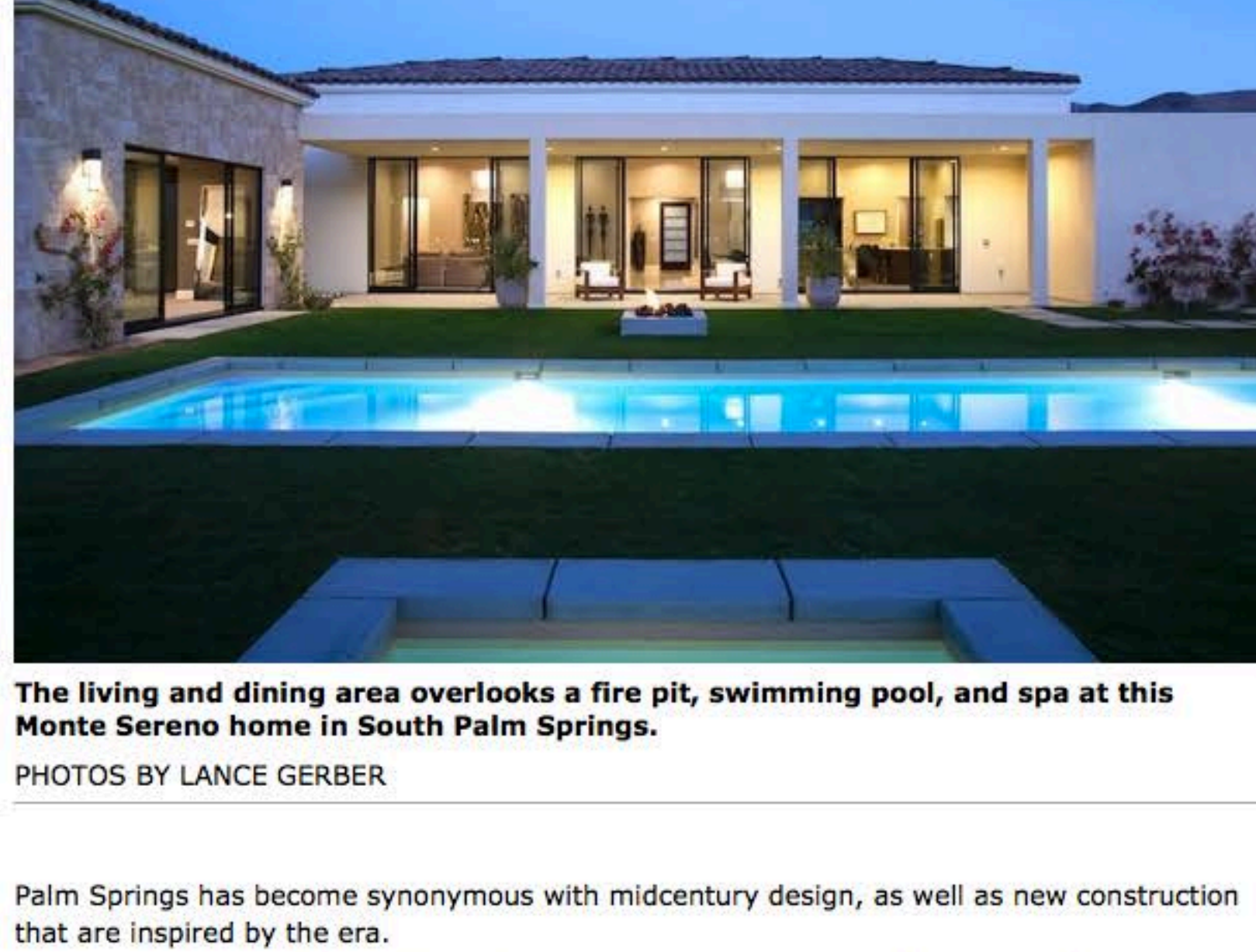


Monte Sereno Palm Springs Balances Midcentury with Spanish, Tuscan-Inspired

Alta Verde Group, Poon Design combine on project

BY LAWRENCE KAROL



The living and dining area overlooks a fire pit, swimming pool, and spa at this Monte Sereno home in South Palm Springs.

PHOTOS BY LANCE GERBER

Palm Springs has become synonymous with midcentury design, as well as new construction that are inspired by the era.

However, the desert is also filled with Spanish and Tuscan-inspired homes and the legions of fans that love them.

Now, there may be something for both groups of enthusiasts all in one house.

New homes dubbed the Modern Villa are being built in the gated community of Alta Verde Monte Sereno just off Bogert Trail in South Palm Springs.

"For the Modern Villa, we created a mythology — a poetic narrative that guided our design, juxtaposing the past with the future," says architect Anthony Poon, who created the design with John Kim, a principal at Poon Design Inc.

The project is also a design collaboration with the developer Andrew Adler of Alta Verde Group.

