

A Family Getaway in Punta Mita

Join the Falkenbergs at their welcoming home in Mexico

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The cooks at this Mexican villa share their mothers' and grandmothers' recipes. The palapa by the swimming area keeps large groups shaded from either a strong sun or a persistent rain the way the iconic palm-leaf thatched-roofs have been doing for centuries in Mexico. While Casa Majani exudes Hispanic authenticity, it does so in a five-star location on the Punta Mita peninsula.

The Mexican retreat possesses a timeless feel: most of the indoor walls are in terra cotta shades or curved expanses of rock panel and the lighting is soft. Many of the furniture pieces are made from the local hardwood parota, and vibrant tropical colours, on flowers or pillows, offer understated festive detail. The home also has its whimsical side, namely the outdoor floating bar made from a vintage surfboard; its fin and tail on the other end of the rock panel wall forms a bathroom towel shelf. But the villa's authenticity lives within a very ordered complex, a veritable series of circles, spokes

and blocks of small buildings harmoniously adjoined through paths and water borders.



The different quarters may carry names written in the language of the Huichol, indigenous people that still inhabit this area of Mexico, but the whole property sits in the gated Four Seasons community near one of the famous Jack Nicklaus Signature golf courses.

Native warmth meets modern luxury. The combination mirrors the journey of Martha and Bob Falkenberg, the California man whose father was a builder and who

appreciates clean lines and modern structures, and the Guadalajara woman who has a strong sense of colour, creativity and a love for her culture. Now married with two children, the couple met back in 1990 in Puerto Vallarta. Through their disagreements and debates and respect for each other's talents, they brought their worlds and design sense to a Northern California home they could both appreciate. Then came another home, and they eventually conveyed their rustic-comfort aesthetic to an architectural



team that respected both of their origins and outlooks, and got Casa Majani opened in 2009.

Bob grew up with a tape measure and a level never far away. His father led large home projects, including one for a member of the Hall family, owners of Hallmark Cards. Bob became proficient in several trades, working alongside his father,

but he would end up turning to a career in investment banking. His appreciation for good workmanship and solid structures never left him, though.

Martha grew up around colour, the youngest of seven children in a home that had a red floor, blue linen and a plethora of flowers growing around a home full of activity. "The place was loud and there was a lot of laughter and screaming, friends and family coming and going. It never felt empty," she said.

However, she felt a certain emptiness when she first stepped into Bob's home during their courtship. "I could not relax and enjoy myself. It was cold. Like a laboratory," she said of the Northern California home that had plenty of glass and cool modern lines. "Bob's home was gorgeous but it was mostly a bachelor's space."

Bob knew they had different aesthetics and got to see the difference between their two cultures on his first visit to Guadalajara with his new love. "I felt like I was leaving a black-and-white world. The neighbourhood in Guadalajara had fiestas in the park, the tables would be filled with all kinds of colour, from flowers to red peppers. And there was bougainvillea everywhere."



So the woman who, as a girl, used to wear bold clothes of yellow and orange for fun and who would intentionally clash colours began to introduce Bob to her favourite shades for the house they were building. No greys, blacks and off-whites for her. There were apricot yellows, raspberry reds and deep purples, many of them applied with sponges in a style she picked up in Greece.

Bob had a hard time at first with all these bold shades but eventually became philosophical, saying this is part and parcel of falling in love with someone from the Latin culture.

In 2008, Bob decided he was ready to end his career in investment banking. "The day after retirement," recalls Martha, "We got on a plane to look for property." They eventually found the site for [Casa Majani](#). The area looks out onto a small island on the Bay of Bandero, which lies in front of the St Regis Punta Mita Resort, while the Marieta Islands can be seen from the left of the property.



They hired two architects who, unlike others they had interviewed in the past, seem to have understood both Bob and Martha. Bob uses words like geometric consistency while Martha talks about falling in love with a project. They found Manolo Mestre, with a creativity and playfulness

they both admired, and Juan Collignon, who Martha says is a disciple of the minimalist architect Luis Barragán, bringing in an organized formality to the structure.

The place is full of open areas, where breeze and shade and sun and salt air can be felt. There is an easy flow from a yoga building to a media building to the kitchen and then to an infinity swimming pool that follows the same contours as the rest of the complex. One of the bedrooms appears as an island on the pool, while the framed rectangles of water act as reflective borders to other quarters.

There's a ground level fire pit for intimate gatherings and sunsets can be seen from the sand beach terrace. Manager Karsten Lemke has created new places to dine. "Setting up provisional venues for meals is easy. With a little custom lightning we can have dinner anywhere on the property. Even on the roof. Or cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at the ocean shore," he says.

While Bob's father built grand homes, Martha's father was also a capable builder, though he constructed more modest vacation homes for the family, one year near a mountain another near a lake. "My father built them for us to simply enjoy our holiday."

For Casa Majani, the name taken from the first two letters of Martha and the couple's two children Jacky and Nikki, the directives are the same. The two people who come from different places built this for people to simply enjoy their holiday.

Original Article can be found at : <https://magazine.luxuryretreats.com/family-getaway-punta-mita/>