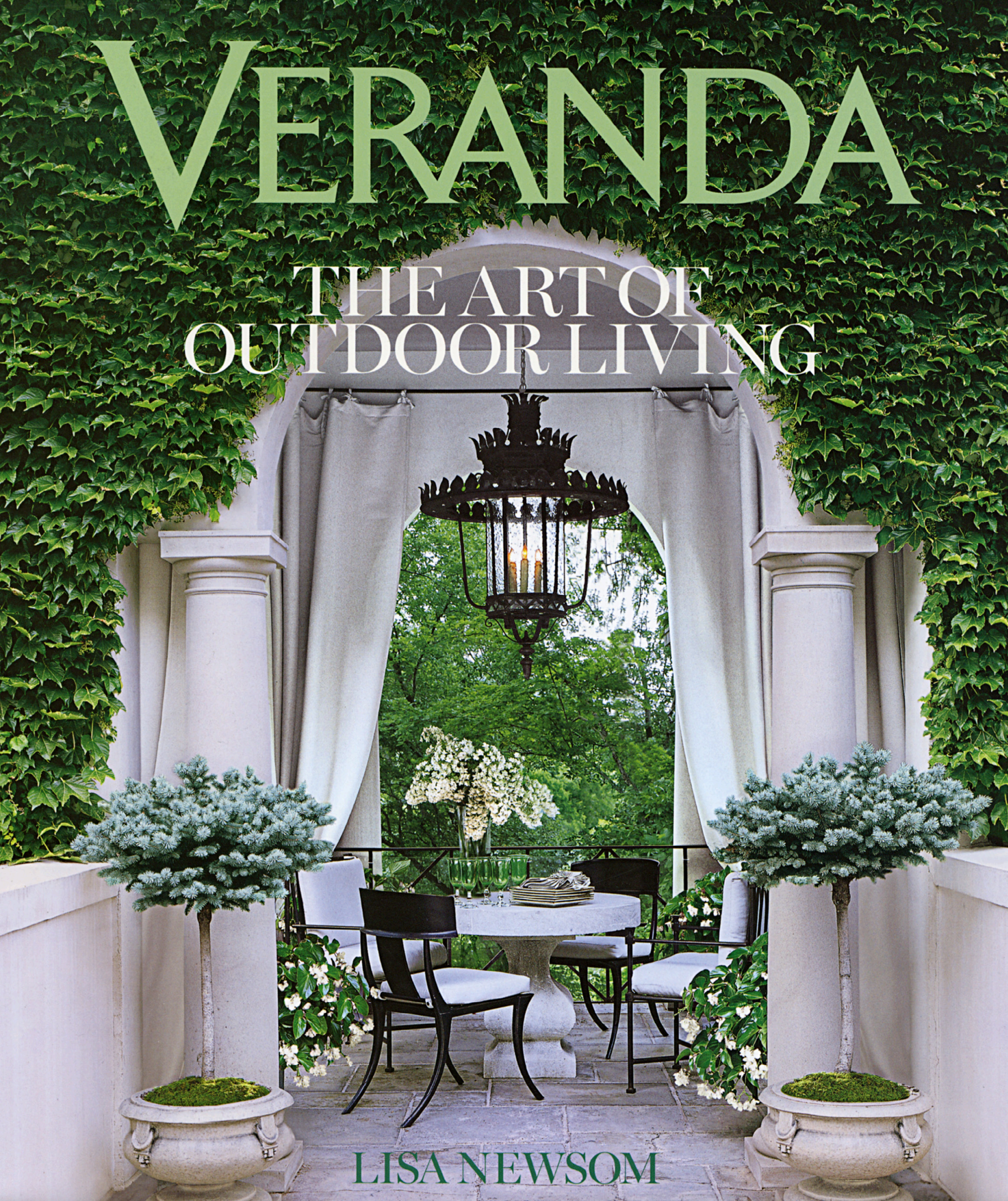


VERANDA

THE ART OF OUTDOOR LIVING



LISA NEWSOM

THE VISIONARIES

Atlanta entrepreneurs build their own tropical paradise in Costa Rica

Ginny Brewer recalls the first time she saw what would eventually become her coastal Pacific Costa Rican home. “We had to go by boat,” she remembers of the trip she took with her husband and their three children, “and then we swam to the beach to see this undeveloped property.” There, her daughter spotted baby turtles hatching, a prophetic sighting, given what the Brewers would do with the 1,200 acres they purchased there to develop into a green resort. The project was modeled on the New Urbanism communities cropping up in the U.S., places where a sense of connectedness among residents is fostered and all the necessary amenities are just a stroll or an easy bike ride away. After founding the Internet service provider Mindspring.com, Ginny’s husband, Charles, established Glenwood Park, a New Urbanism community in Atlanta. It was such a success that he then searched for a vacation project to develop, and Las Catalinas was born.

Casa Brewer, the three-story house that Roswell, Georgia, architect Len Oliver designed for the family, was one of the first in Las Catalinas, and it embodies the design elements the Brewers were striving for. “We wanted the house to connect with the outdoors as much as possible,” says Ginny. “We wanted lots of open spaces. The air flows through the house. You don’t need to use air-conditioning all the time. Nature just surrounds us.” The Brewers hired Atlanta designer Beth Webb to handle the interiors, and University of Notre Dame landscape architecture professor Douglas Duany to create the grounds.

Webb spent enough time on-site to get a good feel for Costa Rican lifestyle, and designed a quiet atmosphere where it could be enjoyed. “You wake up to the howler monkeys and parakeets,” she says. “It’s just incredible.” She also made sure everything was family-friendly, with plenty of washable slipcovers in outdoor fabrics by Perennials. The designer became so besotted with Costa Rica that she took a piece of it back to Atlanta with her: a stray dog who lingered on the job site for weeks. Her name is Catalina.

The serene loggia, where sheers flutter in the ocean breeze. **FOLLOWING PAGES:** To avoid, as Webb says, a “Casa Americana” look, the designer shopped for pieces in Mexico City. Ginny commissioned Charleston artist Joe Walters to create the wall installation of hatching turtles, to commemorate the family’s beach arrival.







ABOVE: The best place for sunset cocktails is the loggia, with its hefty cerused-oak swings. OPPOSITE: A view from the pool into the barrel-vaulted grotto, where a dining table designed for the family's frequent entertaining can seat 16.