"We imagined a visitor discovering a traditional farmhouse, like one might find in the Tuscan countryside," adds Poon. "As the visitor inhabits the building and as a family grows and evolves, modern structures are added onto the original building. This story created the conceptual diagram that you see: A tall gable-roof form — living, dining and kitchen, that has contemporary additions — bedrooms, bathrooms, library, media room, etc."

There are some older homes in Monte Sereno that were previously built by another developer before construction was halted. The Alta Verde Group and Poon Design came into the project about three years ago to design and build out the remaining 60 lots.

"We call the philosophy Mission Modern," says Poon. "The phrase has two meanings. One, the combination of California Mission style and modern design and, two, our 'mission' is to make this community modern and current. Due to the first developer's initial work, some design guidelines were in place. These guidelines required a nostalgic and old-fashioned look that was of little interest to us."

"As modern architects, we did not want to pander to the past with faux-Spanish-Italian décor and trim such as classical columns, arches, fake wood shutters, decorative chimneys, and so on," he adds. "We wanted to respect history, but do so with our own contemporary ideas of expansive sliders and windows, connections to the outdoors, technology, open flexible floor plans, luxurious master bedrooms, a cutting-edge kitchen and appliances, and modern materials, finishes, and lighting."

The philosophy seems to be appealing to a wide swath of house hunters looking for primary residences and second homes. Poon says they are seeking both luxury and a resort-style home.

"Buyers are regional, national, and even international," he says. "They are straight, gay, middle-aged, active seniors, retirees — buyers of all kinds."

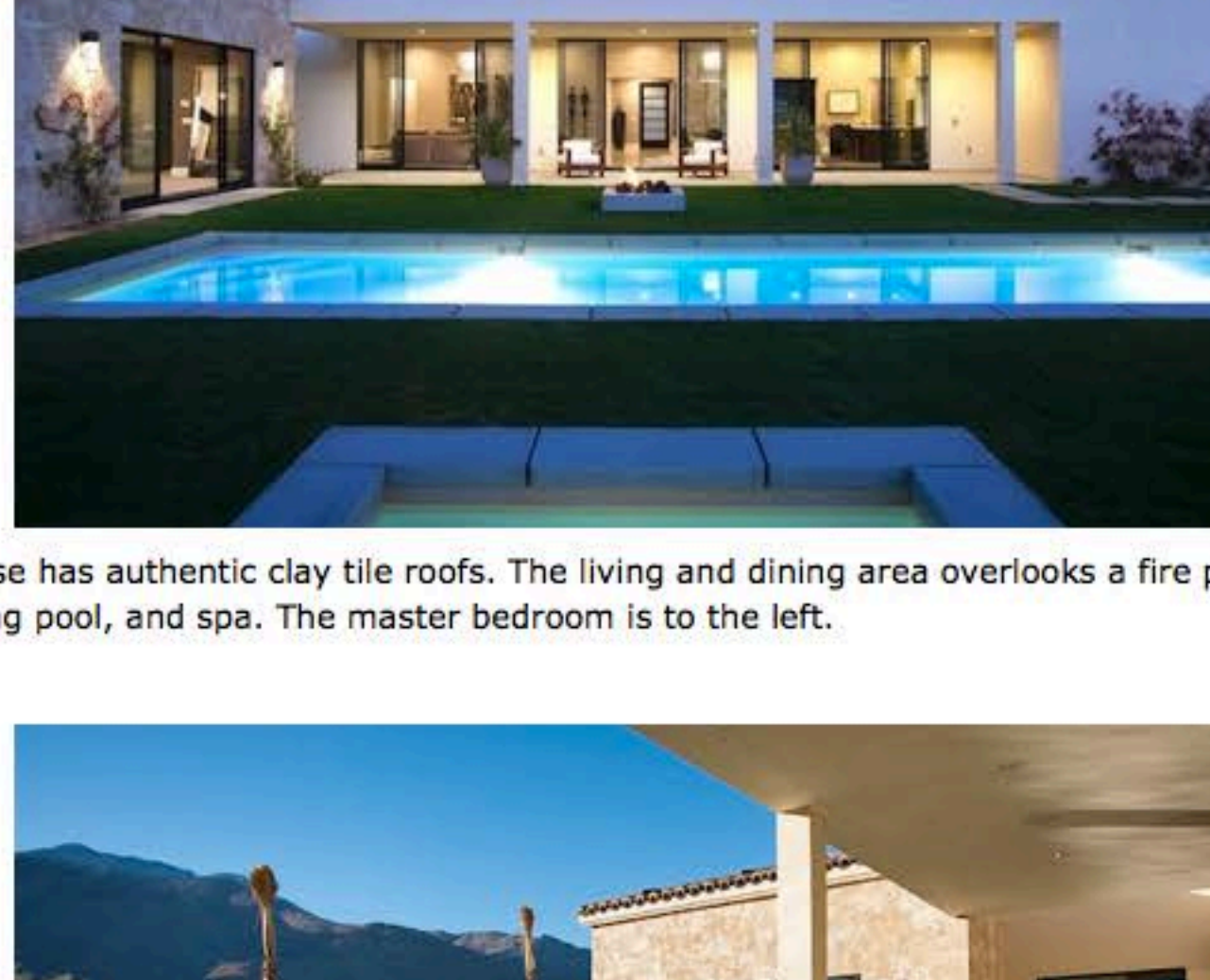
All of the furniture shown here — including the custom outdoor furniture — lighting, wallpaper, window treatments, and accessories are from Interior Illusions and were hand-selected by lead designer Scott Allen of Interior Illusions Design Studio.

