

# Californian Villas

Patel Architecture Patel 建筑事务所作品

加州别墅

广州市建艺文化传播有限公司 编

 天津大学出版社  
TIANJIN UNIVERSITY PRESS



图书在版编目（CIP）数据

加州别墅/广州市建艺文化传播有限公司 编.  
—天津:天津大学出版社, 2010. 11  
ISBN 978-7-5618-3717-7

I. ①加… II. ①广… III. ①别墅—建筑设计—作品  
集—美国—现代 IV. ①TU241.1

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字（2010）第183102号

责任编辑: 油俊伟  
流程指导: 陈 玲  
英文翻译: 许 艳

出版发行: 天津大学出版社  
出 版 人: 杨 欢  
地 址: 天津市卫津路92号天津大学内（邮编: 300072）  
电 话: 发行部: 022—27403647 邮购部: 022—27402742  
网 址: www. t. jup. com  
印 刷: 利丰雅高印刷（深圳）有限公司  
经 销: 全国各地新华书店  
开 本: 280mm×280mm  
印 张: 19  
字 数: 222千  
版 次: 2010年11月第1版  
印 次: 2010年11月第1次  
定 价: RMB 248. 00 USD 50

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# Preface

## Architect Narendra Patel's Design Mantras

Narendra Patel grew up in the provincial town of Bharuch, a cotton-producing region of Gujarat, India. His childhood house was a row house with a tin-roof in a neighborhood of "Slumdog Millionaire". He played in the fields with his uncles, hand-sculpting mud into castles and surreal creations from the clay-like soil out of which both the cotton and the young prodigy's urge to create arose.

Patel wanted to be an artist, but his father, a grade seven teacher, urged him to meet engineers as he was finishing high school. Like men a half of a world away, half a millennium earlier in Italy, Patel realized that architecture was the perfect gestalt of three-dimensional geometry and the creative imperative.

It was while an architecture student at the University of Maharaja Sayajirao in Baroda, India (enrollment, 50,000) that the world got its first glimpse of what Patel would ultimately share with it — in this early case, a jury placed one of his sculptures in a major American airport. After completing his Masters of Architecture at the University of Toronto, Patel was soon in America himself — re-starting his life, reincarnated again with the humblest settings. While his young family lived in the custodial suite of a strip motel in Palm Springs, CA, he earned a mere \$9 per hour at a blue-blood architecture firm.

Since then, Patel has designed a billion dollars of commercial buildings, luxury houses, master plan communities, interior designs, landscapes, furniture and sculptures under his own brand, the Rancho Mirage, CA-based Patel Architecture. Patel's signature style — "like sculptures that grow out of the earth," he suggested — has attracted clients like Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell, as well as national media attention from magazines like the Robb Report, which has featured two of Patel's luxury houses on its cover. In 2009, *Patel* received the LEED Silver Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council for the Henderson Community Building in Palm Desert, California, the first for an architecturally significant building in the entire Palm Springs Region.

His newest design is a 25-storey luxury hotel in Guangzhou, China that totals half-a-million square feet but leaves a carbon foot-print of next to nothing (the term of art in green architecture, "net zero" means that the complex generates more than 50 percent of the energy it consumes on-site). "China hires the best professionals in the world, decides what's the best for the country and then just does it proactively," said Patel. "This is why China is more rapidly progressive than we are in the United States, which is stagnating under the inertia of procedure, lawyers and a turn-of-the-century banking system."

Just as the universe is inexorably expanding so is Patel's design atmosphere: "I now want to do exhibition venues, museums and civic spaces where a large amount of people can experience inspirational spaces."

When he is not hand-sketching his next vision in Da Vinci-like code, Patel's personal hobby is slicing open geodesic rocks from Brazil which he plans to use in a re-imagining of flooring. Patel's play-doh is now crystals, no longer the cotton-field mud from his homeland of Gujarat. From that deep earth he went for the sky, and today, is drawing a rare air into his lungs. The rest of us feel like we're in heaven when we step into an environment into which he has breathed his life force.





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In this signature streamlined modern desert house, architect Narendra Patel, creates a delicate pavilion, overlooking the golf course and the valley view on one side and mountains on the other side. The house defining element is a daring inverted shell roof that lifts up towards the exterior, bringing light into airy interiors. The architect organizes a series of sculptural forms standing out against underlying geometric fields. Some of these forms are clad with specially selected slates.

All of the main living spaces, like the great room, dining room, family room, kitchen, and the master suite are located facing the pool and the preferred view. These spaces are sheltered by the large hovering roof. As the roof lifts up, it allows for the clerestory windows to extend full height in all the way up. The house is designed in a layered fashion. From the street, the house is elevated and has a welcoming feel. Created by a combination of raised planters, a sculptured gate, and a pre-entry terrace, the idea is to create a celebration of arrival. The gate opens to the sculpture courtyard with a sweeping walkway that guides you to the main entry.

The glass door to the main entry is fitted with stainless sculptured door pulls, designed by artist Russell Jacques. The family room is separated by art glass that slides into a pocket. The dining room is also designed in such a way that it could be completely open to the great room or it can be closed off by sliding the art glass when needed. All of the art glass through out the house is consistently designed by the artist Bob Burg from Chanikva Studio.

钻石豪庭

Address: Bighorn, Palm Desert, California  
Architect: Narendra Patel  
Photographer: Arthur Coleman

Diamond Residence













The great room opens to the outdoors with a touch of button that sends all the glass doors into a pocket. The fireplace flows flawlessly from the inside to the outside. Simple cladding of the titanium with gold crystals over the fireplace is combined with slate. All of the furniture is custom-designed and fabricated by Patel Architecture.

The master bath is designed with dramatic wood ceiling and skylights. The architect keeps the circulation of the bedrooms completely separated from the public areas, allowing each bedroom to have its own access to the private patios and views, while maximizing privacy.

The palette is a mix of sleek, polished materials, and rough surfaces, bound beneath the shell like roof structure, which echoes to the geometry of the plan. The solid walls of the exterior are clad with specially selected slates. The juxtaposition of massive walls of stone with planes of glass creates a dynamic dialog between solid and void, open and closed, inside and outside. The walls give the house sense of shelter and enclosure.

Patel has designed many landmark modern houses in his nearly 25-year career. The Diamond Residence reveals the most unique design directions in his firm. It is the one that incorporates more innovative structural solutions and more advanced environmental controls.























