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Comfort Zone

Gisele Bündchen + Tom Brady's Eco-Chic Family Home

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COMFORTS OF HOME

Gisele Bündchen and Tom Brady commune with family and nature in a welcoming, eco-conscious Los Angeles residence far removed from the bright lights of the runway and the gridiron

TEXT BY MAYER RUS PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROGER DAVIES PORTRAITS BY NINO MUÑOZ PRODUCED BY CARLOS MOTA

Above: Model Gisele Bündchen collects produce from the garden at the Los Angeles home she shares with NFL quarterback Tom Brady and their children. The architecture is by Landry Design Group, and Joan Behnke & Assoc. oversaw the interiors; the landscape design is by the late Dennis Hickok. ***Left:*** A loggia features a chandelier and sconces by Gregorius | Pineo and RH wicker sofas and chairs cushioned in a Clarence House fabric; the reclaimed-oak ceiling beams and antique limestone mantel are from Koen Van Loo of EA2. For details see Sources.

Above: In the great room, a Gregorius|Pineo ceiling light hangs above a Formations cocktail table, Christian Liaigre stools, and sofas custom-designed by Behnke in a Great Plains silk, with cushions in a Loro Piana linen; the curtains are in a Loro Piana cashmere-wool, the sconces are by Hervé Van der Straeten from Ralph Pucci International, and the carpet is by Tai Ping. ***Below:*** The family room's sofas are upholstered in a Castel cotton, and the ottoman/cocktail table is covered in an embossed Bordoni leather from Richard Shapiro/Studiolo; the lounge chairs are by Michael Berman, the chandelier is by Formations, the table lamps are by Gregorius|Pineo, the curtains are made of a Sahco fabric, and the rug is by Tai Ping.

First, a caveat: Anyone expecting the home of supermodel Gisele Bündchen and New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady to be a lavish pleasure dome replete with sultry sirens and gridiron gods cavorting around the pool is in for a serious letdown. Likewise, those who imagine a sprawling palace staffed with a battalion of liveried footmen proffering protein shakes on silver trays have also missed the mark. The reality of Bündchen and Brady's life in Los Angeles's Brentwood neighborhood is far more—dare we say it?—normal.

"I like simplicity and coziness," says the renowned Brazilian beauty. "I want to live in a place that feels like a real home, where you can put your feet up on the couch and just relax." Brady seconds the notion: "Gisele and I have eight sisters between us, and there are lots of kids. We built this house as a sanctuary for our family—a place where we can enjoy being together."

The couple's L.A. story began roughly six years ago, when Bündchen and Brady started making regular excursions to the sunny shores of Southern California during the NFL off-season. On one of those trips, prior to their marriage in 2009, they discovered an open lot with stunning views of the Pacific Ocean near the house they were renting. They immediately knew the patch of land would one day be home.

"It was important for us to plant roots for our family, and since we both enjoy the creative process, we decided to start from scratch," Brady recalls. (The couple has a three-year-old son, Benjamin, and a baby daughter, Vivian Lake, along with six-year-old John, Brady's son from his previous relationship with actress Bridget Moynahan.)

To help refine their vision of domestic bliss, the pair engaged architect Richard Landry and one of his frequent collaborators, interior designer Joan Behnke. "I'm all about team dynamics and putting the right people together," says the future Hall of Famer and owner of three Super Bowl rings. "We knew Richard and Joan could take us where we wanted to go without imposing a signature look. They understood that we wanted a comfortable house, not a style statement."

For Bündchen and Brady living well also means living responsibly. Bündchen is a global ambassador for the United Nations Environment Programme, and the couple is acutely aware of issues related to the

Above: Light dapples the koi-stocked moat; the home's walls are a blend of three types of Texas limestone. The steel doors and window frames, all by Optimum Window, are in a customized bronze finish.

conservation of natural resources. One of their primary imperatives when building their home was to use as many recycled components as possible and to implement energy and water systems that would ameliorate the family's impact on the land. In addition to composting, gray-water technology for irrigation, and environmentally friendly construction materials, the pair installed two substantial arrays of photovoltaic solar panels (one next to the garden, the other on the roof of the house) that would meet all of the property's electricity needs. "From the beginning we asked everyone involved in the design and construction, 'How can we make it as sustainable as possible?'" Bündchen says.

Incorporating those priorities into the design plan, Landry conceived an elegant interpretation of old-world European architecture—think French château via the Pacific Coast Highway—deftly attuned to the needs of contemporary life. The six-bedroom, nearly 14,000-square-foot house is constructed of different types of limestone, all acid-washed for patina and texture, with a traditional mansard roof of Vermont gray slate with zinc gutters and flashing. A winding driveway leads over a pond to a motor court paved in reclaimed cobblestones and then to a stone bridge spanning a koi-stocked moat that's picturesque but not pompous.

"Tom and Gisele aren't worried about impressing people," Landry says. "They're very sensitive to style and quality, but those considerations never trump comfort and ease."

