

ROSADA



REVERIE

SUMMER THORNTON designs
a playful, palm-shaded retreat
steeped in sunbaked Sayulita color,
local artistry, and Pacific breezes.



INTERIOR DESIGN BY **SUMMER THORNTON** • ARCHITECTURE BY **ENRIQUE GARCÍA** • LANDSCAPE DESIGN BY **JORGE DEL REAL**
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ANNIE SCHLECHTER** • STYLING BY **MIEKE TEN HAVE** • WRITTEN BY **ROBIN SUTTON ANDERS**

A custom palm mural by Mexican artist Priscila González Urrea envelops the kitchen in tropical splendor. The wicker pendant is by Mestiz; gas range, Wolf



PREVIOUS SPREAD, FROM LEFT: In the entry courtyard, a slender fountain crafted of volcanic stone rises from an emerald arrangement of *zellige* tiles (Zia Tile). ♦ Designer and homeowner Summer Thornton in the living room (sectional fabric, Perennials; rattan chair fabric, S. Harris). **LEFT:** An oceanfront *chukum* table comes alive with Mexican artistry, from glassware (Muebla) to copper-finish flatware (Inox Artisans). **BELOW:** Summer with her husband, Josh, outside the newly built home

says local architect Enrique García, who collaborated with Summer on the project. Just beyond it “the courtyard greets you as if it is the hostess of the house,” he says. “It’s how we structure spaces to create circulation and flow like a foyer.”

Summer adds, “The idea was to make it look as if we found the courtyard ‘as is’ and built a modern structure around it.” Underfoot in the central patio, she arranged colorful handmade Moroccan tiles in a pattern that, to García, “is like a painting” anchoring the home. Concrete walls were plastered with *chukum*, a traditional Mayan mixture made from a combination of limestone powder and the sap from a tree grown only in the Yucatán Peninsula. “Chukum withstands salt spray and leaves a beautiful patina over time,” she notes. Rather than adding a bright, “beachy” color to it, Summer wanted a hue that would feel playful and fun during the day and moody at night. “Mexico feels like pink to me, so I chose a melon-ish, terra-cotta-type shade. It has this warmth that holds you.”

DECORATORS OFTEN DECIDE ON A ‘HOUSE WHITE,’” says Chicago-based interior designer Summer Thornton. It’s typically the color of the trim, doors, and ceiling, she notes—a neutral equalizer. But in the case of Casa Rosada, the vacation home she and her husband, Josh, built in Sayulita, Mexico, the house white is pink. “It automatically puts you in this fantasy realm,” says Summer. And she is exactly the type of artist and out-of-the-box adventurer the vibrant town of Sayulita attracts. Surrounded

by mountains and jungle on one side and the blue-green Pacific on the other, “it’s a place that invites you to lose yourself and follow your dreams,” she adds.

Her dream: to design and build an oceanfront tropical home for her family’s vacations, yes, but also to offer as an innovative, luxury rental property with the staff and services of a top-tier hotel. “I wanted guests to feel as if it was personal and private, like a friend had invited them to their amazing house in Mexico,” she says.

Still, such an endeavor would have humble beginnings. Summer and Josh purchased a late 20th-century house with a side garden/courtyard that was not in great shape. In fact, a pair of wooden arched doors was the only part of the house worth saving.

Today that salvaged front door has been rightsized with a surrounding concrete arch that suits the new home’s grand scale,





Elements of Escape

TOP ROW, FROM LEFT: Tasseled pom-pom trim dangles playfully from carved oak canopy beds. ♦ A lone Madagascar palm stands in stoic contrast to wild palm-skirted pendants (Muebla) in a second-floor hall. ♦ Exotic birds flutter across a vintage tapestry in an ocean-front sitting room. **MIDDLE ROW, FROM LEFT:** A nylon Yucatecan hammock (Coqui Coqui) invites siestas on the rooftop terrace. ♦ Crowning the Sunset guest suite is a custom Baroque headboard resplendent in silver leaf detailing (Casamidy). **BOTTOM ROW, FROM LEFT:** In Summer's bedroom, a painted red coral bed is upholstered in Penny Morrison's Inca Vertical Stripe. Bed, Casamidy. Fringe chandelier, Daniela Bustos Maya. ♦ Potted agave climbs the courtyard stairs. ♦ A soaring wall of windows ushers light and fresh air into the art studio. Bunk cushion fabric, CW Stockwell



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—HOMEOWNER AND DESIGNER
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A pair of exuberant palm leaf chandeliers (Casamidy) casts a golden shimmer over dinner parties. Rattan chairs, Sika Design

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THE IDEA OF ‘WHY NOT?’” —SUMMER THORNTON

Exquisite Mexican craft in the form of a carved parota wood coffee table anchors each of the sunken living room’s seating areas. **OPPOSITE:** A pair of pool-side loungers is shaded by a scalloped sage pool umbrella (Santa Barbara Designs).



Conversational seating awaits in the large sunken living room, where “you can hear the ocean and feel the sea breeze.” Anchoring both arrangements is a custom coffee table crafted from a local wood that easily withstands salt and humidity and dubbed Tortuga for the turtles that nest and hatch on the beach directly in front of the house. Shades of ochre, dusty green, deep jade, and the all-over easygoing pink reference hues that repeat throughout the region and tropical landscape.

Summer thinks of the look as inspired by Mexican architect Luis Barragán at the beach. “Casa Rosada is loose and open, reflecting a sense of adventure and whimsy and the idea of ‘why not?’” And like the butterflies that flutter in through the open-air layout, this lightness of spirit finds its way into each of the home’s bedrooms. Through romantic arched corridors, beds stand as works of art, adorned with tassels and shell carvings and red coral in color-coded sanctuaries ranging from deep jade to dusty plum. In one suite an outdoor chukum tub is shrouded in bougainvillea; another bedroom steps out to a private sunbathing area. “I didn’t want it to feel like there was one glorious bedroom and the rest are little afterthoughts, so each of them has a little something special,” Summer says.

As the sun sets and she and guests gather around the dining room’s 16-foot-long table, two gold leaf chandeliers dangle like wondrous low-hanging palm branches. These are already turning a beautiful copper green from the salt air. This, too, is a slice of Summer’s fantasy. “Vacation homes are different from everyday life—they’re built around play and a strong sense of place,” she says.

Casa Rosada is indeed a home with a soul, adds García. “In the evenings, when you’re sitting in the dining room having dinner and you look out toward the patio with the water falling in the fountain and the lights in the palm trees, you feel like the spirit of the house lives right there.” ♦