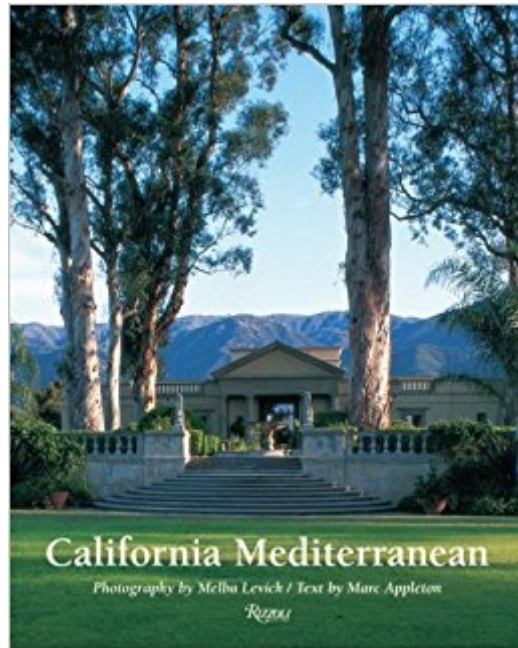




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California Mediterranean



Synopsis

In the early 20th-century, architects designing houses for the balmy climate of Southern California were influenced by the style of the villas and palaces that dominated the architecture of Italy, France, Spain, Greece, and Morocco, and a few other North African locales. The resulting style-noted for its pleasing combination of simplicity and dignity, for its often asymmetrical undecorated facades-reflected romantic, European forms, and yet distinguished itself by adding American ingenuity. Prime examples of this include Villa Narcissa, widely celebrated for its unimposing grandeur, and Casa Leon, with its stunning hillside location and ocean views. Included here are residences by noted architects such as Julia Morgan, Bertram Goodhue, Addison Mizner, George Washington Smith, Wallace Neff, and others. While some of the houses are lavishly decorated villas with lush landscaping, others are more spare, creations; what all these interpretations of the California Mediterranean style have in common is an indoor-outdoor approach to living.

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Customer Reviews

"new photographic tome California Mediterranean showcases some of the SoCal coasts' most stunning estates" -- Riviera Magazine

Melba Levick is a widely published and exhibited photographer who works and lives in Paris, Los Angeles, and Spain. She is the photographer for Rizzoli's Casa California, Estate Gardens of

California, Great Gardens in Small Spaces, and many others. Marc Appleton is principal/president of Appleton & Associates, a Santa Monica-based architecture firm. He is a member of numerous organizations, including the California Preservation Foundation and the Historical Society of Southern California.

Such a disappointment. I read that Mr Appleton is knowledgeable about California Mediterranean. He may not be in David Gebhard's league, but should be a reliable commentator on the genre. I have seen pictures of his residential designs and think he has a good sense of proportion and scenography. So this book leaves me puzzled. The cover photo caught my attention--Roman villa in a Eucalyptus grove in Montecito, California. Sadly, it's the book's best feature. The contents are disappointing. The introduction is fairly informative, but the examples of houses are not. Considering sheet count limitations I would have preferred either more complete verbal description of each house and one or two photos or just the statistics for each house, a few photos and a floor plan or site plan. As published this book presents less verbal information on each house than Architectural Digest while falling short on photos as well. Architectural Digest's selection of photos gives the reader an impression of the place. This book's photos seem to be cropped from widescreen. Maybe this should have been a small pamphlet instead of a large format book.

Although Marc Appleton wrote a very interesting introduction and the history about the houses was engaging, I was disappointed in this book. I was hoping more for an architecture book but instead got more Architectural Digest coverage of the homes. Having photo descriptions such as "The dining room is carried out in white, platinum, ice blue, and iridescent periwinkle." really didn't do anything for me. As a floor plan of George Washington Smith's Casa del Herrero was included in the introduction, I was expecting floor plans of the houses, but there were none. The photos were beautiful and Marc Appleton apparently knows his subject, but this book left me wanting for something more substantial.

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