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CARIBBEAN LUXURY LIFESTYLE, PROPERTY AND DESIGN MAGAZINE

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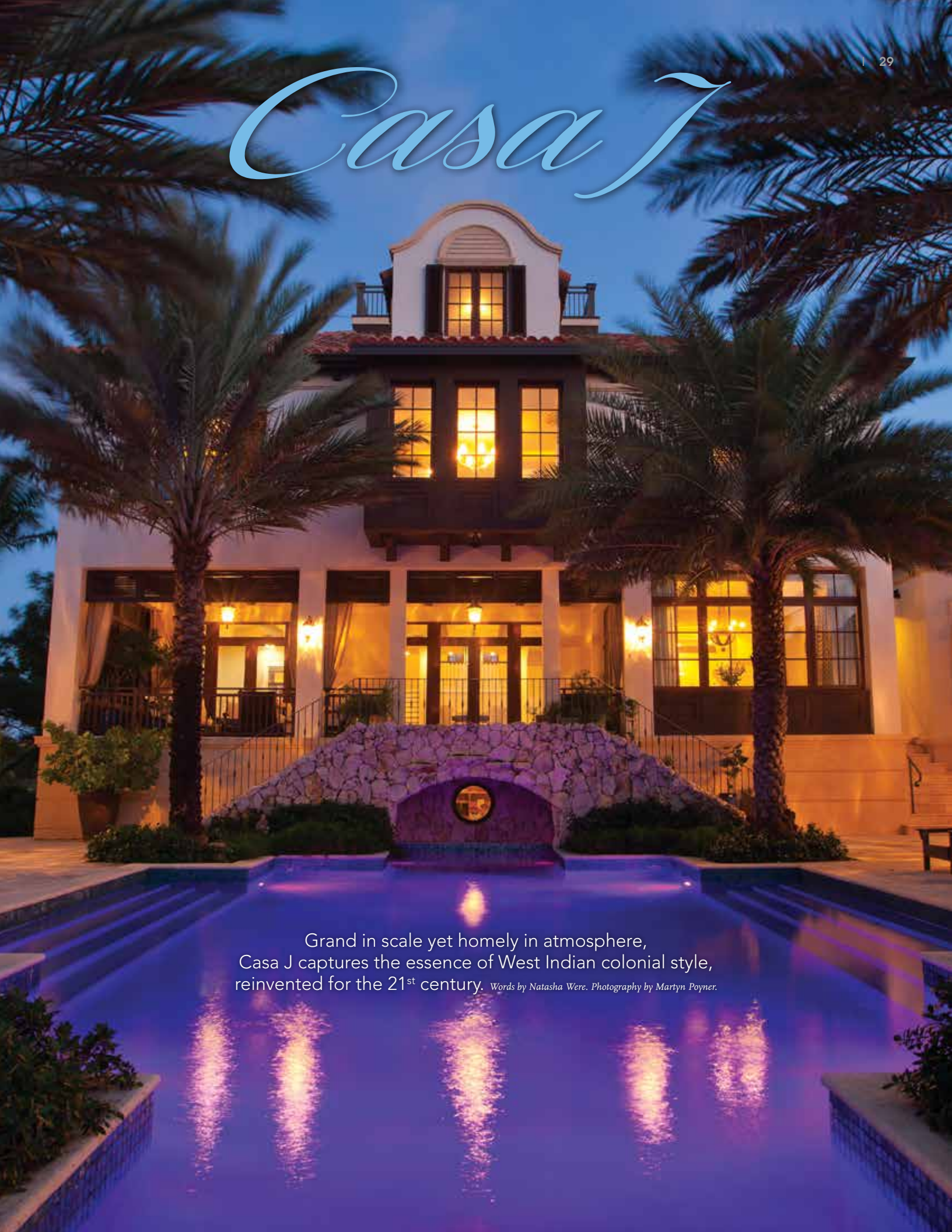
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Casa J



Grand in scale yet homely in atmosphere, Casa J captures the essence of West Indian colonial style, reinvented for the 21st century. *Words by Natasha Were. Photography by Martyn Poyner.*

When John Doak, one of the leading architects in the Cayman Islands, purchased a lot at the tip of Salt Creek he knew that, despite his own proclivity for Caribbean-style architecture, the covenants governing the Vista del Mar community would oblige him to design his home with a Mediterranean aesthetic.

The result, Casa J, straddles both camps seamlessly. The exterior paintwork, wooden shutters and terracotta roof tiles lend it the requisite Spanish flair, while the design and layout is typical of a traditional West Indian great house.

Artfully configured, with the main house at the heart of the property and separate pavilions on each side, Doak has created a variety of spaces where he and his wife, their children and guests can find seclusion, inspiration or recreation, depending on their needs.

The three storey main house is the core family space: this is where John and Jackie and their children sleep, eat and work, and at its heart lies the great room, where mahogany furniture upholstered in pale fabrics sits easily →





beneath the soaring 12-foot beamed ceilings.

Assisted by interior designer Michelle Butler of Design Studio, the Doaks have created a home that is both timelessly elegant and undeniably comfortable. Hardwood floors, recessed lighting and quirky, one-off chandeliers create a warm ambience, and the family photographs, mementoes and keepsakes that fill the shelves underscore that this is a home that is well lived in.

Doak's study, where he conjures up his award winning designs and is penning his tome, *Cayman Style*, is equally inviting: walls lined with bookshelves and antique maps and a vast leather sofa, it is his space to relax as well as to work.

The children meanwhile, have the entire basement, furnished with rum barrel chairs and a life-size doll house at their disposal,



and guests have the luxury of their own private quarters in one of the pavilions, complete with indoor/outdoor shower, kitchenette and a private garden and beach.

Occupying a prime position on Salt Creek, the property is bordered by tranquil waterways and unobstructed views on two sides. This enviable location means that friends can drop in by boat as well as by car. When they do so, the Rumbana, the canal-side pavilion, comes into its own. A stylish rum-shack, it is home to Doak's extensive collection of fine amber nectars from around the region and the ideal space for entertaining at the water's edge.

Although built in 2009, Casa J is a work in progress that evolves in tune with the needs of the family: in addition to renovating the guest house Doak plans to build a fishing dock, where he and his children can indulge





their love of fishing by moonlight.

A true champion of local enterprise, he has drawn on island-based suppliers for almost every aspect of Casa J, from A.L. Thompson's for kitchen appliances to ITC tile for the floors and Dart Nursery for the landscaping.

Indeed, in Casa J, Doak's love of all things Caymanian and

Caribbean shines through. From the colonial-style design and the emphasis on outdoor living to the paintings by local artists and his treasured rum collection, every aspect of this home anchors it firmly in the Caribbean. Despite his Scottish origins and the property's Spanish name, Casa J is a home with an unequivocal sense of place. TM