Modern Villa Front

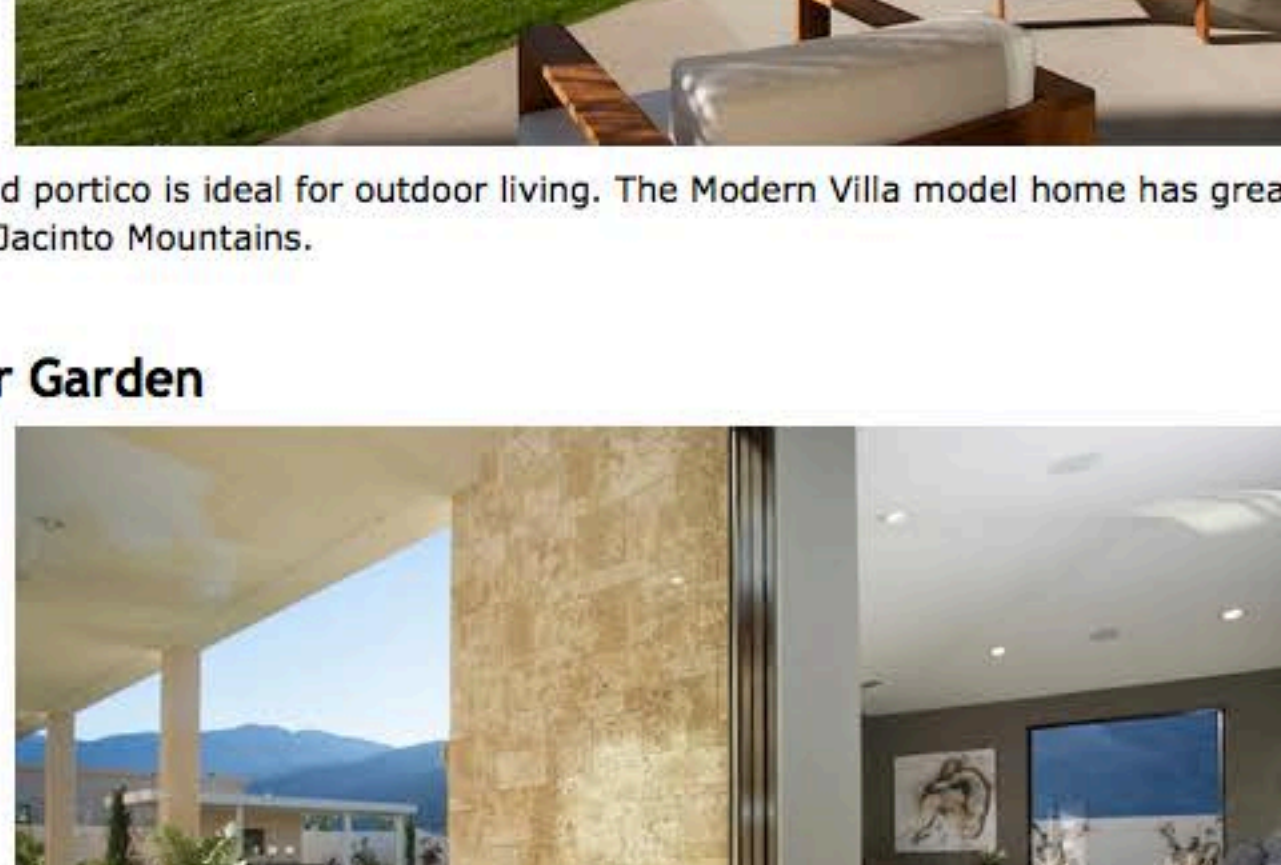


The exterior of the Modern Villa exemplifies the Modern Mission feel described by Poon with an "historic" structure with gable roof, modern flat roof with solar panels, and additions added to the sides and to the front. The entire street façade is wrapped in precast stone.

