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.

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Above: Model Gisele Bündchen collects produce from the garden at the Los Angeles home she shares with quarterback Tom Brady and their children. The architecture is by Landry Design Group, and Joao Behrakis & Assoc. oversee the interiors; the landscape design is by the late Dennis Hitchcock. Left: A loggia features a chandelier and sconces by Dropglass/Phino and the wicker sofas and chairs cushioned in a Clarence House fabric; the reclaimed-oak ceiling beams and antique lanterns were from Roan Van Los of EA2. For details see Sources.
First, a caveat: Anyone expecting the home of superstar Gisele Bündchen and New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady to be a lavish pleasure dome replete with sultry scenery 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 butlers 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—normal.

“I like simplicity and comfort,” 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 echoes the notion: “Gisele and I have eight skaters 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. “It’s 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
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, grey-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 18,000-square-foot house is constructed of different types of limestones, all acid-washed for patina and texture, with a traditional masonry roof of Vermont grey 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 lot-stacked 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, Behrnie punched up the restrained, sophisticated atmosphere with eye-catching light fixtures that include a confection of dripping silver mesh in the entry, gilded scoops by Horst 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 deceptively 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," Behrnie says. "The motto of this project was 'Simplify.' We 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
Clockwise from above: A terraced garden supplies the family with an array of fruits and vegetables. Birkin is in the garden with son Benjamin. The family’s dog, Lulu, sits on a path of reclaimed cobblestones, flanked by Japanese maples and shaded by a single-leaf loquat. Opposite, from top: James Perse chaise longues invite respite atop the reclaimed-teak deck; the pool is lined in hand-poured glass tiles. The view out over the city, with the Pacific Ocean in the distance.
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Above, from left: A large artwork by San Francisco hangs in the hallway, which is paved in antique Belgian bluestone; the Bel Air-designed lanterns and the sconces are by Paul Ferrante. The oak-paneled library includes a Deuxième 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 Outfit, is equipped with custom-made wrought-iron mezzanine bars. An antique crystal chandelier erihvans Bündchen's closet, which features custom-made cabinetry and marble countertops.

commitment to reuse. Much of the repurposed material was supplied by Belgian dealer Yoen 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.

"My little outdoor space is, Bündchen's favorite spot in the garden—planted into a terraced hill off the side of the house—which supplies us with apples, peach, plums, grapes, carrots, cucumbers, and tomatoes, plus basil 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 house or the land, it's the same—if you nurture something, it will nurture you back."
Clockwise from top left: The Classic Clock placed on the desk and the curtains' leafy Schumacher print add a spirited touch to a bedroom; the striped pillows and Behrrie-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 Frenellot fabric can be drawn to shade a mahogany tub. Behrrie conceived the multiplay light fixture in the foyer bedroom; the framed tortoise shell was purchased in Paris. Opposite, from left: Installed in the master bath are sconces by Dennis & Leen, Kalista sinks, and turquoise-blue-marble countertops from Compos 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 Joe Brothier. In the master bedroom, the chandelier and the sconces above the bed are by Gregoriani Fine; a Behrrie-designed sofa clad in Loro Piana linen faces a Dennis & Leen low table, and the custom-made rug is by Tai Ping.