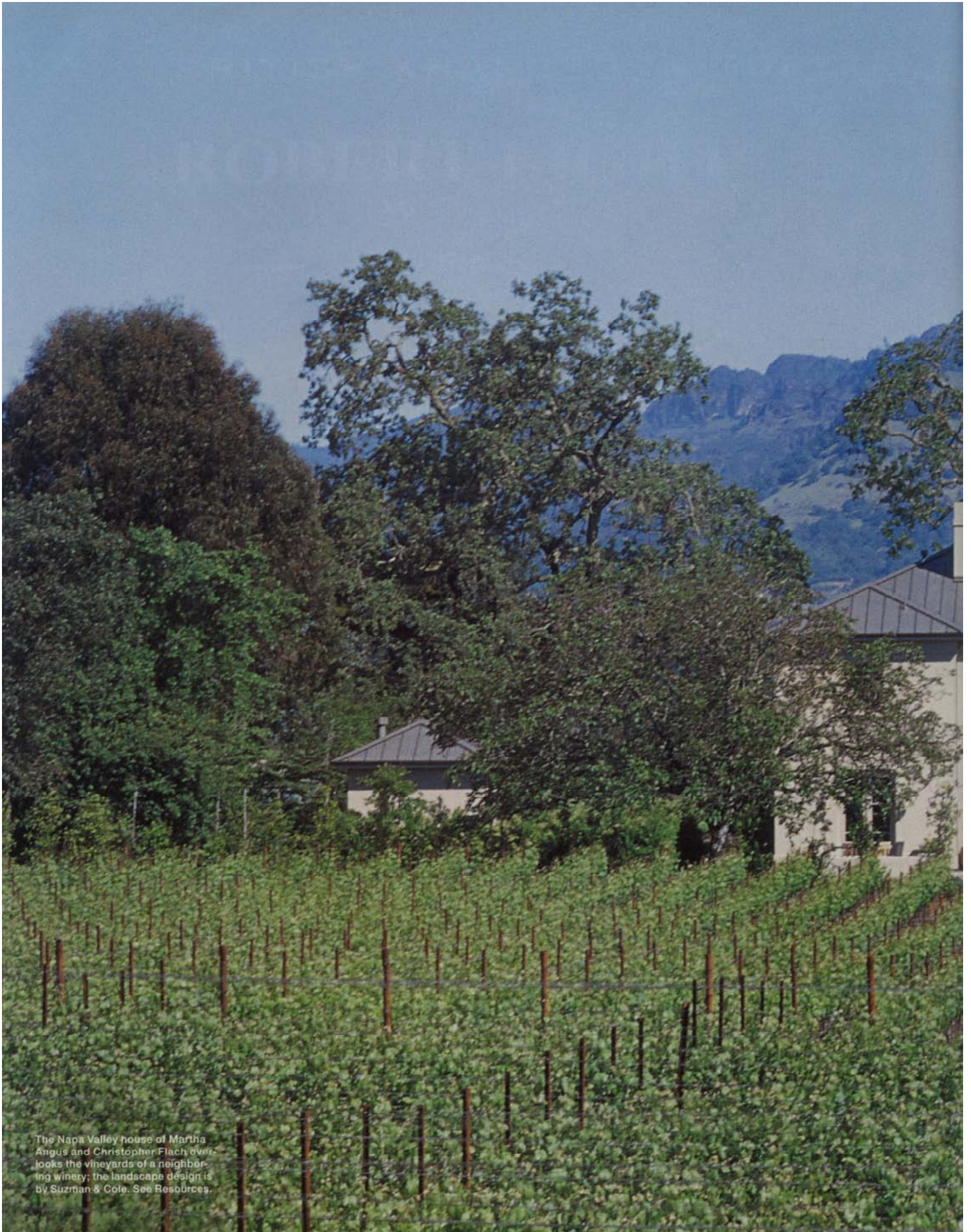


ELLEDECOR

Style Across America

Napa Valley Romance
Ralph Lauren's Montauk Retreat
Continental Flair in Florida
Chic Modernism in Nashville
Ben Stiller in
the Hollywood Hills