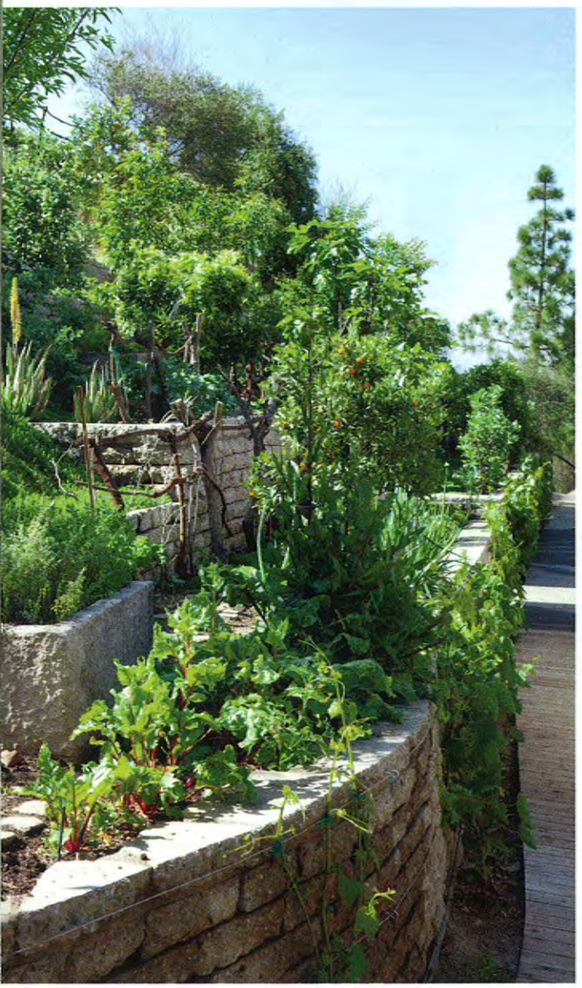
When it came to the interiors, Behnke punched up the restrained, sophisticated atmosphere with eye-catching light fixtures that include a confection of dripping silver mesh in the entry, gilded sconces by Hervé Van der Straeten in the great room, and an antique crystal chandelier in Bündchen's dressing room that the model and designer purchased together in Paris. The color scheme throughout, playing off the building materials, is decidedly neutral, with occasional accents of green and blue. And the furnishings are unpretentious pieces made with fine natural materials such as Belgian linen, old leather, silk, and velvet.

"Gisele is an earth mother—she's drawn to certain things because of the energy they give off," Behnke says. "The motto of this project was 'Simplify!' She and Tom were constantly searching for the essence of things."

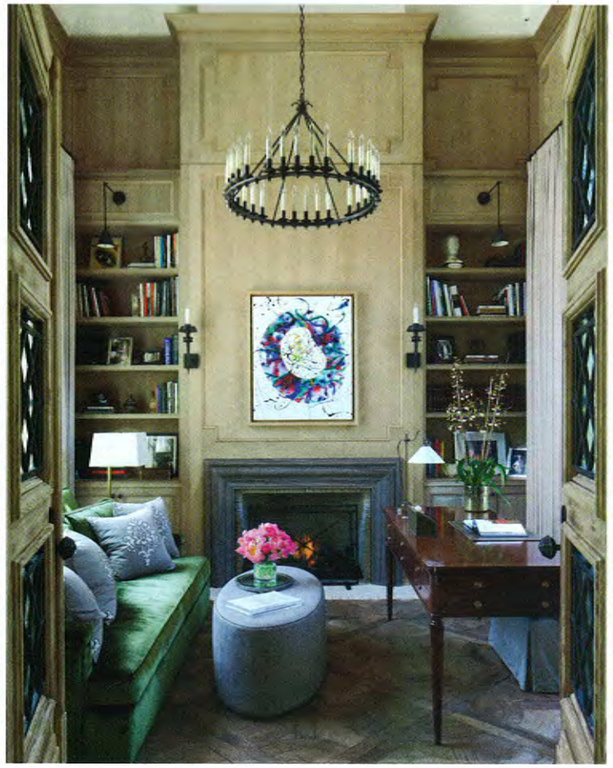
Part of that quest entailed the use of reclaimed ceiling beams and floorboards, salvaged ceramic tile, brick, and bluestone, and antique wood doors and marble fireplace surrounds. For Brady and Bündchen these were aesthetic choices that aligned with their

Above, from left: The great room's billiard area features a TV cabinet and side table designed by Behnke and barstools by Rose Tarlow Melrose House. A Kevin Reilly light fixture is suspended from the breakfast room's reclaimed-brick ceiling, above a Gregorius | Pineo table and Brenda Antin chairs; the curtains are of a Sahco fabric.

Above: Antique Tunisian tile from Exquisite Surfaces makes a lively backsplash in the kitchen, which is appointed with Formations pendant lights, marble countertops from Compas Architectural Stone, custom-made alder cabinetry, an oak island, and a Wolf range. ***Left:*** A chandelier and sconce by Dennis & Leen grace the dining room; the curtains are made of a fabric by Marcie Bronkar, and a Kerry Joyce linen covers the chairs by Behnke, who also designed the table.



