

MODERN LUXURY

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Star designer Summer Thornton manifests a Mexican dream home
in Casa Rosada, which serves double duty as both her family's

CASA,

vacation getaway and a strikingly luxurious guesthouse.
By J.P. Anderson // Photographed by Annie Schlechter

SU CASA



The dining room pops with a custom live edge table in parota wood, rattan Fleur chairs by Sika-Design and a stunning custom gold tropical leaf chandelier by Casamidy.



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-SUMMER THORNTON

THE PROJECT

Having discovered Sayulita, a beach town in Mexico about an hour from Puerto Vallarta, Chicago-based interior designer Summer Thornton and her husband, Josh, were smitten. "The town was full of life and had great organic food, a few cute shops and fun surf culture," says Thornton. "We often remarked that the only thing missing was a truly remarkable home with some nice resort amenities." So, after visiting for years, developing a network of locals (from a great masseuse

A rope sculpture by Mexican designer Daniela Bustos Mays adds visual interest to the lower hallway. Opposite page: Highlighted by a custom fountain in white volcanic rock and a panoply of handmade Moroccan zellige tiles from Zia Tile, the courtyard is a feast for the eyes.

and a surf instructor to talented chefs), and discovering the perfect beachfront property in Sayulita in 2020, they set out to build one themselves: Casa Rosada (casarosadasayulita.com). Says Thornton, "The idea of merging the privacy and exclusivity of a luxury home with the services of a resort really offered a special vacation experience."

THE PRIORITY

"We designed Casa Rosada as our personal vacation home," explains Thornton, "so the top priority was



Just beyond the well-appointed kitchen beckons a breezy outdoor dining area fitted with a custom table made from natural chukum plus Mestiza chairs from Mexa. Opposite page: The pool terrace boasts custom single and double chaises in tornillo wood by Guadalajara-based A&D Interiores with Cabana-patterned cushions in Sunbrella coral fabric by CW Stockwell.



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creating a home that we would personally love to enjoy ourselves [with friends and family]. We're directly on the beach, so most evenings include a sunset swim playing in the waves; we watch turtles nest and hatchlings go out to sea right in front of the house; and many mornings are filled with walks down the beach. As far as the design concept, I wanted Casa Rosada to pay homage to Mexican architectural history, so we found inspiration from historical homes in Mexico. I've always loved homes with a central courtyard, so that quickly became a core idea, and I'm a romantic, so the sound of the fountain and the idea of filling the courtyard with candles at night sounded dreamy."

THE CHALLENGE

"From a design perspective, the biggest challenge was selecting materials that could withstand the salt spray [from] the Pacific Ocean," Thornton says. "So we chose materials that would age beautifully, such as copper outdoor showers, which patina in the most magical way. Similarly, instead of using traditional paint, which would chip and peel, we used an ancient Mayan plaster that's a mixture of tree sap and limestone powder called chukum for the walls. It's water-resistant and ages beautifully; we tinted it to create a beautiful soft peachy pink color that is seen throughout the house."