Modern Villa Back

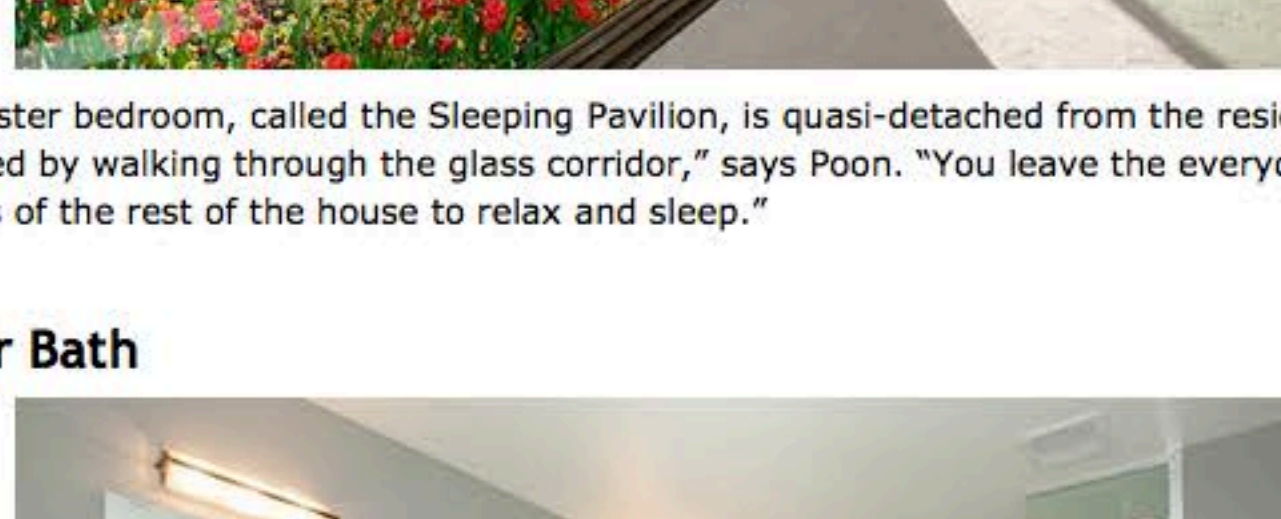


The house has authentic clay tile roofs. The living and dining area overlooks a fire pit, swimming pool, and spa. The master bedroom is to the left.



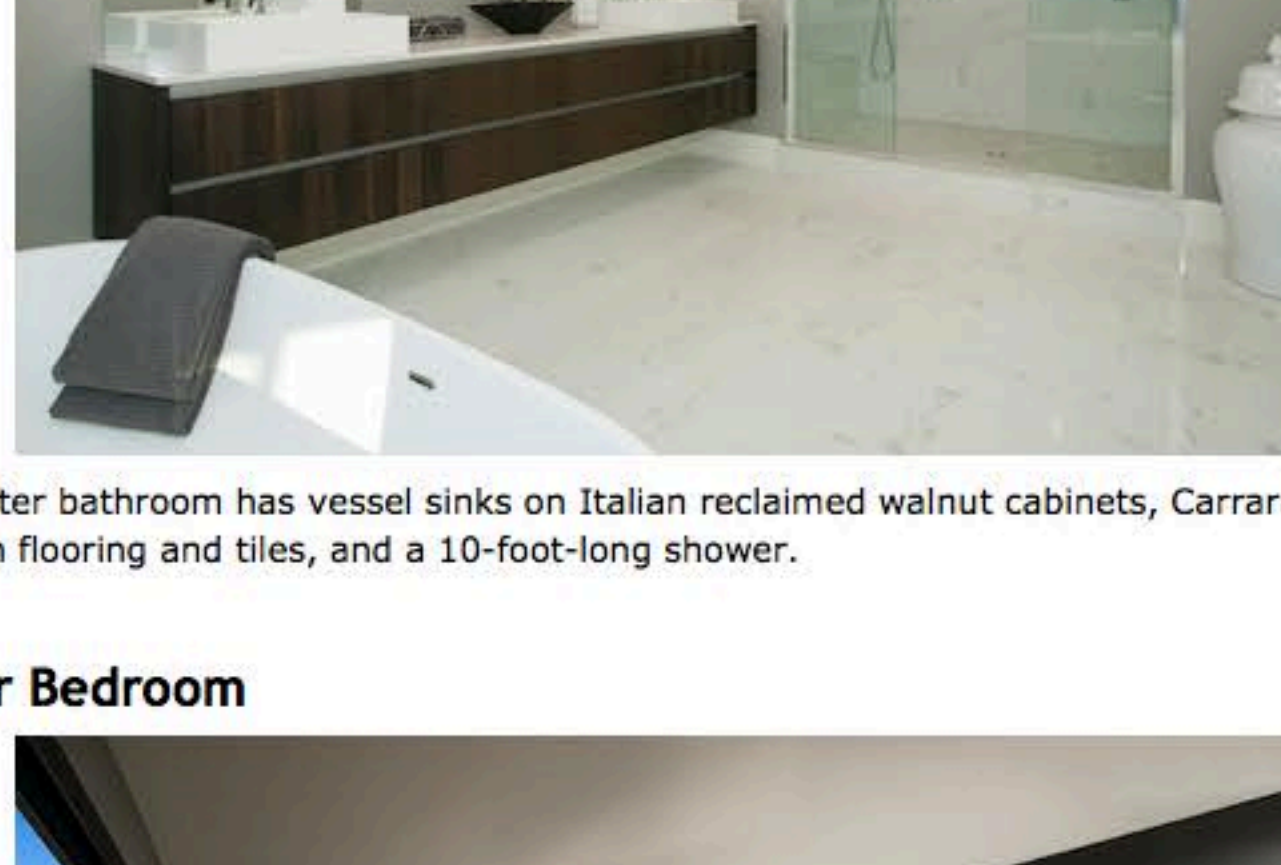
A covered portico is ideal for outdoor living. The Modern Villa model home has great views of the San Jacinto Mountains.

