



Treasure Chest

The collection of a lifetime

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This page: A 27-by-10-foot-textured gypsum panel creates flow from the foyer toward the common areas. Miniature Vietnamese hot air balloons “float” over guests as they arrive and a cow-hide bench establishes the juxtaposed theme of the home’s decor, best exemplified in the dining area (opposite page) where orange Eros chairs by Philippe Starck for Kartell are combined with a family heirloom table built in 1865.

Some homes are showplaces, some are merely a place to hang one’s hat, and some, as the late George Carlin observed, are a “place for our stuff.” The latest Las Vegas residence designed by Sheldon Colen of SCA Design is a combination of all these mantras but with a singular spin. Nearly every item in the house has its own significant origin and its own story. It is truly a collection of items amassed from a life well-lived and life well-traveled.

Work moved Tobias Mattstedt and his family, originally from Germany, around the world—England, France, Switzerland, Hong Kong and Maui. “Wherever we were, we were collecting stuff,” says Mattstedt. “It started off with little bits and pieces. I don’t like homes where everything looks like it was done by an interior designer, where everything looks perfectly prim and proper. It wouldn’t be us.”

The design accents included family heirlooms, exotic collectibles and cultural artifacts, designer furniture, decorative items from IKEA, and three children. Since the new residence is likely to be where the family will call home until the kids grow up, everything had to be done just right.

After speaking with several builders and not finding the right chemistry, Mattstedt heard about SCA Design. In Mattstedt, Colen found a prospective client who knew what he liked, dealt with high-end architectural firms in his own work and wanted his house to be filled with an extensive collection of existing furnishings. Open houses, magazines and brainstorming sessions had already yielded some ideas. The home would have courtyards, with nice views from every room. A layout emerged that was tentatively destined for a Tuscan theme. Colen impressed his clients by asking the right questions—how did they want to live, what styles did they like, what did they see as the essence of the house? He was taken on a tour of the Strip, where restaurants at the Bellagio, MGM Grand and Mandalay Bay provided further inspiration. Colen suggested they keep the layout, especially





This page: A triple-paned corner window in the family room was constructed with a view of the pool but positioned to allow maximum light in the winter and minimal heat in the summer. Opposite page, right: A large social area is dedicated to a collection of designer chairs, which surround a table improvised from a heavy slab of Brazilian ironwood. A one-of-a-kind bookcase custom-made in the Philippines lines the west wall, which benefits from the glow of ambient light that can change with the seasons. Opposite page, below: The family dines outdoors as often as possible in the spring and fall.



the courtyards, but drop the Tuscan trappings and go for a modernist home. The west-facing home looks somewhat cubist, with each section—all clean lines, no curves—a shade of beige or orange. The driveway gives the first indication of a preference for travertine tile, with rough-hewn paving stones curving around the home to the northside four-car garage. A checkerboard pattern of alternating tile and squares of grass leads to the front door, with the first of several courtyards adjacent to the entrance. Inside, a 27-x-10-textured gypsum wall accented by miniature hot air balloons from Vietnam first catches the eye. The home's main sightline extends past the dining area and floor-to-ceiling wine racks to the family room, with a freestanding decorative fireplace and a large, triple-paned corner window that allows maximum sunlight (but little heat, due to an exterior overhang and deference to the seasonal positioning of the sun) and a scenic view of the backyard pool area. The bedroom wing is down the hall to the right, but a large social area dedicated to a collection of designer chairs comes first. Every room has a function. There are no pristine environments or a dining room only used at Thanksgiving. The five designer chairs are meant to be sat in, and include a black, cracked-leather Eames chair, an orange chaise lounge designed by Tony Chi and recovered from a hotel room, an Eero Aarnio white ball chair, and a blue chair and ottoman made from a chenille/corduroy-hybrid fabric which came courtesy of Yabu Pushelberg, famous in Vegas for their interior work at MGM Grand's Shibuya. The "Peel" chair is the piece de résistance, a Danish design inspired by an orange peel that doesn't quite look like "the most comfortable chair in the world," as its owners claim. The red leather seat curves up under the right armrest and behind to form a back and





Above: A lounge chair designed by Le Corbusier lies near the foot of the staircase leading to the loft-style master bedrooms. The floor and stairs were constructed from environmentally friendly bamboo. Above right: A floor-to-ceiling wine rack is filled with decorative empty bottles with esoteric labels that were bought for \$5 each. Opposite page: A collection of classic Pirelli calendars dominates the view from the tub in the master bedroom.



