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DESIGNERS' OWN HOMES





Roger Thomas

THE BELLAGIO'S DESIGNER GOES
MODERN IN LAS VEGAS

Architecture by Mark Mack
Landscape Design by Bruce Anderson
Text by Nancy Collins
Photography by John Edward Linden





The reason I built this house was because I had divorced and come out as a gay man,” interior designer Roger Thomas cheerfully admits, explaining the impetus behind the spectacularly modern Las Vegas pad that he dreamed up with architect Mark Mack. “While we were building, we talked a lot about interior colors, and one day Mark called and said, ‘What do you think about an all-lavender interior?’ I said, ‘Mark, I don’t know if I’m *that* gay.’” He laughs. “But if you want an all-lavender interior, I’m game. I can work with anything.”

Indeed. As the executive vice president of Wynn Design and Development, Thomas, in a place where excess is the norm, has created some of Las Vegas’s most tastefully showy interiors—landmark casinos like Treasure Island, The Mirage (see *Architectural Digest*, September 1992) and Bellagio, whose ornate interiors he likes to call “bigger than life.” When it came to his own new life, however, Thomas was looking for the diametric opposite—“the complete cohesion of spatial architecture” he discovered when he stayed with Reno friends Peter and Turkey Stremmel (see *Architectural Digest*, December

1995). “I walked in that house and couldn’t find a misalignment or a collision of angles or surfaces. Everything was beautifully married. I said, ‘I have to live this way.’”

So he called up Mack, whose work renders Thomas rhapsodic. “Mark’s spaces are exciting, because his sense of scale is charged with so much energy, economy and perfection of detail,” he explains. “In such spare structures every detail counts, because nothing covers up any of the edges. Everything is brutally honest.” He pauses. “And our personalities meshed immediately. I told him, ‘We’re both designers, which is one too many.

ABOVE LEFT: For his own house in Las Vegas, Roger Thomas—who designed the rooms at Treasure Island and Bellagio—worked with Los Angeles architect Mark Mack to create a modernist aesthetic. Local landscape designer Bruce Anderson added drought-resistant plants.

“The design is directed inward, for privacy,” says Thomas (opposite, in the walled courtyard). ABOVE: Asian sculptures—most depicting bodhisattvas—adorn a Jean-Michel Frank-designed credenza in the gallery, which leads to the living/dining area. The painting is by David Kessler.