Master Garden



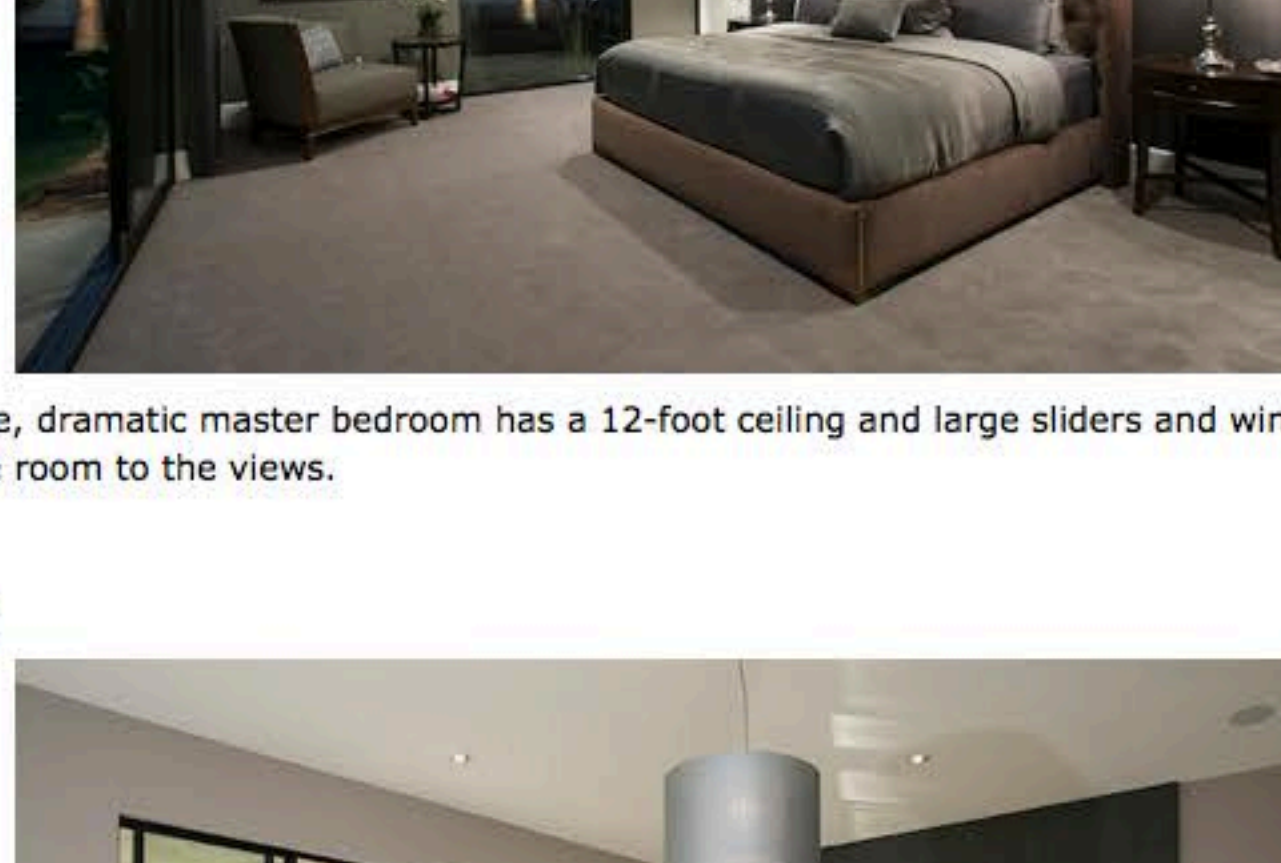
"The master bedroom, called the Sleeping Pavilion, is quasi-detached from the residence and is reached by walking through the glass corridor," says Poon. "You leave the everyday activities of the rest of the house to relax and sleep."

