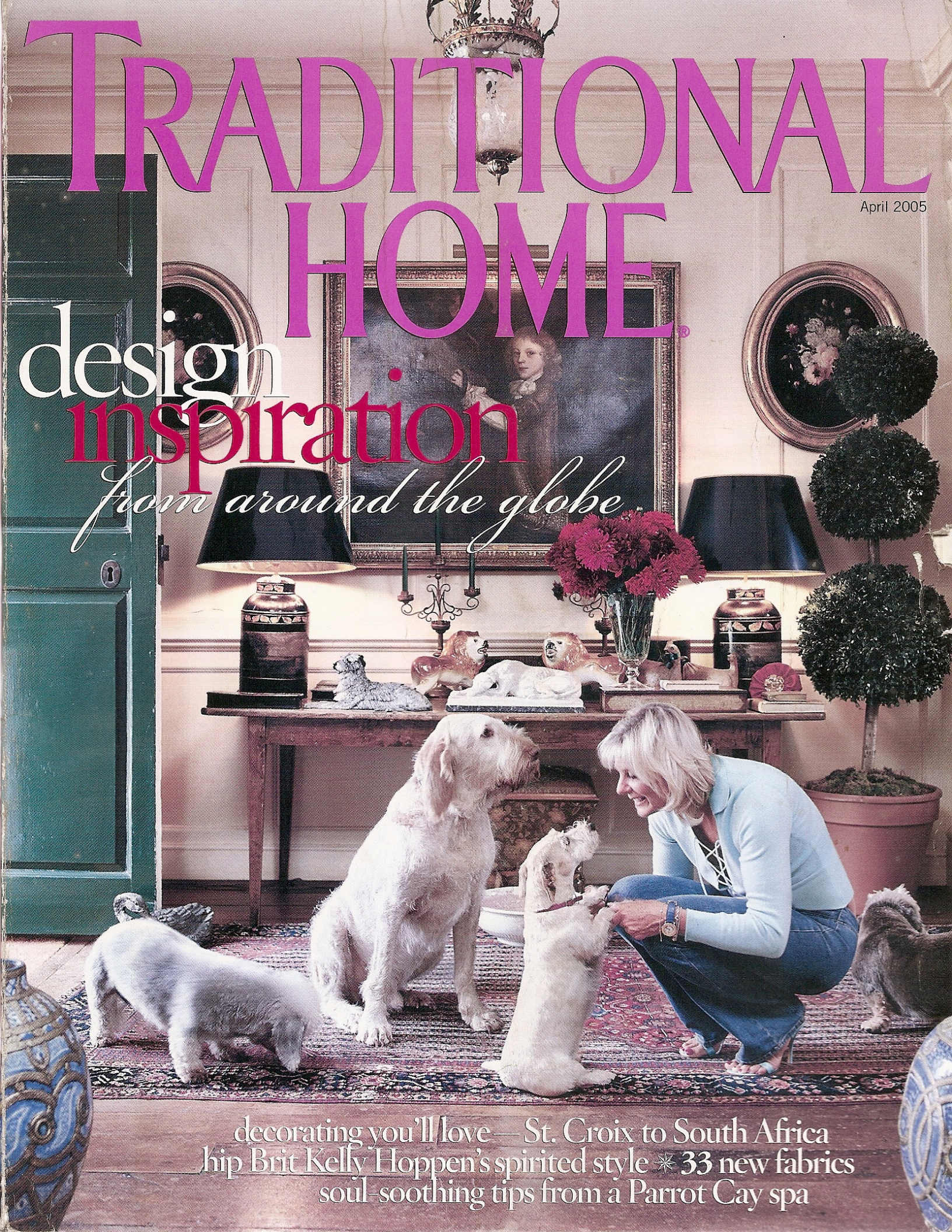


TRADITIONAL HOME.

April 2005

design
inspiration
from around the globe



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albeit not efficiently—without having to venture into the open-air courtyard. But in good weather—which is most of the time—the courtyard serves as the hacienda's main artery. Many of the doors leading between rooms, in fact, are swollen shut from moisture and inertia, not having seen service in years.

The courtyard not only is vital for sensible traffic flow but is the focal point of every room. Through wide doorways, rooms open up to its sensory delights: the lulling riffs that flow from its carved *cantera* (volcanic) stone fountain; the fragrance and color of its jasmine, apple, and fig blossoms, roses, lantana, impatiens, and bougainvillea; and the weathered sheen of its unglazed terra-cotta pavers (called *barro perón*) that have hosted generations of Hernández family footfalls.

The downstairs includes the chapel, several bedrooms and baths, the formal dining room and parlor, and a main kitchen as well as an “outdoor” kitchen. The outdoor kitchen, one of the hacienda's loveliest and most colorful rooms, features a grill at one end for making *carne asada* (grilled beef) and a domed oven at the opposite end for baking *gorditos* (little corn cakes). The sink is made of glazed tiles decorated in the traditional

Talavera style. (Talavera—Mexico's majolica—is glazed pottery made from the clays of Puebla.) A tiled relief above the doorway also displays the shiny, muted patterns of old Talavera platters.

