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PREMIERE ISSUE

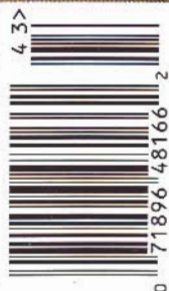
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POOL > A Lanai on Lanai

A scientist's
Hawaiian
backyard has
infinite appeal

By Jorge S. Arango

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LONG BEFORE HE BECAME a respected genetic scientist renowned for cancer research, Dr. Andrew Conrad was a simple California kid who loved surfing and diving in Maui. Now 40 and extremely successful, he hasn't really changed, though Maui has. Commercial development there led him to the quieter, unspoiled island of Lanai in search of a site for his dream beachside estate.

Since Lanai is privately owned, by Dole Foods chairman David Murdock, the island is outfitted with such modern conveniences as high-speed Internet access, while building is kept in check. "It's the way Hawaii was 25 years ago," Conrad says. "It's going to be a unique place forever."

The resulting 7,000-square-foot house was built around views of Manele Bay, and one highlight is the lower lanai and pool. "I wanted it to be an open and expansive space without any fancy columns," Conrad explains. "I wanted it to blend into the distance." So he hired architects—designers Monique

Lafia and Chris Arvin, who had already built his two Malibu homes—to undertake the project.

Lafia/Arvin's strategy was to go native. The lanai flooring's coloring comes from island earth mixed into the cement. The spa that is perched on the rim of the infinity pool—saltwater rather than fresh—was wrapped in tiles made of sliced indigenous lava rock. The pool itself is black-bottomed and 15 feet deep. "You could go snorkeling in it," says Lafia.

Sand was hauled in to create a beach area on one side. Umbrellas were placed everywhere to soften the sun's rays, and because winds can get intense. Lafia shopped for sturdy market umbrellas at Santa Barbara Designs ("It's the BMW of umbrellas," she says). Likewise, she went to the BMW of outdoor furniture, Janus et Cie in West Hollywood, for the Praslin Eclipse chaises. For a finishing touch, Conrad purchased high-power pedestal binoculars from a decommissioned Russian battleship to view the dolphins and whales that frolic offshore. 