

The pergola outside the Malibu, California, home of Sue and Alex Glasscock, whose wellness retreat, the Ranch, is also part of their nearly 200-acre property. Built in 1932, the hacienda-style house was recently renovated by Steven Gambrel with landscape design by Scott Shrader. The Bielecky Brothers wicker chairs have cushions in a Janus et Cie fabric, and the vintage French stone table and pots are from Inner Gardens. The plants in the foreground are dwarf olive shrubs.

BACK AT THE RANCH

WITH AN UNEXPECTEDLY SERENE COLOR PALETTE, **STEVEN GAMBREL** HELPS TWO MALIBU WELLNESS ENTREPRENEURS RETHINK THEIR STORIED 1930S HACIENDA.

BY VANESSA LAWRENCE PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN



IN 1929, THE AMERICAN MOVIE STAR WILLIAM BOYD began building a hacienda-style home on almost 150 acres of land in the Santa Monica Mountains in California. Boyd, who would soon become famous for playing the cowboy hero Hopalong Cassidy, had recently been on location in Spain shooting a movie. There, he fell in love with the local architecture and realized that the style would work equally well in the dry Malibu climate. He envisioned his house, which was completed in 1932 and overlooks Boney Mountain and the Pacific Ocean, as a place where he could detox from his Hollywood life.

Nearly 50 years after Boyd's death, the property now belongs to Alex and Sue Glasscock, who, incidentally, are continuing the actor's vision for the site as a place to unwind from the stresses of modern existence. The Glasscocks are

the founders and owners of the Ranch, a wellness and fitness retreat touting rigorous regimes (think 5 A.M. wake-ups, four-hour daily hikes, and a caffeine- and gluten-free vegan diet) and a celebrity clientele (actresses Mandy Moore, Rebel Wilson, and Brooke Shields have all been guests). When the couple purchased Boyd's former land in 2009, they also bought an adjacent parcel that was being used as a children's camp. The Glasscocks transformed its cabins and grounds into the Ranch Malibu (they have since opened an additional location at the Four Seasons in Westlake Village). They decided to live next door in Boyd's U-shaped house, which retained its original tapestries, Spanish Colonial furniture, and 90-year-old carpets.

Initially, they reconfigured the main bedroom suite and upgraded the finishes, but otherwise kept the spaces intact.



LEFT: A reclaimed-wood gate leads to a garden path lined with terra-cotta pavers. The bench and vintage plant pots are from Inner Gardens, and the teak bowl filled with lemons is by Andrianna Shamaris. **BELOW LEFT:** Alex and Sue Glasscock and their dogs (from left) Clara, Max, and Pip. **BELOW:** The breakfast area's custom furnishings include a banquette in a Janus et Cie fabric, chairs in a Perennials textile, and a table by Groundwork. **OPPOSITE:** In the great room, the custom sofa by Dune is in a Cowtan & Tout fabric, and the vintage Spanish chair (left) and armchair are in Arabel fabrics. The cocktail table is topped with a tray by Robert Kuo, and the artworks include pieces by Lukas Machnik and Claude Lawrence.



In the kitchen, custom stools with cushions in a Dualoy leather pull up to an island topped with French limestone. The range is by Lacanche, the refrigerator is paneled in reclaimed oak, and the industrial pendants are vintage. The copper table lamp is from JF Chen.

OPPOSITE: In the den, the arched bar is original to the house. The tray is by Made Goods, and the star pendant is vintage. The walls were reclad in two shades of custom mixed plaster, and the artwork is by David Silka.



“We had all these dark, heavy carved pieces of furniture,” Sue explains. “In the spirit of the moment, we felt we should keep a lot of it.” As time passed, the decor seemed at odds with their more relaxed, outdoorsy lifestyle. A year and a half ago, they sought help from their friend of two decades, New York-based interior designer Steven Gambrel, though who exactly initiated the intervention is up for debate.

“Maybe your house is a bit dark and monastic,” Alex recalls Gambrel saying to them.

“Sue said to me, ‘I think the house is a bit gloomy, and the ceiling is so dark,’” says Gambrel. “And I was like, ‘God, I never thought about it.’ Honestly. The coolest thing about this project is that it was so beautiful before.”

He certainly made the most of the house’s stellar bones. With an eye toward adding lightness and serenity, Gambrel replastered the walls and painted the exposed ceiling beams white. The couple loves entertaining and hosting dinner parties, so in concert with the landscape designer Scott Shrader, Gambrel revamped the outdoor spaces, adding vintage stone garden furniture and wicker seating to facilitate social gatherings.

Indoors, he continued this theme, transforming the great room from an underutilized space into a central hub. Now, vintage and custom sofas and ottomans mix with antique marble tables and contemporary Japanese ink drawings. Glass bell-jar lanterns add expansiveness. In a breakfast nook off the kitchen, Gambrel designed a custom 17-inch-high banquette in a Janus et Cie fabric. It clocks in



In Sue's bathroom, the limestone shower has fittings by Zucchetti and a powder-coated-steel enclosure. The table is topped with a lamp made from an Eric Roinestad vessel, a 19th-century footed bowl from Balsamo, and a Fratelli Mannelli travertine bowl from JF Chen. **OPPOSITE, FROM TOP:** In the main bedroom, the custom bed is by Dune, the vintage Giacometti bench has a cushion in a Janus et Cie fabric, and the nightstand is by Kathy Kuo Home; the large painting is by Richard Serra, and the three smaller artworks are by Claude Lawrence. The guest bedroom's 19th-century Spanish bed is topped with an Annie Selke coverlet, and the rug is from J&D Oriental Rugs Co. For details, see Resources.



at two inches lower than the standard, giving the entire corner a laid-back, easier feel.

Perhaps the most noteworthy changes come from what Gambrel did without: color. The Glasscocks prefer a neutral palette, the better to keep the focus on the natural bounty outside. Gambrel, whose New York projects often feature bold and artful hues, obliged, limewashing walls and layering in shades of taupe, putty, and gray for an aged finish that still exudes the sophistication for which he is known.

"When you can rely on texture and patina, then color is not as relevant," the designer explains. "I'm not sure that I'm the first name that comes to mind when you think of California, but I love the vernacular and the freshness."

For the Glasscocks, Gambrel's work on their home is not entirely dissimilar from the wellness goals they set for their human clients at the Ranch. "When you look at something that's beautifully sited and has the right scale," says Alex, "then it's fun to make it its best self." ■

