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HANA SOUKUPOVA

BEACH PATROL

HERNAN ARRIAGA

Designing Dreams

Hernan Arriaga remembers being three years old and sitting at the kitchen table of his family's Buenos Aires home drawing his mother's living-room set. "Even then, I remember wanting to change the curtains and the way the furniture was arranged," says the 34-year-old president of Arriaga Interiors, an architectural-design, decoration and landscape-design firm with offices in New York and Miami. "I think I've always had a calling for what I do."

En route to Italy to model in 1998, Arriaga made a brief stop in Miami to visit friends and never left the country. After spending two years in Florida with the Argentina-based clothing company Ona Saez, he moved to Manhattan, where he attended New York School of Design and worked for interior designer James Kiernan Pine before launching his eponymous firm. Today his roster of clientele is a fashionable, socially relevant who's who, including Roberto Cavalli, Ian Schrager, the Hermès family, Alec Baldwin, Tico Torres and Nina Griscom. Last year Arriaga relocated to Miami, where he opened a second office and began designing a home for his friend, model Inés Rivero.

"I love organic materials and love to use a lot of earth colors to make a house feel more charming and warm," says Arriaga, who takes on about five to 10 projects a year, from New York and the Hamptons to Italy and Spain. "The reality is that every project is different: Not everybody has the same taste. You have to understand your clients and give them *their* house—not yours. My goal is to make them feel comfortable in their own home so they walk in and feel like it's exactly what they wanted from the beginning."

—Suzy Buckley

JUST THE FACTS

Languages: "Spanish, English, Italian, Portuguese."

On the horizon: "Opening up a fashionable home-design shop in the Miami Design District with partner Inés Rivero."

Favorite home-design shop in Miami: "Jalan Jalan."

Fragrance: "Malbec by O Boticário."

Favorite Miami Beach nighspot: "Casa Tua."

Favorite design era: "From the 1920 to the 1940s—I love the beginning of modern design: straight lines, organic materials and a lot of glamour."

You wish you could: "Design Madonna's house."



PHOTOGRAPH BY MARIA LANKI