



CALIFORNIA STYLE

ZOE SALDANA

From *Star Trek* Heroine
to Nina Simone, She'll
Put a Spell on You

**JEWELRY &
ACCESSORIES ISSUE**

THE BEST

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(AND TURBANS)

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HIDDEN GEM

Behind the massive wooden gates to Liv Ballard's Beverly Hills retreat is a home as beguiling as its creative tenants

BY CHRISTINE LENNON PHOTOGRAPHED BY CORAL VON ZUMWALT



Liv Ballard and her dog, Gracie, in the courtyard of her 1926 Roy Seldon Price home. OPPOSITE The pool and fountain are original to the property.



Jewelry designer Liv Ballard is a woman of considerable charms. In fact, she is so enchanting that back in the late 1990s, when she and designer Annie Kelly were first furnishing Ballard's Tichenor & Thorp-restored 1926 house, the duo managed to talk Tony Duquette into relinquishing two of his cherished lanterns from a long-neglected pagoda on his famous property, Dawnridge (see p.112).

"Tony was an inveterate collector. I don't think he was made for de-acquisitioning!" says Ballard. "So we were delighted when he offered the Moroccan lanterns for my house. We did have to crawl around underneath one of the pavilions to find them. It was a little scary down there but worth the risk of a possible creature encounter."

Even though the fiftysomething Mississippi native and mother of two, Basil and Mac Ballard, left her home state decades ago, she is still every bit the Southern belle, entertaining guests at her "Hispano-Moorish" home, she says, "whenever possible."

Sixteen years on, the property continues to evolve. Ballard has acquired more exotic pieces on her travels across the globe. Her two boys have grown into men under its roof, and Ballard and her music-producer husband have since parted ways.

"It feels lighter in here now," she says with a wink. "A little brighter, maybe a little happier."

When Ballard was determined to find her passion, she looked to her art background (she studied art at Ole Miss, where she and her former husband met, and literature in Paris before moving to Los Angeles) for cues. She began her search for a goldsmith and jeweler and eventually landed in Rome. Ballard first sold her designs in 2007 at Maxfield in Los Angeles and Caribou in Aspen. (Liv Ballard jewelry is also available on 1stdibs.com.)

In her line, hefty gold link necklaces and bracelets are weighted with impressive baubles, like a sapphire encrusted globe that spins on an axis, and a dragon coin inscribed with an imperious Latin saying ("she who conquers herself wins all").

"Italian craftsmen take such pride in their work," she says. "Other people were telling me that what I wanted wasn't possible, but they didn't say no. You know, if a Medici prince asked an Italian jeweler to make a jeweled globe that spun on a chain, they were going to make that thing spin. There's a long history of engineering there."

Throughout her travels, Ballard has acquired an impressive art collection and an assortment of old Damascus bone inlay pieces. Slowly, she has added textiles as well, including floor cushions in Robert Kime fabric. Antique Indian saris on the walls were gifts from the late jewelry designer Devon Page McCleary. As Ballard layers colorful and disparate exotic elements, the house absorbs them. "I keep adding color and texture," she says, "and the house just seems to keep asking for more."

An ottoman upholstered with an antique prayer rug sits in front of a pair of French Gothic Revival chairs. A rattan chair upholstered in a bold Chinoiserie print shares a nook with a Mexican tiled bench.



A German Rococo mirror hangs above a 19th-century Indian bench. OPPOSITE, FROM TOP Grace between the home's massive wooden gates. The Gryphons are by Seldon Price.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP In the master bedroom, linens are from Ya Living. The butler's pantry. A custom daybed in the living room with Robert Kime floor cushions. A French Gothic table next to a Mexican tile bench. Architects Tichenor & Thorp built the teahouse in the courtyard. A sapphire encrusted globe pendant from Ballard's collection. The wine cellar's intimate tasting room. In the breakfast nook, French encaustic tile and wrought iron details are original to the house.





In the living room, Ballard mixes disparate exotic elements like an upholstered ottoman, an Indian bench, French Gothic chairs, Mexican tile and a Chinoiserie pattern on a chair.



