

SPECIAL ISSUE: EXOTIC LOCATIONS

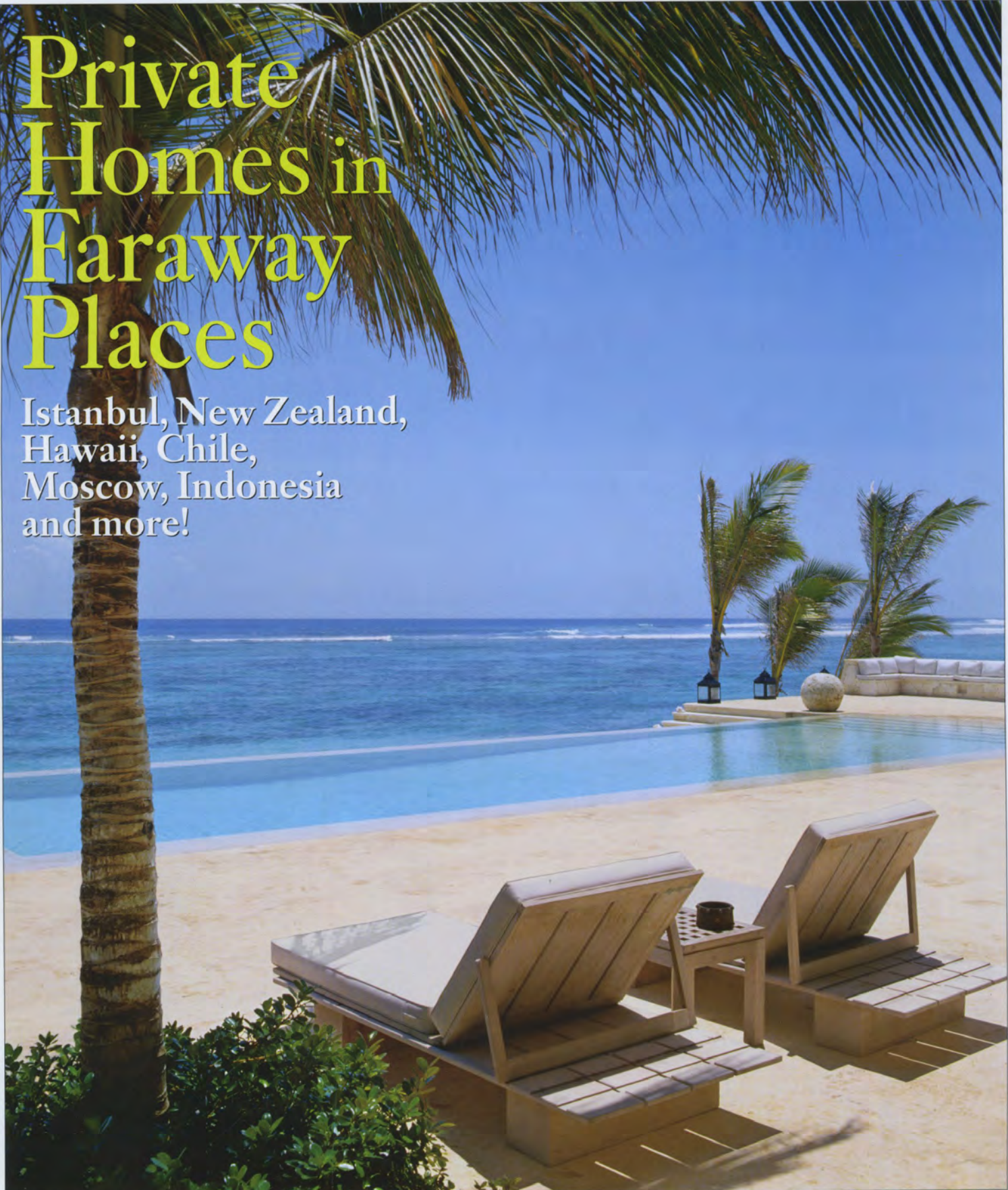
ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

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Big Island Production

DAYNA AND STEVEN BOCHCO'S
GETAWAY ON THE KOHALA COAST



JIM MICHUGA

As a television writer and producer, Steven Bochco is famous for knowing exactly what he wants. Not surprisingly, when it came to building a house in Hawaii, Bochco and his wife, Dayna, became deeply involved with all aspects of the design. Bochco is an innovator, and his wife has become his collaborator and coproducer. For this Hawaiian house he had a nonnegotiable demand. "I told the builder—who was a sweet guy—'I want to spend my

60th birthday in that house.'"

This was accomplished: The house was finished in late 2003, a month before his birthday. "It was a big birthday. I needed to celebrate it in a special way. And this house has become our second home."

Bochco is noted for giving each of his shows a specific look and feel. He has provided television with some of its most memorable shows, notably *Hill Street Blues* and *NYPD Blue*, as well as his recent series *Blind Justice*. It

Architecture by Hamlet Charles Bennett
Interior Design by Charles Allem, ASID
Landscape Architecture by Greg Boyer, ASLA
Text by Paul Theroux
Photography by Mary E. Nichols



"I wanted something casually elegant," television writer and producer Steven Bochco (opposite, with his wife, Dayna) says about his residence on the Kohala Coast of Hawaii. "Privacy, solitude and a sense of well-being were of great importance in the design," says Charles Allem, an old friend of Bochco's, who was asked to do the interiors.