Master Bath



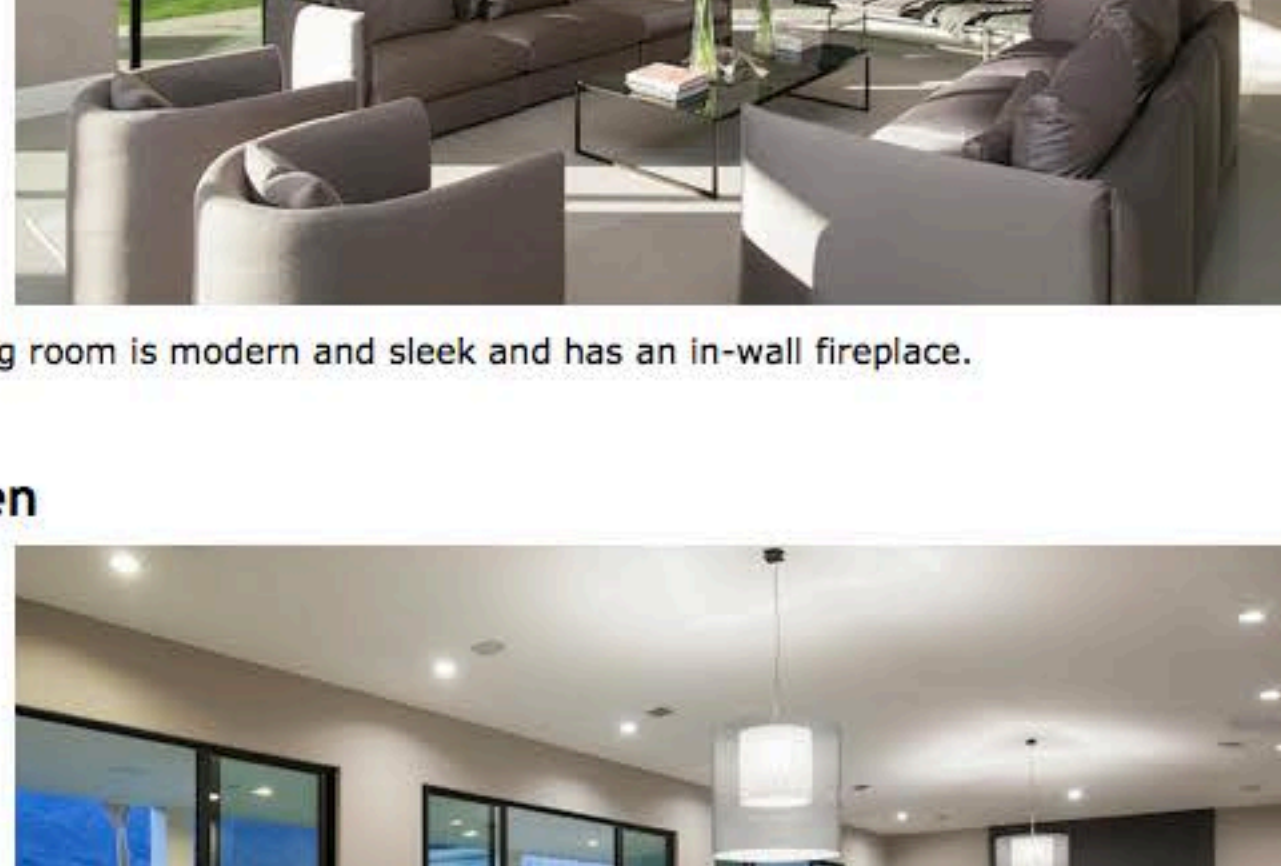
The master bathroom has vessel sinks on Italian reclaimed walnut cabinets, Carrara-style porcelain flooring and tiles, and a 10-foot-long shower.