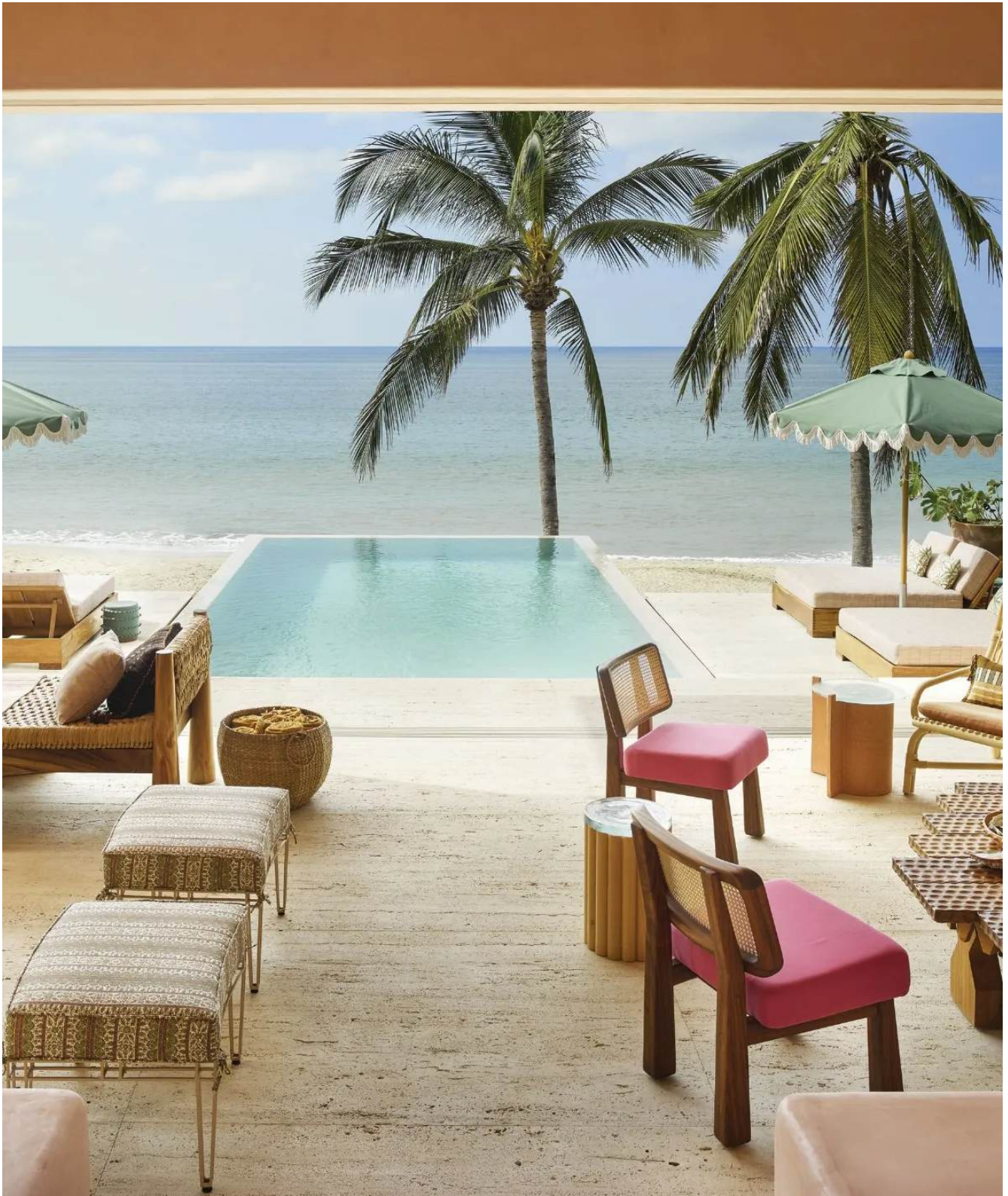
THE DETAILS

"Many guests have been brought to tears of joy when our staff opens the front door at Casa Rosada,"

The chicly designed living room features multiple lounging areas, all of which enjoy stunning ocean views.

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From top: The Pom-Pom Room charms with custom carved canopy beds along with a pair of handsome antique painted chests from Marquesa de Mancera; a custom tub designed by Summer Thornton and carved from a single block of red travertine highlight's Thornton's bathroom.

Thornton says with pride. "The foyer is an open-air courtyard, with a traditional fountain, huge palm trees and a Moorish tile patterned floor. There's this moment of transportation from the journey to a sense of arriving somewhere magical. We have staff there with cocktails in hand and the courtyard looks straight out to the ocean. It's a wow moment." She adds, "I love the hand-painted murals we commissioned [from local artists] for the house. And since there's over 300 days of sunshine in Sayulita and very consistent warm temperatures, we weren't restricted to the practicalities of other climates. Fantastical ideas like outdoor showers and soaking tubs overlooking the ocean became realities. The living room is open-air, offering the most remarkable ocean breeze that flows through it to the courtyard."

THE OUTCOME

Notes Thornton, "When we aren't personally using the home we rent it, and we've had a great response so far. Many guests have already booked return visits. We had a young bride stay at Casa Rosada for her wedding in 2024, and her sister has booked us for her wedding in 2025 because the family loved it so much. Casa Rosada is our first, but certainly not our last. We're starting to plan our next property, and our hope is to take investors and expand the concept to additional locations in the coming years."

With Casa Rosada, Josh and Summer Thornton have designed their own piece of Mexican paradise.

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Design Details

Type
Single-family home

Location
Sayulita, Mexico

Architecture
Enrique Garcia
Arquitectos
enriquegarcia.mx

Interior Design
Summer Thornton Design
summerthorntondesign.com

RESOURCES

Casamidy
Various furnishings
casamidy.com

Comité de Proyectos
Living room cane back chairs
comitedeproyectos.mx

Coqui Coqui
Various textiles
coquicoqui.com

Glant Textiles
Various fabrics
glant.com

Marquesa de Mancera
Various fabrics and furnishings
marquesademancera.com

Mestiz
Various furnishings
mestiz.mx

Muebla
Various furnishings
muebla.com.mx

Peca Studio
Living room side tables
peca.com.mx

Perennials
Various fabrics
perennialsfabrics.com

Text.ure
Living room daybed, Palm Room coffee table
txt-ure.mx