

LUXE HOMES

# THE ART OF LIVING

*They say art is a reflection of man's soul, and this masterpiece of a property by the beach is a testament to its resident's own*

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**PREVIOUS PAGE**  
Upholstered high-back  
Lazy dining chairs by  
Patricia Urquiola and  
an Athos bench by  
Paolo Piva surround  
the floating dining  
table, which uses thick  
plexiglass for support

**J**uan Antonio Mendoza y González's home outside the city is a 700-square-metre canvas of his life and work. For the renowned architect and interior designer, building a home in Tali Beach in Nasugbu, Batangas was not a difficult decision to make. J Antonio Mendoza—as he is known amongst his peers in the industry—enjoyed many weekends on the beach with his family as a child. “Whenever possible, on Fridays, my parents would take us to Nasugbu right after coming home

from school at the Ateneo de Manila,” he recounts of such trips that inspired his affinity for sand and sea. The four-bedroom split-level is Mendoza's main residence, and not a weekend *piéd-à-terre* like most beachfront homes. “This is my private sanctuary,” he says. When work does not demand that he stays in the city, days are spent here with those closest to him. “My family, my cousins, they are my usual guests,” he adds.

Much like the idea behind his chosen location, the concept for the property itself was inspired by Mendoza's passions

and craft. “I envisioned it to be sharp, to be very simple but with sophistication and clarity of design,” he says of his initial plans for the house. Out of this vision came a modern masterpiece—straight lines and clean angles coming together to form a living space that complements the natural elements surrounding it, with expansive windows and openings that allow natural light and sea breeze to flow seamlessly through the space. The house itself, which covers 200 square metres of the property, is the quintessential reflection

of Mendoza's mastery of the art and technique of architecture.

The master's bedroom, his favourite spot at home, has corner glass windows that open to the living room, pool, and the sunset—“so I am always a part of all the beauty that surrounds,” Mendoza says. The living room opens up to a 100-square-metre *terrazza* (terrace) overlooking the sea. In keeping with the architectural theme of the house, an asymmetrical infinity pool sits by the edge, the blue sky above reflected on still, clear water over dark tile flooring.

**THIS PAGE:** The sleek horizontal planes of the home's architecture are not marred by lush landscaping

**THIS PAGE**

Clouds reflect on clear waters, whilst the infinity pool and the West Philippine Sea appear to meet seamlessly





**FROM LEFT**  
On the pedestal beside an artwork by Jaime Zóbel de Ayala is an antique silver Moro *gadur* from Lanao del Sur; the infinity pool is a perfect place to relax on a sunny day

**OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**  
The neutral palette of black, white, and anthracite is carried all the way to the bedrooms; a glass window commands a view of the lush foliage; hurricane lamps line the white stairs at the main entrance of the home

Strategically arranged around the open area are contemporary designer furniture that, besides providing comfortable lounging, may be considered works of art themselves. Mendoza identifies two of his favourite items in the house: the Croissant sofa and the black Bloom chair, both signature pieces from the collection of his friend Kenneth Cobonpue. He is particularly proud of the latter, which was a personal gift from the multi-awarded industrial designer. “I have the distinction of having the only black Bloom Chair in existence,” Mendoza says of the piece, which was customised according to his signature colour palette. Equally impressive is the round white Canasta sofa by the Spanish architect and designer Patricia Urquiola, the same seating used in a luxury hotel’s poolside in Barcelona. Mendoza had especially

ordered the piece from an internationally renowned design magazine. Though Mendoza embraces lines and angles in architecture—noting the modernist architect Richard Neutra and German art school Bauhaus as influences—his style as a designer, in fact, is more eclectic. He describes it as “a flawless, seamless, clever mix of modernity and antiquity,” adding that it is “a very different side of me. It’s a side of me I’ve always liked.” Letting his artistic passions take control, he draws inspiration from a mix of concepts and objects when designing a home—history, travel, even his own childhood. “I am easily inspired when I see beautiful homes, *objets d’art*, or even endearing personalities,” says Mendoza. An original painting by his friend Jaime Zóbel is proudly displayed in his home, also a personal gift from the



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celebrated industrialist and artist. “Yet I sometimes am inspired by the most mundane or simple things—like a well-designed paper clip. That’s the artist’s passion in me,” he adds.

Philippine history, in particular, is a strong influence in Mendoza’s design work. “The Philippines has a very distinct culture,” he says. “We are very different from our Asian neighbours. I always like to say we are a Latin American country swept to Asia by a giant tidal wave.” The Hispanic and Moro flavours, specifically, are unmissable in his home. Displayed amidst the strong lines and angles of the interiors are iconic jars and antiques such as a 19th century Gothic-style

gilded altar—also a favourite item of his. According to the distinguished interior designer, such elements temper the modernity of the architecture. Their gold tones and patina break the monotony in a palette of black, white, grey, and brown.

Mendoza credits his Spanish ancestry for his affinity to this era in Philippine history. Having generations of family members who grew up and resided in Intramuros, he notes the Walled City as a major inspiration in his work: “My lines are very modern and yet Intramuros is my sanctuary. It is in this bastion of Hispano-Filipino culture where I am at home.”

Taking a cue from the natural

**THIS PAGE**  
A view of the *terrazza* (terrace) and the infinity pool

**OPPOSITE PAGE**  
A 17th century-style *papelero* (drawers) in *kamagong*, *narra*, ivory, and tortoise shell from Osmundo Antiques is topped by a black fan coral and an antique *gadur*





**THIS PAGE**  
Canasta sofa by Patricia Urquiola, Bubu stool/table by Philippe Starck, and Croissant sofa by Kenneth Cobonpue are some of the highlights in the living room

**OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT**  
The sunset peeking through the home's exteriors; on top of a 19th-century *cómoda* (chest of drawers) are blue and white porcelain, shagrin boxes from Cebu, and sea shells; *manzanita* twigs from Mexico are tucked behind a Sung Dynasty brown jar that serves as a hamper in the master bathroom; a cantilevered ledge by Antonio Citterio for Abitare and a sketch by HR Ocampo welcome guests at the vestibule

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greenery surrounding the beach, plants are carefully plotted around Mendoza's property, extending to select rooms inside such as the bathrooms and living spaces. The harmonious mix of greens and antique elements adds character, warmth, and comfort to the strikingly contemporary property.

Like a true artist, Mendoza designs homes by instinct. “I don't find reasons to create. Otherwise, it ceases to become art,” he explains. Whilst he takes a very hands-on approach when it comes to

selection of materials, and is particular about details such as textures and colours to use, he is not constrained by any rules in design. Rather, he taps into a wellspring of knowledge and years of experience to lead his work. It is precisely for this reason that he considers his property by Tali Beach as his best and favourite work. It is an impeccable display of J Antonio Mendoza's expertise and *mélange* of influences. Like brush to canvas, he created his dream home from a palette of passion and skill. **H**