Clockwise from above: A terraced garden supplies the family with an array of fruits and vegetables. Bündchen in the garden with son Benjamin. The family's dog, Lua, sits on a path of reclaimed cobblestones, flanked by Japanese maples and shaded by a zinc-top loggia. ***Opposite, from top:*** James Perse chaise longues invite repose atop the reclaimed-oak deck; the pool is lined in hand-poured glass tile. The view out over the city, with the Pacific Ocean in the distance.



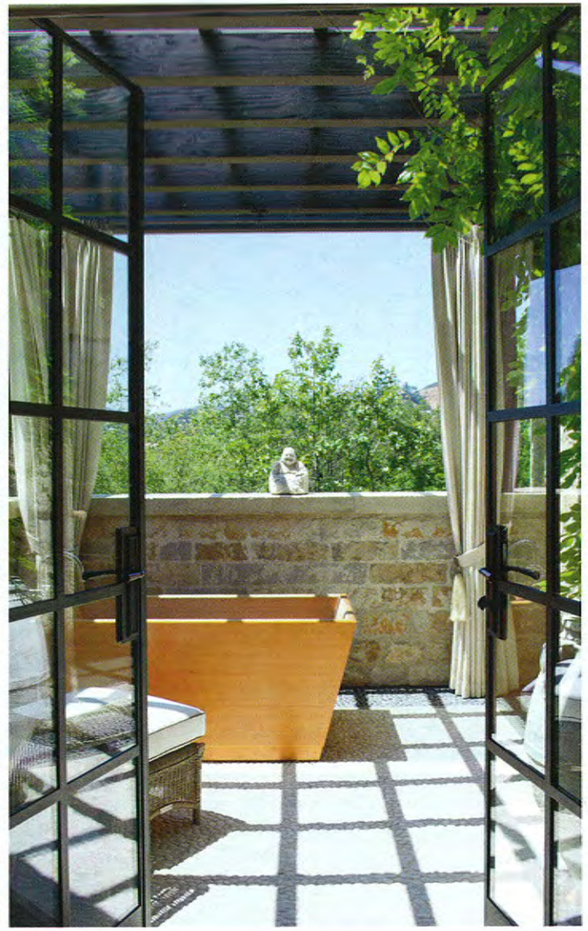
"TOM AND GISELE AREN'T WORRIED ABOUT IMPRESSING PEOPLE," LANDRY SAYS. "THEY'RE VERY SENSITIVE TO STYLE AND QUALITY, BUT THOSE CONSIDERATIONS NEVER TRUMP COMFORT AND EASE."

Above, from left: A large artwork by Sam Francis hangs in the hallway, which is paved in antique Belgian bluestone; the Behnke-designed lanterns and the sconce are by Paul Ferrante. The oak-paneled library includes a Dessin Fournir chandelier and sconces, the latter flanking another work by Francis above the fireplace; the sofa pillows are made of a Loro Piana fabric. ***Opposite, from top:*** The gym, designed by Out-Fit, is equipped with custom-made wrought-iron monkey bars. An antique crystal chandelier enlivens Bündchen's closet, which features custom-made cabinetry and marble countertops.

commitment to reuse. Much of the repurposed material was supplied by Belgian dealer Koen Van Loo, a friend of the couple's who sells vintage architectural details and building components.

If the moat and bridge set the romantic tone of a European country estate, the ingenious swimming pool at the rear of the house adds another layer to the transporting fantasy. Offering dreamy vistas of the Pacific dissolving into the distance, the pool is laid out with two straight sides and one long, sinuous edge that helps give the impression of a natural lake, particularly in early-morning and late-afternoon light. A deck made of reclaimed-oak planks projects into the water to buttress the illusion.

Idyllic as that outdoor space is, Bündchen's favorite spot is the garden—planted into a terraced hill off the side of the house—which supplies a cornucopia of apples, peaches, plums, guava, carrots, cucumbers, and tomatoes, plus kale and other greens. There's also a chicken coop filled with hens busy laying eggs. For Bündchen the microfarm is another aspect of living mindfully. "It's so important for kids to understand where their food comes from," she explains. "And whether you're talking about a home or the land, it's the same—if you nurture something, it will nurture you back." □



Clockwise from top left: The Classic Cloth plaid used on the beds and the curtains' leafy Schumacher print add a spirited touch to a bedroom; the striped pillows and Behnke-designed storage ottomans are both covered in Loro Piana fabrics, and the chandelier is by Axel Vervoordt. On the master bath terrace, curtains of a Perennials fabric can be drawn to shade a hinoki-wood tub. Behnke conceived the multipart light fixture in the boys' bedroom; the framed tortoise shell was purchased in Paris. ***Opposite, from top:*** Installed in the master bath are lanterns by Dennis & Leen, Kallista sinks, and turquin-blue-marble counters from Compas Architectural Stone, which also designed the sink and shower fittings; the artwork above the fireplace is a photograph of Gillette Stadium (where the Patriots play) by Jon Coulthard. In the master bedroom, the chandelier and the sconces above the mantel are by Gregorius|Pineo; a Behnke-designed sofa clad in a Loro Piana linen faces a Dennis & Leen low table, and the custom-made rug is by Tai Ping.