

THE LIFE AQUATIC

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A vision of Mediterranean elegance in the heart of Doha, this royal residence fuses glamour with comfort to create the ultimate beach home



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T OVER 43,000 SQUARE FEET, this palatial home is hardly your average beach residence. With its apricot stucco façade and marble terraces studded with palm trees, it could be the retreat of a Mediterranean socialite or a Hollywood movie director. In fact, it's located in Doha's West Bay Lagoon, and belongs to

a prominent member of the Qatari royal family, His Excellency Sheikh Mohamed bin Fahed Al-Thani.

The Sheikh's main home is in the royal compound to the west of the Qatari capital, and this property serves more as an urban sanctuary, where he and his family can entertain, spend days on the white sandy beach and relax on their boat. Step inside the house and you'll be greeted by a mix of opulence and repose, courtesy of LA designer Timothy Corrigan. He has designed no less than six homes for the family, including several in Paris and London. Corrigan's style, which blends classic elegance with casual, California-inspired comfort, was just what Sheikh Al-Thani had in mind for this project.

"The family are very sophisticated and wanted this house to have a timeless feel," Corrigan explains. "Because it's on the water, they also wanted a less formal atmosphere than their main residence. Our approach is that no matter how beautiful a room is, it's not successful if it's not also very comfortable."

Accordingly, you'll spot numerous lounging zones all around the house, furnished with plump sofas, chairs and cushions, intended to






ABOVE: A hallway leading to the beach is furnished with an 18th-century table base from Bonhams, which has a custom-made mother-of-pearl and malachite top. The ceiling dome is decorated with a white-gold-leaf and crushed-pearl finish by Atelier de Ricou.

OPPOSITE PAGE FROM TOP: The house's apricot stucco exterior recalls 19th-century Mediterranean villas; the pool pavilion, adorned in fresh nautical hues. The sofas are from McKinnon & Harris and the seat cushions and blue curtain fabric were sourced from Perennials Fabrics.

This vast entrance hall has an inlaid marble floor inspired by the dining room at Chateau de Groussay in France. The Hasler ceiling lanterns are from Paul Ferrante. The Albert armchairs are from Randolph & Hein, upholstered in Clarence House fabric, and the

coffee tables are by Timothy Corrigan Home. In the centre of the space sits a sculptural shell and stainless-steel table from DK Home, decorated with silver shells by Buccellati. The Mahal Persian rug is a 19th-century piece from Aga John Rugs.





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ABOVE: Corrigan designed the bespoke kitchen, which has a blue stone island worktop by Stone Italiana and the walls are adorned with decorative tiles from Country Floors.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The dining area adjacent to the kitchen. The pendant light is from Ironies and the armchairs are by John Boone. 18th-century Delft ceramics and a 19th-century lion mask (found in a Paris flea market) add a touch of embellishment.

instil a sense of ease. Indeed, you could say luxurious seating is a leit-motif of Corrigan's design – it was one of his key strategies for dealing with the house's enormous living spaces, of which there are three, as well as four bedroom suites (each with their own sitting room and terrace), a large American-style kitchen with dining and sitting areas, a formal dining room and several beach pavilions. All are notable for their dedication to restfulness. "Living spaces can be the most difficult to design," says Corrigan, "not because it's hard to make them beautiful, but because you have to ensure that people will use them every day, not just for formal occasions. There has to be a reason to use them. So in these very large living rooms, we created multiple comfy sitting areas, with games tables or places to watch television." Even the many bathrooms boast zones to recline, linger and enjoy the views.

The cosiness of the interior is all the more remarkable given that when Corrigan began, the house was mid-build and consisted of little more than a steel frame. The Sheikh's vision of a home that recalled "classic 1920s Palm Beach houses" had to be conjured from scratch. Corrigan took inspiration from Floridian architects like Addison Mizner and Maurice Fatio – designers of "Mediterranean-inspired houses with large, richly detailed rooms decorated in bright colours" – but added whimsical elements, so that it would be "a playful reinterpretation" rather than a pastiche. "I struggled with the concept until I remembered how much I enjoyed looking at photographs of Palm Beach in the 1920s and 30s," Corrigan remembers. "The 'Palm Beach

casual' look signalled luxury and glamour tempered by a sunny palette, crisp, clean lines, and a certain relaxed sophistication. It became a touchstone for this project. The image we wanted to evoke was not so much a pool house at noon, but of a terrace at twilight; the kind of place that brings to mind kaftans and glamorous people."

This concept translated to a palette of golden beiges, rich blues and shell pinks, "to echo the sea visible from the many windows". To make the rooms feel more intimate, almost every surface is embellished, from walls and floors to ceilings. "We used a variety of decorative treatments, from painted murals to trellising, gold leaf, gypsum plaster and hand-painted wallpapers," says Corrigan. "The resulting array of textures and colours ensures that the eye never grows bored." Furniture is a mix of antiques and contemporary bespoke, always with an eye to functionality and relaxation. "We put marine varnish on even the finest antiques, because it allows for a glass to be put down and not leave a mark," reasons Corrigan.

Finally, vividly patterned fabrics, colourful artworks and statement chandeliers give this characterful home even more panache. "There's nothing more charming than watching children at the beach building castles in the sand, and in a way, that's what I had to do here – create a residence that was grand in scale and luxury, but also embodied a sunny, relaxed vibe," Corrigan muses. "It's a place worthy of three generations of family, where they can gather, relax and enjoy the clear waters of the Arabian Gulf." timothy-corrigan.com