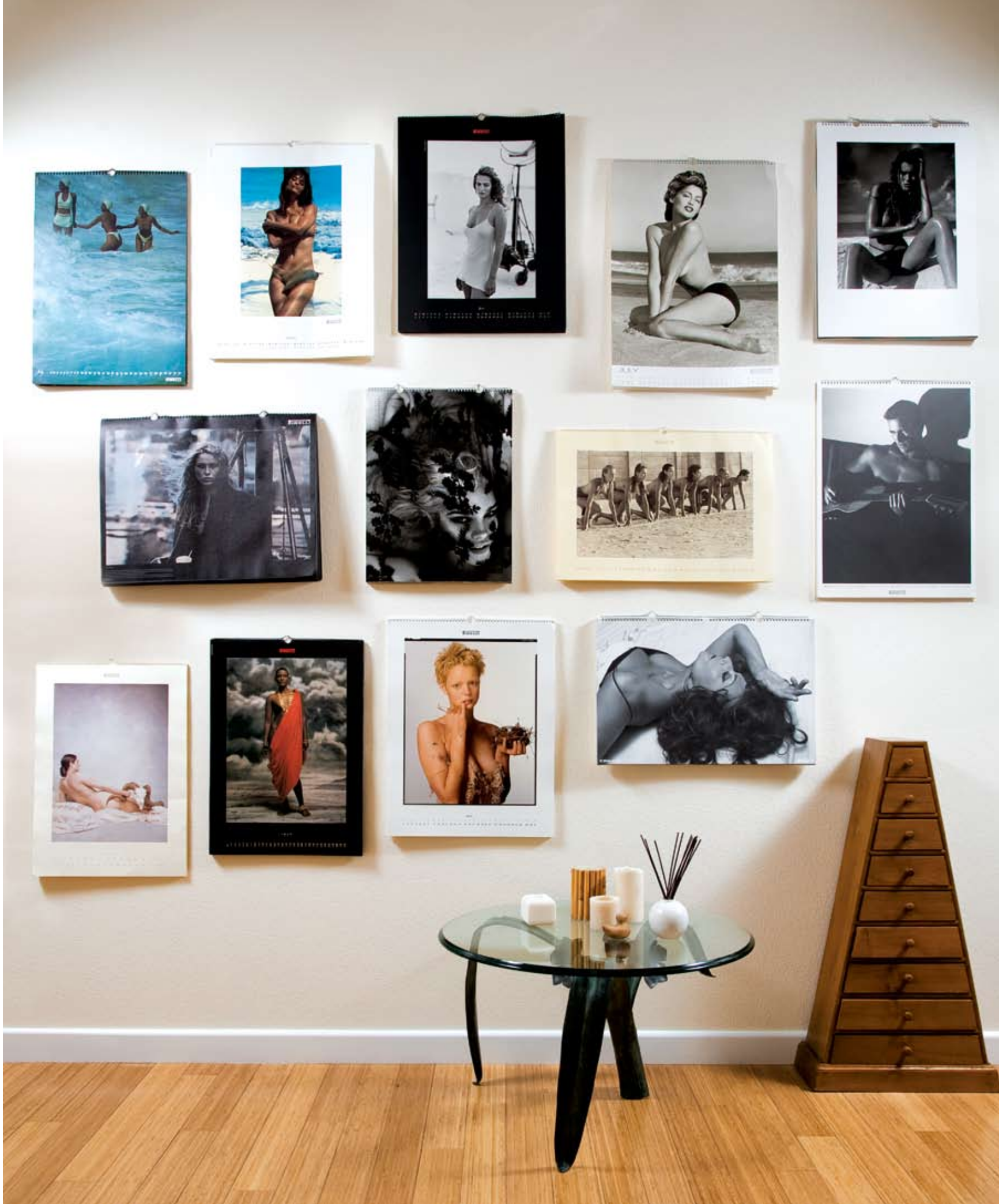
headrest. It takes a leap of faith to sit in it, but the comfort claims demand credence.

The chairs create aesthetic astonishment, but there is also a bookcase custom made in the Philippines with shelves that incline and decline. A heavy slab of ironwood, sliced from an oak tree in Brazil tops a pair of improvised bronze bases in the middle of a rug that looks like an island in the midst of a smooth travertine tile sea. IKEA lights create patterns on the wall—blue in summer, red and green in winter—and the backyard scene is fully visible through wall-length glass.

Clocks that have been in the family for generations populate the walls. A table built in Brandenburg in 1865 is also a legacy, constructed of walnut wood from an ancestral home. Orange Eros chairs purchased from the Museum of Modern Art create the sought after modern/antique

juxtaposition. An adjoining outdoor courtyard was made into a dining area, where the family prefers to eat October through April. The wine racks contain dozens of empty, decorative bottles, although a small, modern wine storage unit keeps selected vintages at the proper temperature.

The family rooms at the east side of the house are small, encouraging the use of the outdoor areas. The kids have their own living area and each of the three rooms contain individual walk-in closets and bathrooms. The second-story master bedroom was inspired by Skylofts at MGM Grand, with eco-friendly bamboo the material of choice for the flooring and stairs. The room is a sparse, open area with a Tony Chi-designed bed dominating the space. An outdoor patio provides a full view of the yard, with a pool by Desert Drafting designed to resemble the floor plan of the house. The yard is extensive, half grass and half desertscaped, with



The home was originally meant to have a Tuscan theme, but SCA Design transformed it into a minimalist masterpiece, all clean lines and no curves. The pool sits in an enormous yard, and was designed as a reduced-scale reflection of the outline of the house's floor plan.



native trees (palo verde, mesquite, eucalyptus, fruitless olive and cassia) populating the grounds. A waterfall feeds the pool, a manmade pond sits directly below the master bedroom and statues of children frolic and recline on the grounds.

The home's smaller stylistic touches are numerous. Rare Pirelli calendars line the wall of the master bathroom with images of Sophia Loren, Naomi Campbell, Kiara Chaplin and John Malkovich peering from the pages. A red Kohler outdoor bath obtained from eBay is in the final stages of completion on the second floor patio. Eleven cast-bronze character sculptures dance down the stairs where two Le Corbusier-

designed lounges lie. Caesarstone counters glint and sparkle among the Miele kitchen appliances. A cloud-like "Nebula" floats over the indoor dining table, while a fire pit is planned for an unfinished corner of the yard.

It doesn't get much more original than this in Las Vegas. Every item, even an allegedly antique cabinet that turned out to be of modern manufacture, contributes to the home's overall look and feel.

"I don't think more than one piece came from any one shop," says Mattstedt. "Every item has history; each was a struggle to get. Every one has a story." **HD**