



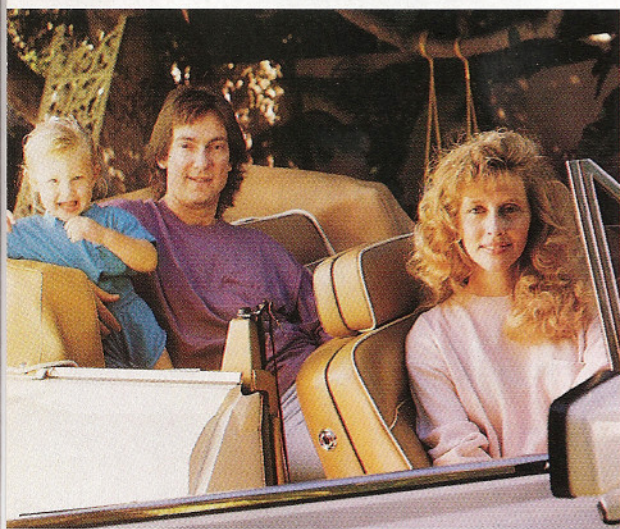
California Suite

One of rock and roll's coolest lawyers, John Branca strikes a traditional chord in Beverly Hills. By Peter Haldeman

Photographs by Oberro Gili Produced by Joyce MacRae



For the Brancas' kitchen, decorator Lynn von Kersting began with 1940s tablecloths from her Los Angeles shop, Indigo Seas, then added old yachting pictures and antique majolica. Details see Resources.



John Branca represents bands like Aerosmith, but there's nothing rock and roll about his house

IF HOUSES TELL STORIES, LOS ANGELES HOUSES are Scheherazades. On a corner in Beverly Hills, a photogenic Mediterranean villa presents to the procession of videocam-sprouting Alamo rentals a vast expanse of salmon pink stucco relieved by green shutters and the noirish shadows of oversize palms and banana trees. Despite the presence of a black Jeep in its driveway and the absence of its address from any star map, the place fairly oozes faded glam: the chiaroscuro surface insinuates dimmer recesses concealing, perhaps, the detritus of better times for a movie queen whose hairstyle and wardrobe alone remain undisturbed by the years.

In fact, the house admits an abundance of sunlight, light that saturates pastel shades on the walls and settles on the evidence of a rich and hardly moribund existence—orientalist découpage screens plastered with monkeys and clowns, English horse and dog paintings, Russian and Turkish carpets in mellowed floral and geometric patterns, Indian games tables draped with rich Kashmiri paisleys and brilliant Chinese tassels, heavy Venetian grotto furniture, a bust of Liszt on a Steinway concert grand, and chests lad-

John Branca, left, with his wife, Julie, and daughter, Jessica, in a Rolls-Royce given to him by Michael Jackson. Above: In the living room sofas and chairs from Indigo Seas ring an oversize ottoman used as a coffee table, under the gaze of Franz Liszt. **Opposite:** An 18th-century Venetian commode holds delftware and a French tureen.