The open living/dining room "has a calm feeling," says Allem. The Japanese screen painting is from Imari. Clarence House orchid-print fabric. Henry Calvin sofa linen. Scully & Scully table lamps. Scalaman-dré armchairs. Vaughan étagère. Stark carpets. Summit outdoor furniture and cushion fabric; Schumacher fabric on outdoor pillows.



BELOW: “The concept for the dining area was to provide a warm, bright dining experience,” says Allem. Atop the 16th-century Ming painting table are 19th-century teak Buddhas. Bamboo table and chairs, McGuire for Baker Knapp & Tubbs. Pindler & Pindler chair linen.

RIGHT: The dining pavilion, one of a series imagined by the Bochcos and realized by their Hawaii-based architect, Hamlet Charles Bennett. “We dine out there, depending on the wind,” says Bochco. The grounds were laid out by landscape architect Greg Boyer. Janus et Cie chairs.



has usually been the case that what Bochco cares about is what the viewer too comes to care about, and eagerly anticipate, in multiple seasons of a show. With Dayna he has produced a new drama, premiering this summer. *Over There*, for the FX network, is another of Bochco's radical departures. Thirteen hour-long programs are near completion. “It's about the war in Iraq—a war being observed in real time.” Throughout his career, Bochco has specialized in offering the viewer the intimate details of his working characters' home life. As a writer, his theme has been the private lives of public people.

This creative interest is apparent in his Hawaiian house. “Dayna and I had a very specific notion of what we wanted,” he says. “Dayna pored through books and magazines,

and what we came up with was a Polynesian village sort of arrangement, with separate dedicated structures. The idea is that we would eat in one, exercise in another, use one for a media room—that kind of thing. We have almost two acres, so the whole house lies across the property, with room to spare. Because of the nature of the layout, we wanted a buffer between us and the neighbor.”

The house—these ocean-front pavilions—is built on a corner lot. His house in Los Angeles also occupies a corner lot. It was important to Bochco that his architect observe and understand aspects of his primary house and his lifestyle, and so he flew the house's architect, Hamlet Charles Bennett, to Los Angeles to size up his living arrangements there.







“We love to go over with a group,” says Bochco. “The house is designed to entertain eight or 10 people at a time.” OPPOSITE: A guest room. The bed, chairs, tables and ottoman are from Baker Knapp & Tubbs. Clarence House striped fabrics on pillow and bench.

BELOW: The master bedroom is housed in its own pavilion, which connects to the main house via a bridge. Scalamandré sofa and chaise; George Smith desk chair. Screen painting from Imari. Clarence House palm-tree-print fabric and linen on chaise. Stark carpet.

“I had good guidance from the Bochcos,” says Bennett. Based in Kailua-Kona, Bennett has a long experience of Hawaii, having lived there since the mid-’60s. He has designed many houses on the Kohala Coast, this golden shore of the Big Island, where the ancient lava flows meet the sea. “We saw how they were living in L.A. A lot of things we did here were extensions of what we saw there, how they lived family style. I answer the client’s criteria. Sure, I’d love to have a client be my patron, but it’s his house. He tells me what he wants, and I find a way of giving it to him.”

The unusual design, which is both supremely comfortable and aesthetically pleasing, is a set of pavilions on the western shore of Hawaii’s Big Island. Elements of Balinese, Oriental and Pacific all figure in the structures and interior design. Bennett says, “The ‘pavilionness’ of it is a function of the large oceanfront lot—we had plenty of room. And it’s expandable space—the media room is openable to the ocean.”

Designer Charles Allem adds, “Pavilions create a wonderful sense of arrival, and then a departure into a new area. The independent structures of the house give the whole place a distinct character. There’s a sort of procession. For example, you cross over a bridge to get to the master bedroom. And there’s always an element of surprise with a pavilion.”

“It’s user-friendly,” Bochco says. “I see it as a reflection of our Hawaiian lifestyle,



which is casual. It doesn’t overwhelm the guest. I didn’t want it to stick out. I like the fact that the house has a specific personality. And there’s freedom in it—we’ve had 10 people in the house at one time, and there was lots of elbow room.”

The Polynesian concept met with the approval of Bennett, who explains, “I like to separate various functions of the house, using landscaping, and to let people experience living outside.”

Bochco collaborated with Charles Allem on the interior design. “Charles is a genius. He designed my house in L.A. He’s a very special and


gifted friend. He came up with three complete sets of designs, and we chose from among these, mixing and matching.”

“You do one design that’s beyond fabulous,” says Allem, “and two that would make a great house.” As an old and trusted friend, Allem was familiar with the Bochcos’ requirements. “I know their tastes. He has a passion for art. And they found many of the pieces themselves—the Buddhas, the artifacts. Things they truly cared for. I don’t impose myself, and I don’t like repeating the same performance. No one comes to me for a certain look. What matters to me is that the client must be

happy and must feel at home.”

“He knows the way we like to live,” Bochco says. “For example, I have a phobia of rooms that you can’t put your feet up in. I need to feel comfortable and at home. You can always re-cover a piece or replace it.”

Bochco has found a routine for his set of pavilions in Hawaii. “Every evening I’ll go for an hour and read in a rocking chair.” The rocking chair, of mango wood, he found in a shop in Waimea, on this island. He is not daunted by the trip from California. “From L.A. to Hawaii is a golf shot—straight—and we don’t have to pack.” □



“Dayna and I had a very specific notion of what we wanted—a Polynesian village sort of arrangement,” says Steven Bochco.

“The property is very well laid out—all the structures are linked conceptually and have the illusion of floating on the water,” remarks Bochco. Adds Dayna Bochco, “It’s a place where we can really relax and not think about anything. I find it truly beautiful and peaceful.”

