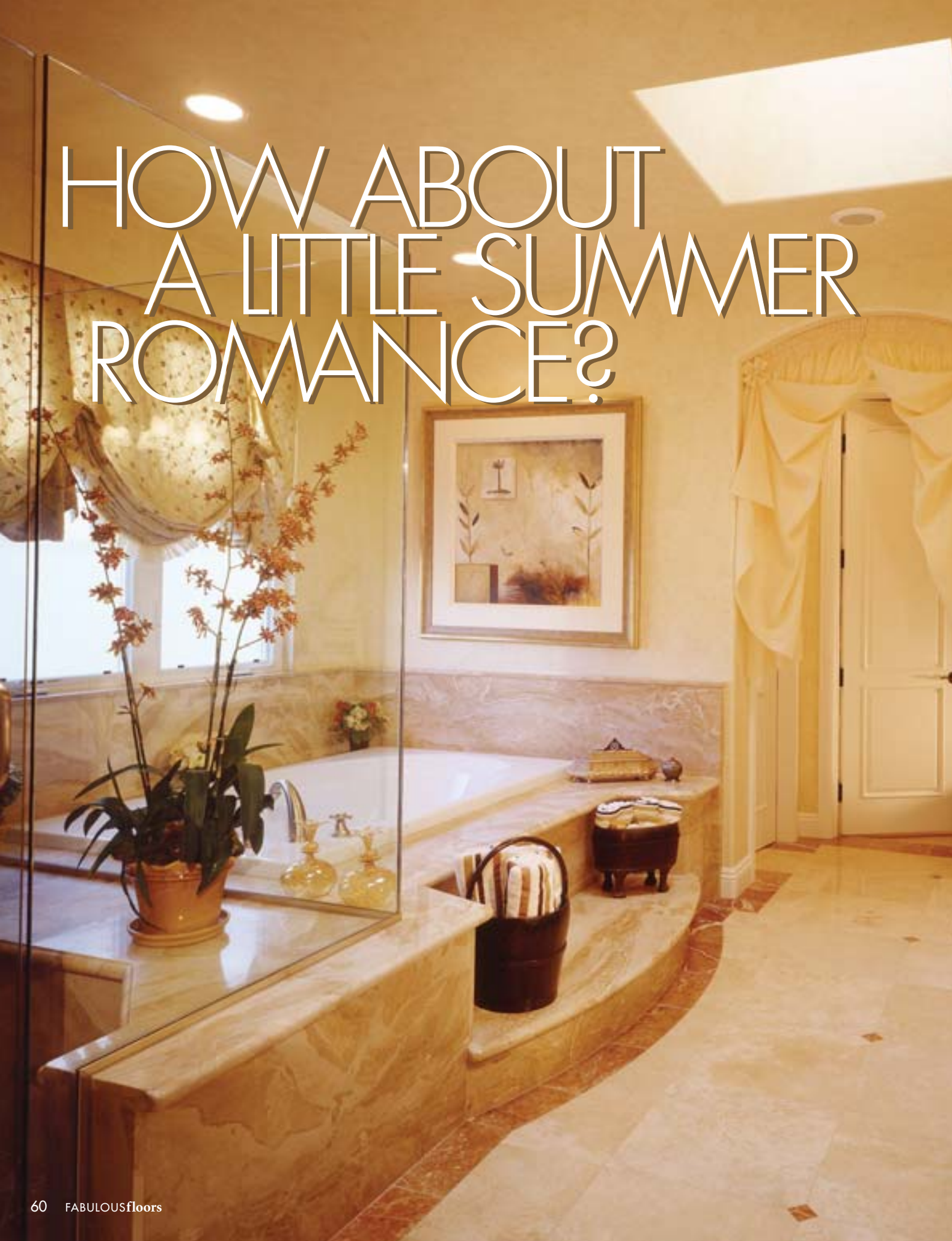


HOW ABOUT A LITTLE SUMMER ROMANCE?



ROMANCE IS WHAT ASID DESIGNER SARAH BARNARD WAS CHARGED WITH FOR THE MASTER SUITE OF THIS NEARLY NEW, YEAR-OLD, 5,500-SQUARE-FOOT MEDITERRANEAN STYLE HOME IN MANHATTAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA LAST OCTOBER.

The home was, as she describes it, a builder's "spec" home. "It was essentially new and in need of no repairs. The master suite was definitely lackluster, though, in need of a designer's touch and finer materials for it to become an adult hide-away bursting with romance! Definitely not ho-hum!"

In the bedroom, the couple wanted the look and feel of Italy. Says Sarah, "It's not true-to-form Italian, rather a variety of influences, predominantly Italian with French and borderline Victorian. The room is clearly feminine, but the neutrality of tones and depths of saturated browns help give it a masculine edge."

At the center of the re-design is an opulent four-poster bed with custom floral chenille coverlet, gathered silk bed skirt and an ensemble of finely finished accent pillows in silk dupion and velvet. It's mellow but luxurious. Sarah brought in an artist to create a mural in the alcove ceiling area above the bed. Where the ceiling and walls meet is a rich gold leaf band, hand-applied, and a dark wood faux finish "frame." Such lavishness is reinforced by the chandelier.

A fabric-draped doorway leads to the bathroom (opposite page and below). Here, the basics were in place, so the objective was to romance the bath with artwork, plants and window treatment in the bath area, lighting (which over the dual sink area is hand-finished with silver leaf accent) and antique pewter faucets and towel rings.

Fortunately, Sarah agrees, the builder got it right with the floor and the marble tub area in the bath. On the floor, large marble tiles had been offset with 2x2-inch accent inserts and a 4x12-inch liner framing the entire room. The inserts and liner are the same marble as the main floor, only darker tones, she explained.

"The bath cabinetry (below) was a pretty hideous orange-cherry color. We didn't need to replace it," she said, "so we used a faux finish in three steps. The counter marble is the same as the tub surround and was left in place. The vase was a homeowner find, an Italian piece." Sarah explained.

Sarah says "The inspiration was for a feeling really 'lux' but not gaudy. So often in traditional interiors there is a propensity to over-decorate in dripping ribbons and bows. I wanted to keep neutral tones for an elegance and to have a WOW! factor — but not bowl you over. It's a settle-in space without being overwhelming." 🏡



Utilizing an existing marble bath and floor design, Sarah Barnard "redecorated" the master bath to continue the romance of the Italian inspired bedroom. Most major projects begin with a rendering (top right) which tells the client exactly what to expect. Carpet in the master bedroom is by Fabrica.