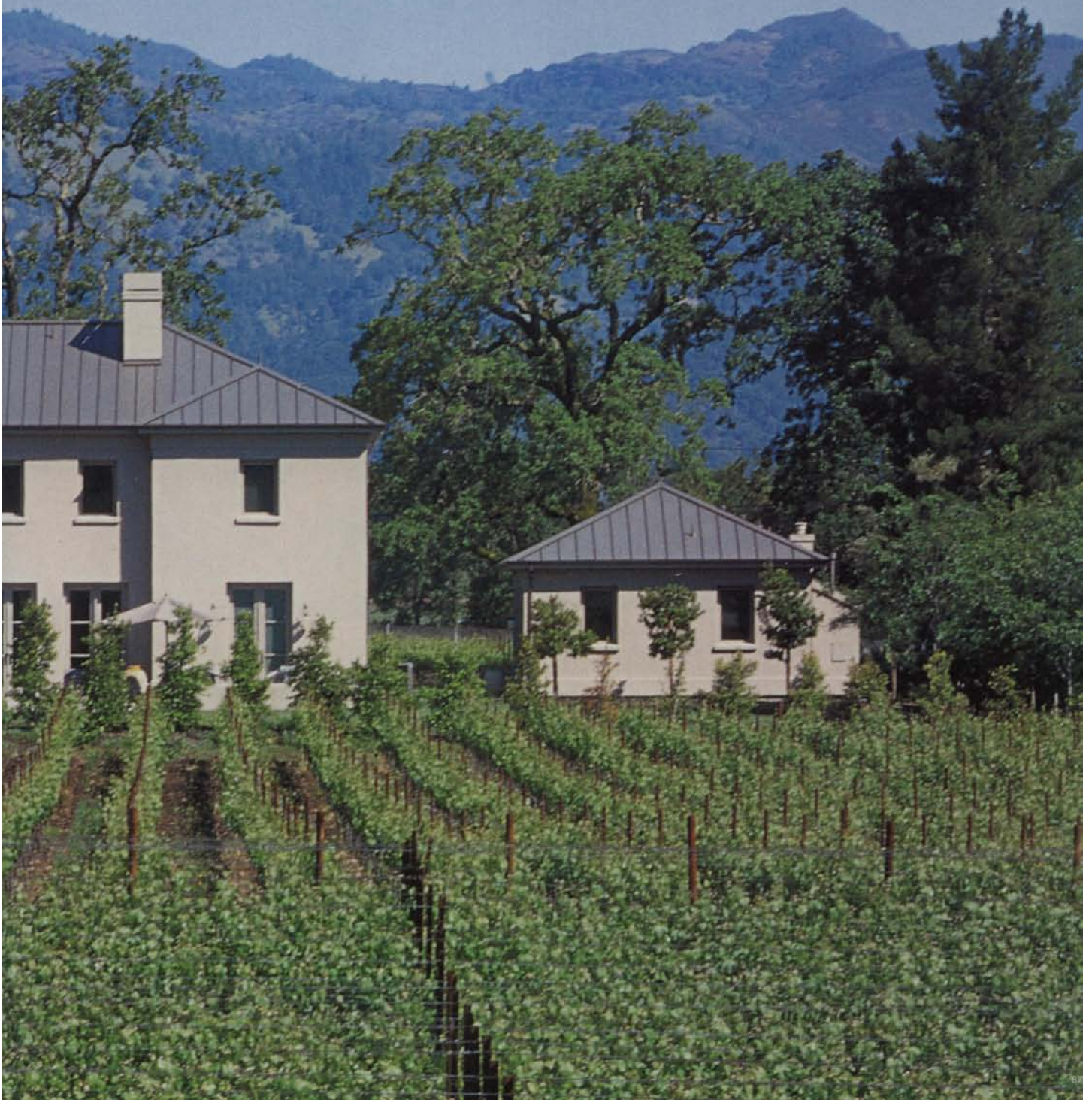


The Napa Valley house of Martha Angus and Christopher Flach overlooks the vineyards of a neighboring winery; the landscape design is by Suzman & Cole. See Resources.

MARTHA'S VINEYARD

EAST COAST NATIVE MARTHA ANGUS DESIGNS A WEEKEND RETREAT IN THE NAPA VALLEY AND FINDS HER URBAN SENSIBILITY YIELDING TO THE ROMANCE OF THE LANDSCAPE

TEXT BY MELISSA CERLA · PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREY CRAWFORD · PRODUCED BY ANITA SARSDI





“THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I realized something that isn't modern can still be attractive, and that I wasn't selling out,” says decorator and East Coast native Martha Angus, sitting on the terrace of her stucco house, a pared-down neo-Palladian villa, as she calls it, nestled in the hills of Northern California's wine country. “When you work in New York, you think modern is everything. But when I moved here, I had to open myself up to creating a house that's more site specific.”

