

hip hollywood homes

**An Intimate Look at
L.A.'s Hottest Trendsetters
and the Inspiring Spaces
They Live In**

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Reagan Silber > High Stakes in the Hills

Buying his Bel Air manse four years ago was a big gamble for entrepreneur Reagan Silber—but like many of his other high-stakes gambles, he turned it into a goldmine.

Back in 2000, the Texas trial lawyer and telecommunications pioneer owned a Dallas home and a New York apartment and was starting to consider a West Coast outpost, just for the sake of jet-setting and investment. “But I didn’t think I would like L.A.,” says Silber. “I hadn’t been in New York for long—maybe three years—but I was already a New York snob. I’m just a really diligent, ambitious, disciplined guy, and I didn’t think the L.A. life would suit me.”

He purchased his current Bel Air home and planned to do only limited renovation. But then September 11, 2001, occurred—changing his outlook on pretty much everything. He promptly sold his New York and Dallas homes and hired New York-based architect Charles Allem to do a mega-renovation in Bel Air. (Silber feels that “in fifteen years, Charles Allem will be considered one of the major influences in modern architecture.”) South African-born Allem is notorious for demanding his autonomy and not allowing clients to micromanage the design process. The renovation lasted for a full sixteen months. “Within minutes of meeting Charles, I knew that like any good relationship, it automatically works and

you instantly understand each other—or you don’t. It was great. I knew it was crazy—but I gave his firm an almost unlimited budget. And they blew right through it and exceeded it. But the end result worked.”

Luckily for Silber, so have his L.A.-based business ventures. He’s an investor in an indie movie production company named Plum Pictures; he created EdgeTV, a twenty-four-hour gaming entertainment channel devoted to games of “skill, strategy, and chance” (read: poker), and he’s opening a W Hotel and Casino for Starwood on twenty-two acres of undeveloped farmland in Vegas in 2008. “It was like meeting the perfect storm when I found out Starwood wanted to do casinos,” Silber says. “I got very, very fortunate with this opportunity. My land is near Peter Morton’s Hard Rock Casino, and the casino Brad Pitt and George Clooney are creating—all off the strip. I think we will all really help each other.”

Silber—who’s morphed into something of a poker-playing wunderkind himself—hosted one of the first of the celeb-heavy poker-for-charity events at the house, attended by Leonardo DiCaprio, Tobey Maguire, David Schwimmer, Jack Black, Ellen DeGeneres, Sean Hayes, Heather Graham, Paul Rudd, and many

others, organized by Amanda Scheer Demme for *GQ* magazine. Silber now hosts what others refer to as the “Billionaire Boys’ Game” once a month. The stakes start at ten thousand dollars a hand, and it’s about as far from a backroom poker game as you could ever get. Tobey Maguire (who’s on the board of EdgeTV) and Leo DiCaprio are fixtures, as are good wines, excellent catering, and a smattering of Hollywood power players from all ilks.

“I really don’t know how I fell into the whole gaming arena,” confesses Silber. “I always played poker as a kid—we did it in my family. The whole thing just turned into a good confluence of opportunities. People started calling me in L.A. to play and I’m good at it. If you’re willing to play a high-stakes game, it’s a small world of people who will play at that level. And, like anything else, it’s hard to go backwards. It’s hard to drink light beer after beer or Diet Coke after Coke. You get used to the rush. Poker does seem to feed into the addictive nature of people in L.A.: it’s the right combination of luck and skill. The best person doesn’t always win—kinda like life. It’s enough like life to make it truly interesting.”

The same can be said for his larger-than-life modern house. When the feedback gives way to superlatives such as “monolithic” and “007-like,” Reagan laughs. “I don’t think that’s right,” he argues. “I think of it as more sophisticated, and not so tricked-up. I know it has some high-tech elements. I like to think of it as more design sophisticated. That’s just my taste. To me, it’s very masculine. The goal was to make it feel like I am living inside a piece of sculpture. I like masculine—and the challenge of contemporary architecture is to make it feel warm. I’ve been heading in this modern direction design-wise for about ten years now. But it’s not a big cement void.”

