



concrete bathing cathedral by Studio KO. Right: acacia trees form a canopy over a path of Japanese Zoysia grass that cuts through jade and aloe. Opposite: Christiansen taking his daily bath. The tub is oriented toward the sunrise, when the stained-glass shadows on the west wall. The casement windows were handmade in Los Angeles and the fixtures are by Waterworks.

ey created a home that both pays tribute California's design clichés. With the is over the city visible from most rooms in e is a sense of being outside even when e is more outside than usual. At the bottom rick staircase (inspired by the filmmaker rte's Capri villa, where Brigitte Bardot languorously in 1963's "Contempt") a feat of regenerative land management. sen moved in, the soil was depleted of it supports papayas, zucchini, strawberries, peaches, plums, figs, apricots and ts. Christiansen worked with the French mer Arnaud Casaus (a regular Studio KO d a local horticulturist, Jeffrey Hutchison, ant different varieties of tomatoes so v in a pleasing lycopene ombré but quickly matoes don't have much respect for art

direction. They're also trying to maintain the native diversity, growing California poppies and mugwort, a medicinal plant that induces lucid dreaming, which Christiansen bundles into sachets with sage and gives as parting gifts.

Looking at all this, it's easy to assume the owner's guiding influence would be the all-encompassing élan of, say, Saint Laurent and Bergé. But in fact, it is Walt Disney, the patron saint of Los Angeles self-invention. "I get such comfort in that singular vision of someone who said, I'm going to build a world that I love," Christiansen said. Flamingo Estate is his Epcot, a happy jamboree of global references: a Spanish Revival house laid with Venetian flooring abutting a Persian-inflected bathing tower wrapped in Moroccan tiles, all realized with Tinseltown-worthy gusto. The buttercup-yellow Big Chill refrigerator and range in the kitchen are new but made to look old, another nod to Los Angeles's endless dream machine; only a city built as a fantasia could allow for such a tropical Arcadia.

There is still work being done on the property. (Recently the concrete pool deck was glazed an electric red, like Faye Dunaway's lipsticked pout in 1974's "Chinatown.") But Christiansen is already settled. He's given up his apartment in Manhattan, which he doesn't miss — "I never once had someone over for dinner at my place in New York," he said. Near the pool, a thatch of camellias stands guard, pink sentries with nothing to disturb them. Flamingo Estate has introduced Christiansen to "all these creative people who have come to Los Angeles determined to live a different life here," he added. "Not lazier, not slower. But different." ■