

Cesar Giraldo

By Abigail Stone
Photography by Paul Vu



Just inside the front door, custom sliding bronze door panels, designed by César Giraldo and perforated with a map of O'ahu lit by Thomas Paterson of Lux Populi, hide a guest bedroom.

A DREAM VACATION inevitably revolves around a beautiful setting. It's also the lynchpin for César Giraldo's soothing interiors, which radiate the promise of a refreshing escape. "Nature is always at the center of my work," confirms Giraldo. That's corroborated by the three-floor, 4,450-square-foot four-bedroom home in O'ahu, Hawai'i, that he designed for the founder of Kona Coffee Purveyors.

"The colors are magical. The water temperature is perfect. The sand is soft," he says of the site, a cliff overlooking Lanikai Beach, which captures a breathtaking panorama of the ocean. "How often do you get to enjoy a view like this?" he questions. "We wanted to ensure that the clients could experience it from everywhere in the house."

But of course, the interiors would need to balance its effect. To start, Giraldo began in the primary suite, where he commissioned celebrated French artist Pierre Bonnefille to create a mural. Dancing across the entire wall, its vibrant pastiche of blues act as a compelling counterbalance to the shimmering hues of the surrounding Pacific. Giraldo then reached out to Cuellar Stone to create a custom tub for the primary bathroom. "I want the client to feel like he's floating on the ocean," Giraldo explained. Carved from Calacatta Lilac marble, it's strategically placed in the room



The three-story home designed by architect James McPeak overlooks Lanikai Beach.



BT45 cabinetry was paired with Gaggenau appliances in the open-plan kitchen. A Giopato & Coombes Bolle Frosted Chandelier hangs over a drop-down table in French oak and Teresina armchairs by Andrea Parisio for Meridiani.

to provide a front-seat view of the idyllic seascape. “I was really lucky that the client was very open to my ideas,” Giraldo explains. “These two elements laid the foundation for the whole design.”

Emulating their exuberance are a cornucopia of design’s most exquisite offerings, sourced from around the world. “I wanted every corner of the home to be special,” Giraldo acknowledges. “I also love comfort and ease. So the idea was for the home to be as luxurious as it is tranquil.”

In the primary bedroom, across from Bonneville’s work, a puzzle of tone-on-tone white oak millwork frames the fireplace; a second

fireplace is carved into the living room’s dramatic silver travertine wall. For the kitchen, Giraldo turned to BT45, pairing their French oak cabinets with a Milas white marble island and Gaggenau appliances. He introduced the client to the concept of a butler’s pantry and installed a wine cellar—also by Gaggenau—fulfilling a long-held dream of the clients, who are dedicated oenophiles.

He called on Lux Populi’s Thomas Paterson to create the home’s lighting design, including a pair of bespoke bronze doors near the front door that feature a perforated map of O’ahu that glows at night. The Netherland’s Hakwood was the source



A grouping of sofas and coffee tables by Meridiani, which sit on a rug by Mehraban, face a soaring fireplace wall created from Silver travertine that extends to the roof. The torch lamp is by Dan Yeffet for Collection Particuliere. The floor lamp is by Robert Kuo.



A bed, nightstands and an armchair by Meridiani sit on a rug by Mehraban in the primary bedroom. The French white oak used for the flooring and walls was sourced from Hakwood. The interior doors are from Lualdi.

for all of the home's wood floors, treated to withstand Hawaii's humid conditions. "We were not shy about anything," Giraldo says.

Giraldo derives his uncompromising sense of luxury from his Colombian mother. "She loved beautiful things," he shares. She also passed along her strength and her joie de vivre, a potent combination that secured him the project. This generous spirit is also behind the formation of the Espíritu Santo Foundation he is working on, which will support young and impoverished women in his native Colombia.

It also helped him convince the client to revise the home's plans. "The original layout was more compartmentalized," Giraldo remembers. Though the client was initially hesitant, "Not many homes in Hawaii are this modern, open and international in style," Giraldo notes, and the client quickly became a convert to Giraldo's vision. In fact, together they have embarked on a second project, a home in Honolulu that promises to be equally spectacular and soothing. For this interior designer, the ethos of vacation runs through his blood and his work.



A 1,000-pound Calacatta Lilac marble tub, designed by César Giraldo and created by Cuellar Stone, enjoys the home's astounding view. The vanity and shower wall were also fabricated from Calacatta Lilac marble. The plumbing fixtures are from Cocoon. The windows and doors are by Sky-Frame.