California can have that effect on people. Trade in skyscrapers for soaring redwood trees and a late-night martini for an early evening glass of Chardonnay, and Manhattan's sleek urban aesthetic suddenly requires a softer, more individualistic touch. Which is exactly what Angus has achieved in the weekend house she shares with her husband, Christopher Flach, and their 14-year-old son, Malcolm. Clean architectural lines are offset with an eclectic mix of antiques, striking contemporary artwork, and whimsical decorative objects culled from the flea markets of Paris and L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue.

“Oooh, I just love them,” says Angus, describing her passion for the Paris flea markets she tries to visit a few times a year. “I'll go with clients and shop the Left Bank for really good pieces. But then I like to go to the Serpette and Paul Bert markets and get less expensive things, too. Not everything has to be important or serious.”

Dressed in a simple white T-shirt and beige slacks, Angus has a crisp style that doesn't immediately hint at her more playful sensibility. A quick glance inside her home suggests a similarly well-defined elegance. The impressive living room has a 21-foot ceiling, a large limestone fireplace, a substantial Georgian sofa and Directoire daybed, and a pair of 12-foot-tall boiserie carvings from Amy Perlin Antiques in New York.

To counter the Europe-meets-East Coast aura, Angus added casual details to channel that California feeling. “I didn't want to worry about anyone coming in with a wet bathing suit,” she says, so she covered





In the living room, a Directoire daybed is covered in Manoir fabric by Nobilis, an 18th-century George III sofa is in Fortuny's Carnavalet cotton, and a lounge chair by Angus is upholstered in Larsen's Shan silk; the cocktail table was bought at auction, and the painting is by Mark Mentzer. Facing page: The bronze-and-horsehair stools are by Casa Vostra; the sofa, designed by Angus, is upholstered in a Cowtan & Tout fabric. See Resources.



Clockwise from bottom left: Angus and Flach with their son, Malcolm. Paintings by Squeak Carnwath and Caio Fonseca in the media room; the sofas and ottoman are covered in fabrics by Maharam. The kitchen-island counter is topped with blue-enamelled lava stone from Sue Fisher King and the lithograph is by Ellsworth Kelly; Angus's design for the refrigerator surround was inspired by an antique Portuguese armoire. Facing page: The pool, which is edged in cast stone, looks onto acres of vineyards. See Resources.







the wicker chairs around the kitchen table in a striped outdoor fabric. Tucked behind one of the emerald-green living room sofas is a worn-out fiberglass Pluto, a bright-eyed former carousel dog. Then there's the *Austin Powers* pinball machine in Malcolm's media room and the six-foot-tall rocket that has landed halfway up the staircase.

Part of the whimsy stems from her husband, a fine-art photographer and psychologist who collects children's toys. And, of course, Angus's own creative background is ever present. "My degree is in art," says the designer, whose firm has offices in both San Francisco and New York. "I like things to look as if they've been artistically put together."

Angus and Flach bought the property near St. Helena four years ago, tearing down a chicken coop to build the new house. "We looked to buy, but mostly saw Craftsman cottages," she says, "and I didn't like the feeling of cramped, little rooms." She called on Phillip King Parton, a building designer at her firm, to help conceive the main house and its adjacent guesthouse, while Suzman & Cole designed the garden. "I loved the chance to do my own space," adds Angus.

High ceilings and expansive rooms lend a sense of grandeur without pretense. And each area is defined by at least one important work of art—from Cy Twombly's *Five Greek Poets and a Philosopher* lithographs in the entrance to an Ellsworth Kelly print over the kitchen stove and three eye-popping Warhols in the master bedroom. Equally impressive are the views from the top floor, where windows frame a landscape of shade trees and the Palisades mountains beyond. The symmetry is perfect, as though nature had planned for the house to sit just there.

That may be the case, but Angus probably had something to do with it, too. Stepping outside, she walks toward the small antique rose-and-vegetable garden her husband is tending. "Christopher is from New York, so this is his attempt at farming," she says with a laugh. Then, from the corner of her eye, she spots a white wisteria vine off to the side. "Do you have one on the other side?" she asks her husband. "If you're standing at the kitchen sink, you'd like to see symmetry." When asked if the balance is really that important, she replies: "Absolutely! When I buy a bracelet, I always buy another to make a pair." ■



Clockwise from top left: Cy Twombly lithographs and a plaster ceiling lamp in the entry. The geranium-red paint in a powder room was custom mixed; the mirror, washstand, and fittings are by Waterworks. Angus found the library's bookcase in L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, the desk is by West Elm, and the club chairs are covered in Maharam's Divina wool. Facing page: In the master bedroom, Warhol silkscreens are paired with a headboard by Angus upholstered in a Larsen silk; the monogrammed pillow is by Leontine Linens. See Resources.