

THIRD EDITION



HOUSES OF LOS CABOS



CASA TITA

DEDICATED TO OFFERING A SANCTUARY FOR FAMILY VACATIONS

ALFREDO AND BETY UMANSKY
OWNERS

LEONARDO UMANSKY, ARCHITECT
PROJECT

ALEJANDRO TREVIÑO, ARCHITECT
CONSTRUCTION

It is a house of clean lines, with plenty of space, clear in its purpose of making the Umanskys' days here pleasurable ones. The care taken in the structural elements is evident, and even more evident is the builders' complete understanding of the owners' needs; a family member was in charge of the project.

Nine months were required to build Casa Tita's eight bedrooms – along with the same number of complete baths, one half-bath, a living room, dining room, kitchen, utility room, laundry, two-car garage, enormous game room, and a large bar. These areas play out horizontally across the property, to create a place for splendid seaside vacations. And in spite of all its spaciousness, the house is simply suited to the needs of Alfredo, Bety, their children and grandchildren.

«Here we have a very easy-going building project, a large house with no great complications,» comments Treviño, who was responsible for converting Leonardo Umansky's plans into three dimensions. And he considers that the house is more modern, more contemporary, than the seemingly

obligatory Mexican hacienda style that is seen throughout the Cabo del Sol residential complex.

Treviño notes that one of Umansky's great achievements was the way in which the living room expands to connect with the rest of the social area. «Although the whole house is full of interesting details, every corner has its own special features to give it character.» Casa Tita does not need any approval for its up-front design; it stretches along the parcel with no twists-and-turns, no tricks. Its constructed area encompasses 13,000 square feet, and takes optimal advantage of one of the best sites in the development. Here the housing design typical of central Mexico is interpreted in a very particular – and modern – way, adopting materials from the surrounding region without succumbing to the temptation of rusticity. Instead, these materials are cleverly employed in making the house very functional. There is a rigorous distinction between public and private areas, and each is equipped with those elements that highlight its purpose: generous sitting rooms encourage social life, and the personal spaces are large but intimate.



Amusing touches

The house's main façade is landscaped with a botanically-varied garden, proceeding from flowerbeds to desert-scape, and gently integrating the plants that existed before the house was built. Large irregularly-shaped flagstones point the way to the entrance, which stands at the villa's center.

The living room and bar are directly accessed from an intervening hallway.

Rooms are differentiated by a pair of steps; above is the bar, with plenty of seating. Most wine

cellars pale in comparison to its selection of fine vintages. Below, the living room with its table for playing board games.

In the front, the pool, garden, a palapa with room for a pair of round tables, and another bar. When the doors slide into the walls, the whole area is connected to the interior; so that the area for entertaining can include the living room, the terrace and the garden.

Appearing to the right of the entrance are the dining room and kitchen, large rooms which are set

up to feed many family members. Both have very good natural lighting; in the case of the kitchen, it is provided by a skylight that also finds a way to illuminate the recreation area one floor below. It might be said that this zone disdains windows and doors, with rooms simply delineated by the geometry of the walls. It is designed so that the younger Umanskys have all that any children could

An estate that is very jealous of its privacy, but also open to festivity.



want, once the beach, pool and garden have finally given them their fill of fresh air.

When the sun goes down

Two stairways start between the kitchen and the terrace, to lead down to the young people's floor. One set of steps ends in a patio that is also the hallway for the children's three bedrooms, and leads into their playroom. The patio has a *torote* or elephant tree at its center, and a single column covered with natural stone; elegant touches to its complete simplicity. The other staircase leads to the children's terrace. Each bedroom has a pair of bunk beds with its own wooden ladder, a big closet, a bathroom

outfitted for heavy traffic, and access to the terrace. All the same elements are repeated, but in somewhat different versions. They are congenial rooms with clean lines; ideal for inhabitants who are outdoors all day, who return exhausted and spend just enough time here to recoup their energy – or maybe to find enough energy for a vigorous pillow-fight before they go to bed. And they're off again, as soon as the sun comes up.

On the upper level, just above the children's area, three more rooms await the grownups. Almost identical but not quite, their design features are replicated with variations, so that each space has its own definite character.

A democratic layout

On the left-hand side, next to the living room but at a respectful distance, are the two master bedrooms with their own baths, small sitting rooms and terraces. Their preferred status announces itself through their spaciousness and wonderful location, but they follow the same decorative and furnishing themes as the rest of the house. We should mention one particular detail: none of the beds, in any of the bedrooms, look out to sea – they are placed broadside, or face into the rooms. Also, while there

The generous rooms are carefully designed to house an entire clan.

are wide windows along the front, the interior walls are illuminated by only three small panes. This doesn't make the space dim; instead it measures out the ambient light in accordance with the room's function.

Treviño comments that «people go to their bedrooms to sleep, or to watch TV, so there is an enormous separate area for playing and socializing,» adding that «when they're done with all their outdoor pursuits it's time to take it easy, and to enjoy the option the sitting rooms and terraces offer of being inside but still partly outside as well.»

Similarities

Casa Tita's interior is built to serve various purposes, and common elements are individually adapted to provide as many different versions as are needed. The ceilings throughout the house, of reeds native to the region, are created in a different design for each room. The hallways simply lead from place to place; they are not charged with any other task. The bed platforms and bedside tables are concrete; the younger children's are bunk beds with their own ladders, to maximize floor-space, and the adults' beds are set facing cabinets that hide their

televisions. Although they do not utilize any unexpected materials, the bathrooms all have their own distinct personalities.

The home works: you can see that from any given angle. There is nothing to be understood «between the lines», just the goal of serving the owners' comfort and well-being in a place with an unbeatable location and magnificent view.

*The desert warms the house,
and the sea cools it.*