Master Bedroom



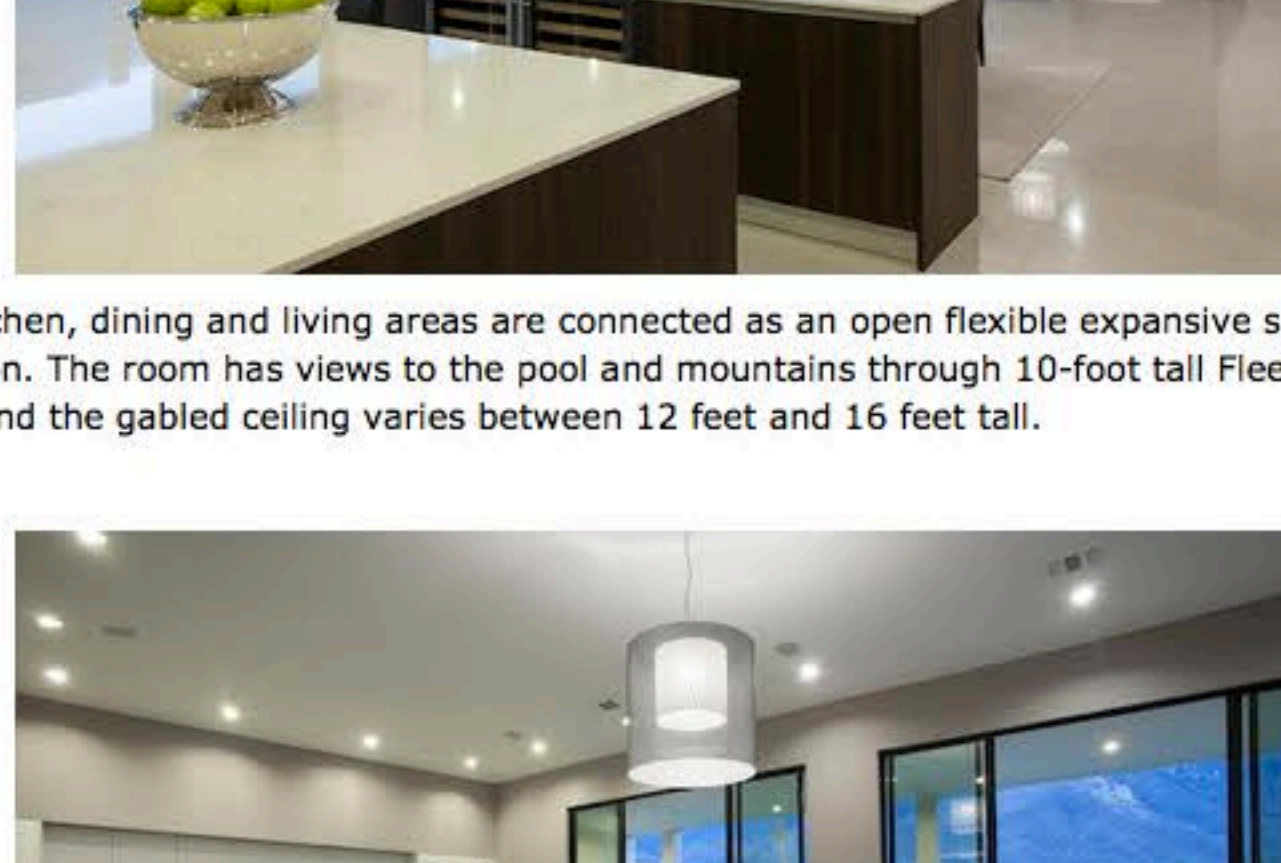
The large, dramatic master bedroom has a 12-foot ceiling and large sliders and windows that open the room to the views.

Living

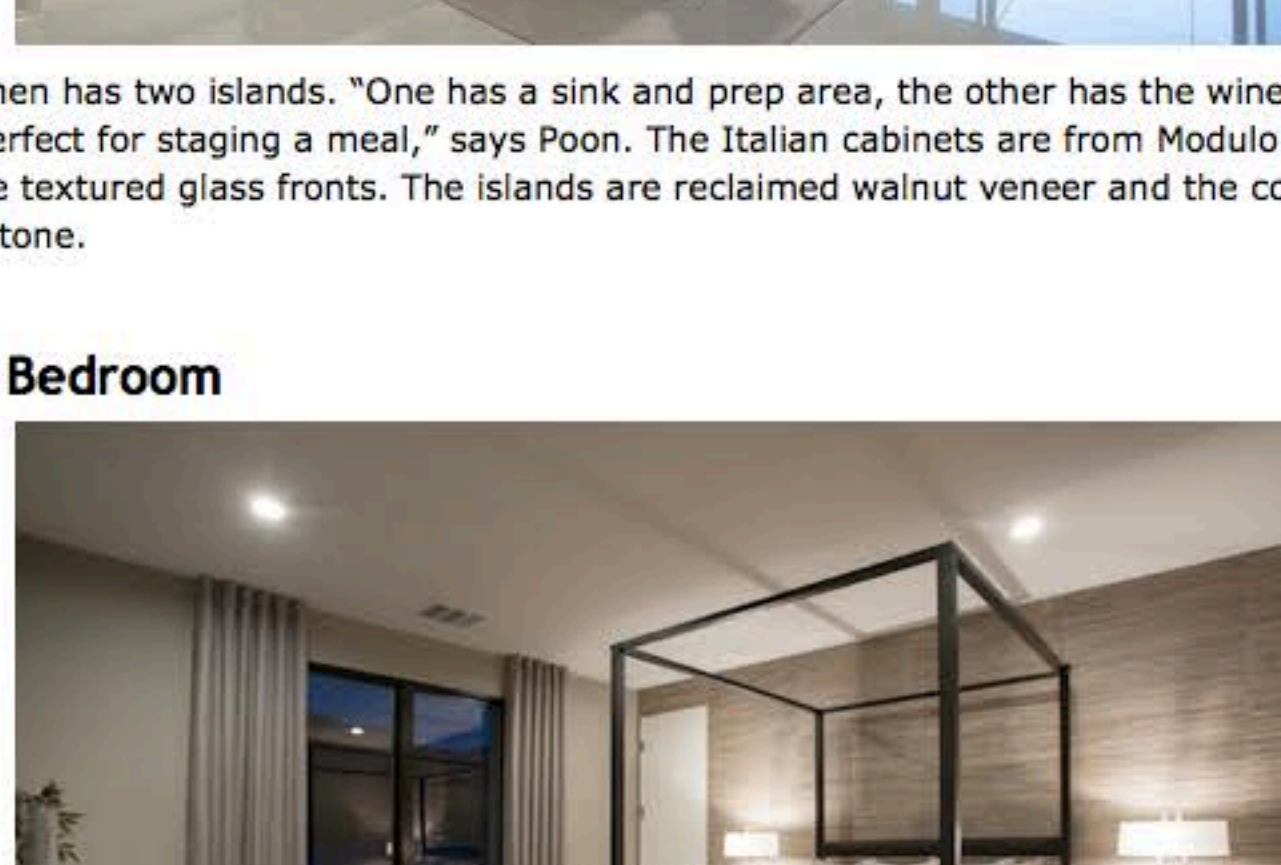


The living room is modern and sleek and has an in-wall fireplace.