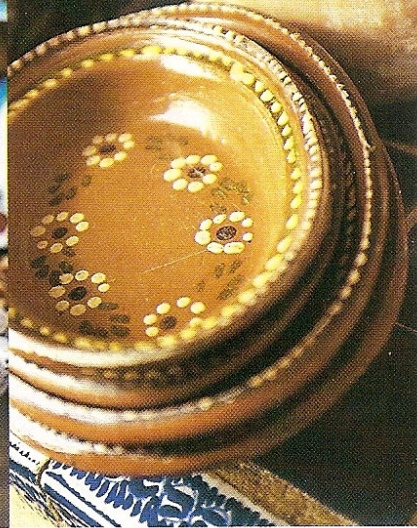
Tile stairs bracketed with a wrought-iron stair rail lead from the entry to the upstairs gallery—a museum of fine antiques and art that serves as a gathering place for the three second-floor en suite bedrooms and baths adjacent to it. Along one wall of the staircase is a grand tile mural. “It is an allegory in remembrance of my great-great-grandfather, José Antonio Hernández Gamiño, who lived from 1785 to 1855,” notes Alfonso. A pair of antique stained-glass French doors create a light tower at the top of the staircase, drenching objets d’art in lavish color. Many of the antiques are heirlooms. But many more are the result of 35 years of collecting by Alicia and Alfonso, who own a fine antiques gallery in Guadalajara, where the couple live full-time in a palatial antique home. (The hacienda is about a two-hour drive away, on rough roads under construction.)

“My father is responsible for how the hacienda looks today—for its decorating,” says Ignacio. A painter in his free time, Alfonso composes rooms the way he does canvases, paying



Opposite: On a table dressed with large antique hurricane lamps, Alfonso and Alicia serve baked chiles and roast chicken with *mole almendrado* (almond sauce made from an old family recipe) and *mole poblano* sauce.

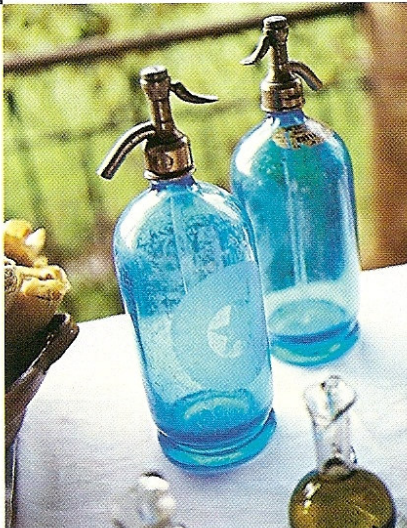
Left: Spanish pieces like the turned-leg 18th-century *bargueño* from the shop influence Mexican style.



Above: Pastries are served on brown glazed pottery from the Mexican state of Michoacán.

Far left: Old spritzer bottles bring color to the table.

Left: The shop's 18th-century Mexican mesquite-wood table, inlaid with bone, is topped with a Spanish chest and sterling crowns from *santos*.



Left: Caramelized *camote* and *albaricocque* (sweet potato and apricot) are traditional Mexican candies.

Below: The outdoor kitchen opens onto the courtyard through a tiled archway decorated with three large, old Talavera platters.

Right: A furnished pergola segues from formal rooms to the courtyard.







attention to color, scale, shape, and balance. Although the formal rooms host the most precious antiques, the open-air spaces receive just as much design attention. Furnished with a mix of casual pine and stitched leather, the terraces, pergolas, and patios sport the look most often identified with Mexican design.

Family events always involve the outdoors. "The last large, happy family event that we had was the baptism of our three grandchildren in the house's chapel," says Alfonso. All of Alfonso and Alicia's grown children plus their spouses attended, along with extended family and friends. After the sacrament, everyone headed outdoors to celebrate. "We added a large party tent by the lake for the reception," Alfonso explains.

"This hacienda has been in our family through the good times, but also through the bad times—such as during the Mexican and the "Cristera" revolutions," reflects Alfonso. During the Mexican Revolution, the family was forced to flee the hacienda to safety but returned once peace was restored. Thankfully, these days, good times prevail. "This is the reunion point for the family over holidays and vacations and for big events such as weddings," notes Alfonso. For his son Ignacio, the hacienda is the family's true home. "This is where our most vivid childhood memories were made," he says. "Now, a new generation is starting to make their own memories here." ■

For more information, see sources on page 178.

Opposite and top: An antique *santo* stands protectively over the master bedroom's sitting area, furnished with early-20th-century cane-and-wood pieces. Family portraits are sprinkled throughout.

Top right: A small window in one of the upstairs guest rooms overlooks the ancient ash tree at the hacienda's entrance.

Right: Old stained-glass French doors light the top of the stairs. A 19th-century painted Italian chest and a jacquard-covered campaign chair are among the upstairs gallery's many European antiques.