Indeed, Charles Allem’s attention to detail—mink chairs, silver-tipped couches, textured walls, and the use of plush indoor furniture outdoors—warm up a potentially steely modern space. “I didn’t exactly ask for those details,” Silber offers. “I wouldn’t have known to do mink chairs or silver tips on the bottom of the legs of couches. But I am detail-oriented, and it’s not just for show. I actually live in this house, my office is in this house, and it’s become a frequent gathering place, which I also love.”

Aside from the poker events, Silber hosts Democratic Party fund-raisers and consciousness-raising events at his home, and will entertain at least once a month, hosting around fifty to

seventy-five people on his third-floor outdoor deck, with “tons of grilled food, passed food, frozen drinks—and with the reflection on the pool, it’s perfect. Another thing I’ll do is entertain twenty-five outside on the main living level with cocktail parties. And people get a real kick out of touring the house. They like to walk through every room. I’m happy in this house. If I met a girl and decided to get married, I’d stay in it—it’s very livable, even with children. It’s not a big crazy place you can’t live in.

“Nobody is more shocked than me that L.A. has really become my home,” he sighs. “I never would have believed it. I still love New York, but I will never live there again. I’ve fallen for the lifestyle and entertaining and work of L.A., and now the casino project will keep me on the West Coast. It’s a big enough, exciting enough project. Depending on how this goes, I think I will go into real estate development and the gaming business.”

There’s only one element in his home that reminds Reagan Silber of his Texas days: Warhol pieces that he purchased in Dallas of the Kennedy family. “I love the whole Kennedy motif,” he says. “It ties back to my Texas roots. The Kennedy assassination ties back to Texas, and Democratic politics, pop art, and growing up in the sixties. These things all refer to my roots.” Charles Allem advised on some of the rest of the art, like the Henry Moore piece, further proof of Silber’s obsession with things sleek and modern.

Counteracting his infatuation with the cool and clean is his affection for his Labradoodle puppy and his undeniable, big passion for sports, especially golf. But contrary to what most others in Los Angeles might think, Reagan Silber does not believe he’s living the ideal life.

“I wouldn’t mind being Tiger Woods,” he jokes. “And who wouldn’t? He gets to play golf all the time, and,” says the well-known bachelor about town (at least at this writing), “he’s got a beautiful Swedish wife. Whose life could be better than his?”

Many of Silber’s friends would repeat the same refrain about him.

Previous page: Silber’s home office is done in red lacquered wood paneling and is duplexed with a stainless-steel staircase. The Andy Warhol lithographs behind the desk are from an eleven-piece series about the assassination of John F. Kennedy titled “The Dark Days in Dallas, November 22, 1963.”



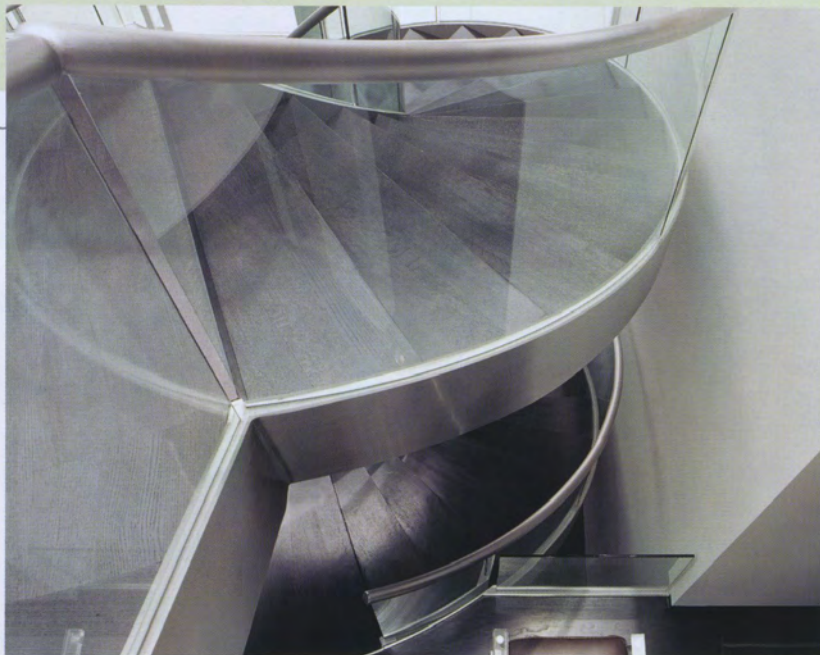
James Bond immediately comes to mind when you step up to the brushed satin stainless-steel entrance and doors that automatically open with a fingerprint scan. The custom-designed glass pyramid peeks out from above and as the doors whisk back, you are struck by the floor-to-ceiling views of Bel Air and Westwood.

