and embarked on his first local project, he relished the ability to reinterpret what amounts to inside and out.

"During the research phase, everyone kept emphasizing the importance of the indoor-outdoor concept," Bouwman reflects. "I took it to heart, and I obsessed over how to incorporate it into this project."

The resulting 4,202-square-foot escape triumphantly blurs the line between enclosed and alfresco environments. Expansive glass pocket walls recede in three key spaces — kitchen, living room, and master — to unite the interiors with an ample backyard; their tracks are recessed to eliminate any sense of division once they've slid open. Limestone flooring and a crisp white ceiling extend to the exterior, visually expanding the property's main gathering areas. Meanwhile, Mother Nature finds permanent residence indoors in organic elements like the veiny Calacatta Paonazzo marble that dresses the kitchen countertops and range hood and the perfectly imperfect



Bouwman is neither a trained architect nor an interior designer. “I’m self-taught,” he says. Perhaps, that’s the magician’s greatest trick. Much of the furniture is custom, including all the seating in the living room. In designing these key pieces himself, Bouwman maintains control over every curve and contour in the house. This room also features a burl wood coffee table from Made Goods, vintage “open hands” table, and a commissioned oil painting by Scott Kerr.



Spanish limestone underfoot, which also makes an appearance on the living room’s fireplace surround and covers a statement wall in the master bedroom.

Bouwman’s indoor-outdoor sleight of hand begins in the foyer (his favorite moment of the build, if forced to choose). Black double entry doors with bespoke handles unlock to reveal an atrium. Three of its glass walls draw back into impossibly narrow pockets; the fourth, far wall, which abuts the kitchen, sports a large porthole window, creating a sight-line through the cooking area to the centerpiece acacia out back. Natural light pours down from the opening above, the framed blue sky a mirror image of the 18-inch-deep water feature that’s sunken into the floor.

“I love the foyer,” Bouwman says. “I love that first impression and sense of discovery: the water feature, the porthole window looking out into the backyard, and then you get the glimpse of those corner windows in the living room and the view.”

Ahead of any structural planning, one of the initial processes

“YOU NEED TO FURNISH TO CARRY YOUR VISION THROUGH BECAUSE PEOPLE AREN’T GOING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT YOUR VISION IS.”



High-end appliances hide behind bleached oak cabinets, a design choice meant to refocus attention in the kitchen on not only the mountain views but also the range and its marble hood. The island and hood are cut from the same slab, and the veining in both elements follows the same line to enhance cohesion.

Bouwman conducted with his architect was a sun and view study. “We looked at the lot, then looked for the best locations on the lot to capture the mountain views. That’s one of the greatest things about Palm Springs,” Bouwman says. “That study helped to determine the room positioning, the depths of the eaves. Then I identified the rooms, or the boxes that I wanted to check, and I plotted them out on the scale plot to configure the layout.”

The life of the party is the living room. This central gathering place accommodates abundant memory-making with dramatic 14-foot ceilings — 4 feet higher than all the rest — and a glass corner that fully opens for an effortless hop, skip, and jump to the pool. A three-sided fireplace faces custom furnishings designed for the space by Bouwman. “Someone said to me once, ‘You need to furnish to carry your vision through because people aren’t going to understand what your vision is.’ So that’s what I do,” he says. “My business is design-build. I really take it from start to candlestick at the end.” If this multipurpose hub gets crowded, the nearby media room promises a cozy, soundproof cinema night.

With Dacor appliances hidden behind minimalist rift-cut oak cabinets, the focus in the kitchen becomes the view. Here too, a glass corner slides away to engage the outdoors. Window tracks are concealed in the leather-finished countertop, which extends outward on a slight angle to form a shapely patio bar.

A guest wing with twin suites occupies one end of the four-bedroom, five-bathroom home. Designed to stoke a hotel-like feel, each room opens to a small entryway, so sleeping areas remain private; walk-in closets keep luggage and clutter at bay. Both have individual HVAC systems so houseguests can control their own temps. This section connects to the kitchen by way of an informal coffee nook that can be partitioned off for the exclusive use of guests. On the opposite side of the house sits the master, whose en suite has separate indoor and outdoor showers, and an attached casita, which could serve as an office, a gym, or nanny’s quarters.

Thoughtful tech-forward touches make this swank residence



MOTHER NATURE FINDS PERMANENT RESIDENCE INDOORS IN ORGANIC ELEMENTS LIKE THE VEINY CALACATTA PAONAZZO MARBLE.



opposite: Glass walls in the master retreat open to a quiet corner of the yard, which affords more privacy when guests are outdoors; a pair of Bouwman-designed chairs in a bouclé fabric lounge in the fading sunlight. left: Spanish limestone climbs up one wall to anchor the bed; handblown pendant lights from Tracy Glover Studios flank the headboard. below: A Kohler tub in the master bathroom makes the ideal start to any spa day.

feel user-friendly and, more importantly, like a home. A flatscreen in the kitchen typically rotates artwork but, on game day, transforms the indoor-outdoor hangout into a sports bar. Built-in speakers let music set the mood throughout the house, inside and out. Dual garages are equipped with Tesla Powerwalls and enough hookups to accommodate a catering team. The master bathroom mirror even has a secret built-in television.

Modern homes can feel cold. This breezy layout is anything but.

Standing behind the pool, surveying his work, Bouwman lets out a sigh and smiles. “This house was different,” he says. His Windy City high-rise commissions rarely call for open-air living. And as a new-construction spec build, he — and his imagination — had complete control of the process. The Movie Colony property sold in November, though the owners have made clear Bouwman is welcome anytime. “I actually got a little emotional on my last day here,” Bouwman says, “and I never get attached to my projects. But this one was the hardest to let go.”



NATURAL LIGHT BATHES THE MASTER AND ENERGIZES THE MIND TO TACKLE ANYTHING.