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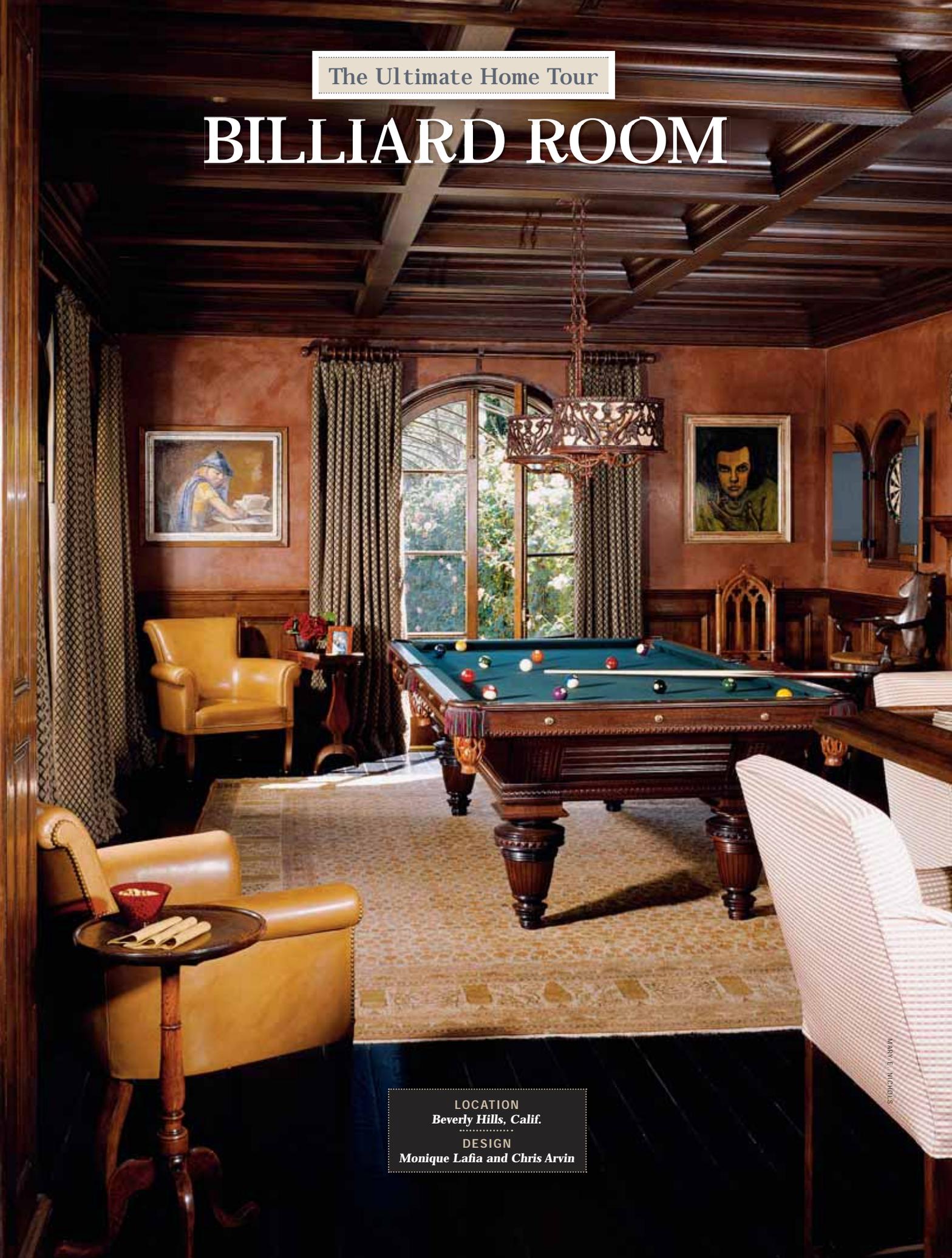


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BILLIARD ROOM



LOCATION
Beverly Hills, Calif.
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DESIGN
Monique Lafia and Chris Arvin

MARY E. MICHOLES



Before monique lafia and Chris Arvin redesigned this Beverly Hills, Calif., billiard room, it was not exactly functional. “There was no room to shoot pool, and it would have been a less-than-ideal place to watch a movie,” says Arvin, noting how the pool table had been flanked by a film projector on one side and a movie screen on the other because of a lack of space. “But movie equipment was a lot larger back then, and that’s how they had to arrange things. The home needed to be brought into the 21st century.”

Originally constructed in 1926, the 1.5-acre estate that houses the billiard room was home to a number of Hollywood stars—Cary Grant and James Mason among them—who would have had some use for that movie equipment, regardless of the awkward arrangement. The current owners, who purchased the property five years ago, enlisted Lafia and Arvin to give the home a sweeping transformation, which included reconceiving and expanding the billiard room. “We had to reorganize the space and divide the area into two parts—a media room and a billiard room—to adapt it to how people live today,” says Arvin. Thus he and Lafia built a new billiard room, connected through a door to the former billiard-and-screening room. They remade the existing space into a media room that has reclining chairs and a screen that can be pulled down over a floor-to-ceiling window.

While the rooms are designed for casual entertaining, their decor is consistent with that of the rest of the home, which houses a collection of antiques and an extensive art collection that includes works by Picasso, Magritte, and Dalí. “[The home] will definitely save you a trip to LACMA [Los Angeles County Museum of Art],” says Arvin, who selected a painting by Francis Picabia for the billiard room. The media room contains several plasma screens, some of which are adorned with frames Lafia and

Arvin designed so that the TVs would blend in with the art. The billiard room is furnished with a late-19th-century Tabriz rug, a set of leather club chairs from Melrose House in Los Angeles, and additional seating designed by Lafia and Arvin. A fireplace dominates one of the walls. “We went to five different marble yards to find the right veining for the fireplace,” says Lafia. “It’s a focal point of the room and had to look like a piece of art.”

Similar consideration went into the selection of the room’s centerpiece, a Union League pool table from 1880. “It took forever to find the perfect

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—chris arvin

one, and once we did, we found out that it had just been sold,” says Arvin. The designers worked with Bankshot Antique Pool Tables in Albany, N.Y., which found a similar table in Kansas and restored it. The table is made from mahogany and features rosewood rails, ivory diamond detail, and hand-sewn pockets. “The owners have a passion for antiques as an investment,” says Arvin. “A pool table like this is not the kind of thing you simply roll through the front door. It comes in pieces, and a specialist has to come out to balance it. Once it’s in place, you don’t move it.”

*Lafia/Arvin, A Design Corp.,
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