Kitchen

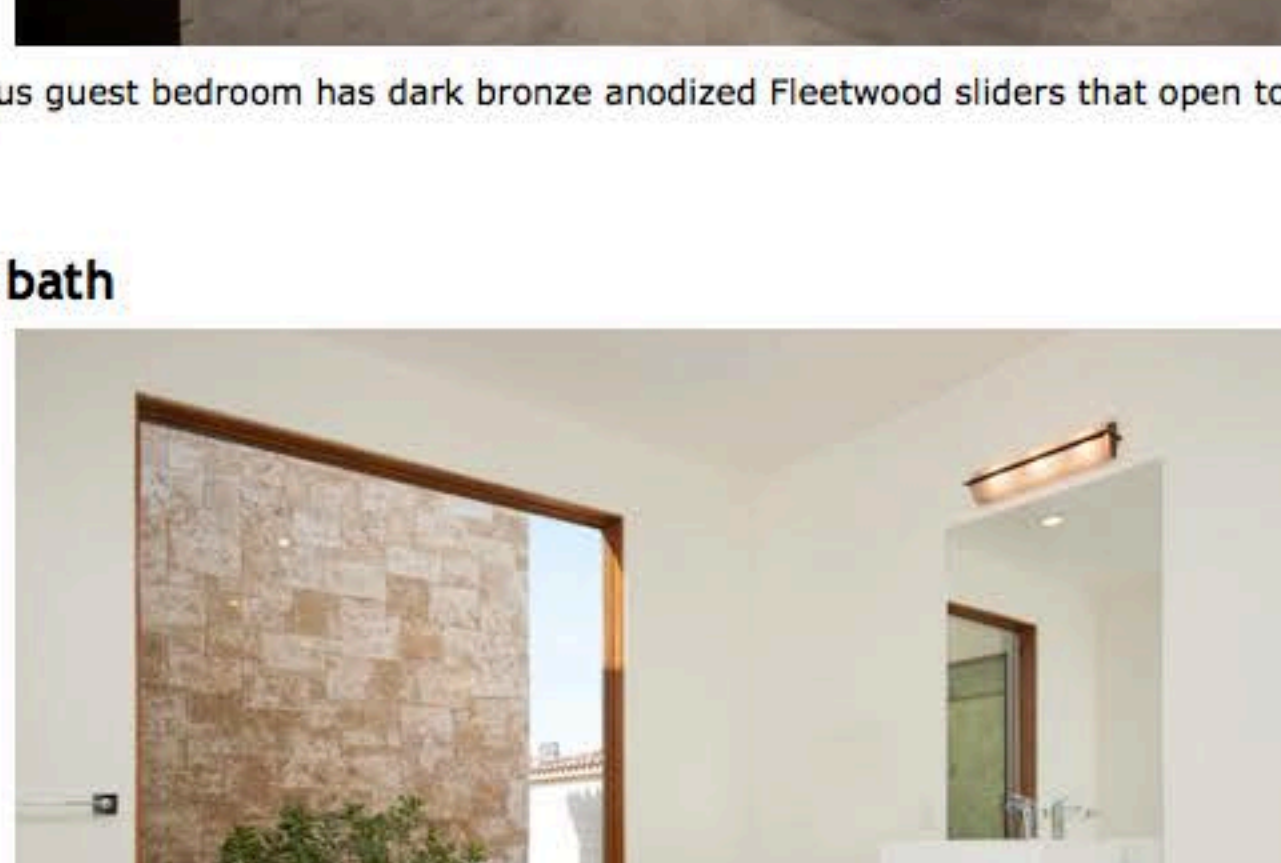


"The kitchen, dining and living areas are connected as an open flexible expansive space," says Poon. The room has views to the pool and mountains through 10-foot tall Fleetwood sliders and the gabled ceiling varies between 12 feet and 16 feet tall.



The kitchen has two islands. "One has a sink and prep area, the other has the wine cooler and is perfect for staging a meal," says Poon. The Italian cabinets are from Modulo Cucine and have textured glass fronts. The islands are reclaimed walnut veneer and the counters are Silestone.

Guest Bedroom



A spacious guest bedroom has dark bronze anodized Fleetwood sliders that open to a garden.

Guest bath



A freestanding tub is perfectly framed by a large picture window. The backdrop is a garden and a precast stone wall.

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