Continuous stainless-steel panels create a fluid sculpture wall around the entry and sides of the property. Coupled with the ficus hedges behind them, the panels extend around the perimeter and shroud the house in privacy.



"The goal was to make it feel like I am living inside a piece of sculpture."

The stainless-steel floating staircase had to be craned in through the ceiling. The arm rail is made up of one continuous piece of metal.





The grand custom-built stainless-steel staircase is freestanding and looks as if it floats from floor to floor. Entertaining expert Colin Cowie designed the center table with its brown leather pedestal and aluminum top, above which sits a Daum amethyst sculpture. Three abstract paintings done in gray lead by American artist David Roth hang over a vintage Paul Frankl embossed green pony-skin curved chaise.



South African designer Charles Allem used many shades of green in the decor to match the lush exterior landscaping, like the mohair chairs with leather piping in this upstairs living room. The console is from Allem's personal collection and the sculpture *Wind Blown Hair* is by Hagenauer. The trellis outside (visible in the center background) covers a built-in terrazzo banquette and fire pit that are highlights when Silber entertains.

The central focus of this living room is the Paul Lazlo curved brown leather sofa that was previously owned by Francis Ford Coppola. Again, Allem used luxury materials with these 1950s Rafael chairs, which he reupholstered in green calfskin leather and mink to match the green mink pillows on the couch. The Modern One coffee table holds a chrome BIR sculpture from 1960.





The media room's unique striped brown wood and stainless-steel-paneled walls, custom designed by Allem, are its most striking feature. The amethyst Oom Grand Swivel Lounge chairs are perfect to relax in for one of Silber's movie screenings. The small stools are designed in green ostrich, wood, and stainless steel.

During dinner, Silber can enjoy stunning unobstructed views that stretch from downtown Los Angeles all the way to Catalina Island. Very avant-garde green mohair chairs with brown leather piping surround a Wenge wood table, another of Allem's designs. An Adam Fuss photogram from 1988 hangs on the wall. Outside, a terrace extends the length of the house.





The front windows of the home offer a view of the white terrazzo and grass checkerboard courtyard, which was formerly the driveway. Ficus trees encircle the property, enclosing a planter full of iceberg roses. A white leather and Lucite J. Robert Scott chair sits in the window.

Even the gym was custom designed by L.A. fitness guru Mark Harigian. In keeping with the use of luxury materials, all of the equipment was made from chocolate brown leather and stainless steel, and the walls are covered in suede.



Every material used and piece of furniture displayed, down to the Pratesi linens here in the master bedroom, was chosen with a very precise vision by Allem. He paid meticulous attention to details like the custom-made silk Bradbury wall upholstery with brown and green stitching. The overall feeling is very masculine, with a pair of matching embossed crocodile and stainless-steel nightstands that frame the custom-made bed. Lynn Weinberg designed the brown silk chaise, circa 1960.

Silber had to move a huge amount of land for the pool to sit where it does today. The sculpture is by Christopher Georgesco, an artist from Palm Springs.

The master bathroom features an oversized steam shower.