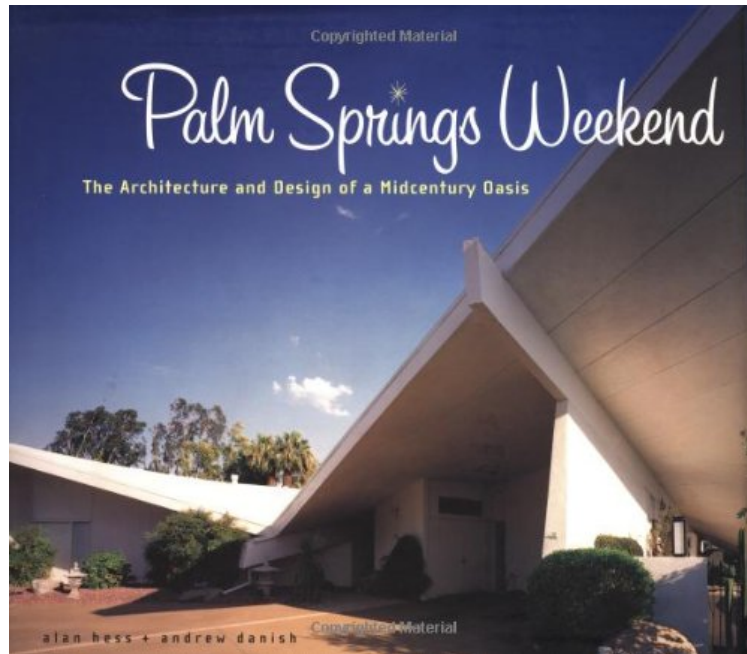


[Download ebook] Palm Springs Weekend: The Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis

Palm Springs Weekend: The Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis

Andrew Danish, Alan Hess

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Andrew Danish, Alan Hess : Palm Springs Weekend: The Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis

before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Palm Springs Weekend: The Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis:

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This is the first book to reveal the eccentric treasure trove of commercial, civic, and domestic architecture that makes Palm Springs a true oasis of progressive design. Not merely regarded as a Hollywood playground, golf enclave, or retirement mecca, Palm Springs is also a bastion of idiosyncratic modernism that is unparalleled in the world. Creating stunning homes and an impressive array of other buildings in the middle of the desert, such masters as Albert Frey, Richard Neutra, John Lautner, R. M. Schindler, Donald Wexler, and Lloyd Wright exercised their creative potential there. Palm Springs Weekend explores everything from the grandiose, such as Neutra's Kaufmann house, to the more humble features of the city--motels, trailer homes, and the ubiquitous metal and concrete sunscreens that shade them. Filled with hundreds of archival and contemporary photographs, elevations, and vintage ephemera, Palm Springs Weekend reveals an inimitable city where modern design, Hollywood glamour, and the desolate drama of the desert

coalesce.

.com Palm Springs Weekend could have been just a breezy look at the celebrity culture of this California desert playground. Instead, Alan Hess offers an authoritative yet refreshingly non-doctrinaire view of the various ways European and American architects--some famous, some not--adapted the canons of modernism to suit the desert climate, landscape, and lifestyle. With evocative vintage photographs and an engagingly retro design by Andrew Danish, this is one of the most enjoyable popular architecture books in years. The story begins with "the panorama of brown rock... peppered with ever-changing shadows and the unexpected desert plants that turn this great natural wall into a tapestry of texture and color." Then came the wealthy industrialists and Hollywood royalty who wanted vacation homes and were more or--at least initially--less amenable to modern design. Car culture and casual living morphed the international style into new silhouettes and textures fit for a modern oasis. Swiss migrant Albert Frey designed minimalist houses "like tents staked in the desert." Richard Neutra's famous Kaufmann House has polished glass walls, flat, floating roofs, and luxury finishes, while John Lautner's Elrod House--seen in the James Bond film *Diamonds Are Forever*--is a futuristic concrete cave. Tract homes by William Krisel and Dan Palmer for the Alexander Company offered a mass-market modernist solution, with butterfly roofs and patterned concrete block walls crisply defined by the intense sun. By the early '50s, local projects also included civic and commercial buildings. Memorable nonresidential projects range from William Cody's Huddle Springs restaurant, with its bold angled beams, canvas awnings, and open plan, to Victor Gruen's City National Bank, on which a sweeping curved roof reminiscent of Le Corbusier's Ronchamp chapel meets the desert opulence of gold filigree. --Cathy Curtis
From Publishers Weekly
Streamlined modernist design arrived on the West Coast in the early '20s with architects weaned on the Prairie School, and spawned a new type of city. In *Palm Springs Weekend: The Architecture and Design of a Midcentury Oasis*, San Jose Mercury News architecture critic Alan Hess (Rancho Deluxe) and veteran magazine art director Andrew Danish document, in 260 color and bw photos, the process by which giant sand lots in the shadow of Mt. San Jacinto became sets of private, family-sized resorts. From the giant roadside Cabezon dinosaurs to the rustic Smoke Tree Ranch (repeatedly visited by Cary Grant), the House of Tomorrow (a retreat for the newly married Elvis and Priscilla) and the slender-columned Robinson's department store, this grand (and environmentally dubious) architectural experiment continues to retain its unique character. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.
From Library Journal
Blazing with sunshine and rich with fantasy, Palms Springs, CA, is a playland for Angelenos and the occasional home to many celebrities. The desert city has alternately reached peaks of chic and suffered shabby years of neglect. A high-powered revival of interest in 1950s modern style and the city's recent life as a gay destination have once again revived this resort town. This book makes no pretense of being a serious study of the way Palm Springs evolved; it is about how Palm Springs looks. Hess and Danish take a very positive view of the city, bouncing from image to image, like first-time visitors dazzled by the sleek buildings and palms lit by sun and buoyed by the promise of fun. The book's design is decidedly retro but not trapped by that cliché. It treats Palm Springs with care, traveling with finesse between a breezy look at this center of desert design and a useful introduction to some of the city's best houses, offices, and hotels. The authors and photographer Robert Polidori fill its pages with enough text and color to present that particular mix of sky, light, mountains, and style that makes Palm Springs. Recommended. David Bryant, New Canaan Lib., CT Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.