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An Exclusive Look at
20 Houses from the World's
Top Architects

The Art of Relaxation

ALTAMER'S ENCLAVE OF PRIVATE VILLAS REDEFINES THE GETAWAY



ABOVE: "I had the opportunity to explore my geometric architectural forms and spaces in a series of separate but related structures," Myron Goldfinger says of his design for Altamer, a resort consisting of three secluded stucco-clad luxury villas on Anguilla's Shoal Bay West beach.

Myron and June Goldfinger's excellent Anguillan adventure began in 1983. After exploring most of the other islands in the Caribbean, the husband-and-wife architect/interior designer team landed on the tranquil island of Anguilla, where they purchased land on one of the best beaches, Shoal Bay West. They eventually completed the resort of Covecastles (see *Architectural Digest*, January 1998).

In 1995 a young American couple, Rebecca and Michael Eggleton, who were residing and working in Moscow, came to Anguilla on vacation. They returned several times and decided to build a holiday villa on an acre they had bought along the beach quite close to Covecastles, and in 1997 they asked Myron Goldfinger to be their architect. One villa led to another, and before long the Eggletons had acquired five additional acres

and were hoteliers rather than homeowners. They now own Altamer, a cluster of three large and tall white villas that complement each other and look like geometric castles in the sand—castles designed by Myron Goldfinger with a profusion of triangles, semi-circles and rectangular expanses of glass.

"*Alta* in Italian means high, and *mer* is sea in French, and we wanted our boutique resort to have an international flavor,"

Architecture by Myron Goldfinger, FAIA/Interior Design by June Goldfinger
Text by Susan Sheehan/Photography by Bruce Buck



LEFT: The property, owned by Rebecca and Michael Eggleton, has a conference center and a public restaurant, which specializes in French and Caribbean dishes. RIGHT: "The patterns of the silver service reflect the waves of the sea," notes interior designer June Goldfinger.



The imposing south façade of the Brazilian Emerald "is all glass," Myron Goldfinger points out. "The upper floor has a master bedroom at center with a semicircular balcony and guest rooms on either side. They can be joined as suites; all of them have high angled roofs."

Rebecca Eggleton says. "We knew we wanted to attract an international clientele."

In the first villa, the Russian Amethyst, there are four bedrooms for guests on the second and third floors of one wing, and a master suite with a 19-foot-high ceiling and a curved deck under the flat roof of its other wing. "Above the master suite is a rooftop terrace with a telescope and a spa, and projecting from the

second level toward the sea is a bridge that is the most romantic place at Altamer for a dinner for two," Rebecca Eggleton says. Each bedroom has a king-size bed and a marble bath. June Goldfinger and Eggleton searched galleries and shops in Russia, Turkey and Italy for paintings and objects to adorn the villa.

The five bedrooms in the central villa, the Brazilian Emerald, are all on the third floor

and face the sea. "This is a fantastic place for entertaining," says Eggleton. "The living room, dining room and home theater are on the two lower floors, with a large semicircular bar and a 180-degree view of the Caribbean." To furnish the villa, the women went treasure hunting in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Salvador.

The third and most spacious villa, the African Sapphire, which opened last October, in-

Altamer is a cluster of three tall white villas that complement each other and look like geometric castles in the sand.





"I went to Russia, Brazil and South Africa to locate hundreds of objects. Each villa has the name and influence of a different country," explains June Goldfinger. ABOVE: "The grand but controlled living room reflects my goal of having the various cultures 'clash' with elegance."

BELOW: A gilt Elkington candelabrum acquired in Russia rests on the dining table. "My signature design elements throughout Altamer are blue opalescent-glass tops for all the major tables, and rattan furniture. I've created a club atmosphere as well as comfort."



cludes a pair of master bedrooms and baths with double whirlpool tubs, four guest rooms and baths, and two bedrooms suitable for children. It has two spas, a pool (each villa has its own), a pond for snorkeling and 14 flat-screen televisions; the largest one is 110 inches and is in the home theater, where guests can watch satellite TV and movies. "Rebecca and I went on a shopping safari to Johannesburg and Cape Town because I knew that tribal art and objects from all over Africa," June Goldfinger says.

What distinguishes Altamer from most other resorts is not simply the sculptural drama of its strong, simple

spaces but the high quality of the villas' artifacts and paintings, the luxury of the hand-finished bed linens, Turkish towels and sterling silver flatware and tableware, and the level of privacy it offers. "We only rent a villa to a single person, a couple, a family or a group of friends or business associates who have arranged in advance to be together," explains Rebecca Eggleton. "Once a villa has been rented, it's all yours. We never rent individual rooms."

A large staff of butlers and housekeepers attends to guests' wishes. A team of chefs prepares meals to order in the villas' kitchens. Upon request, butlers play songs on the surround-sound systems from

Altamer's 30,000-song collection. A concierge assists guests in hiring boats for scuba diving or for day trips to St. Martin or St. Bart's. Arrangements are easily made for massages (each villa has a treatment room); personal trainers (each one has a fitness center); lunches or dinners at Altamer's restaurant; and reservations at other fine restaurants and lively pubs on the 39-square-mile, eel-shaped island. Some guests play tennis on Al-

RIGHT: "The African Sapphire brings the history and heritage of the Caribbean to Altamer," says Myron Goldfinger. **BELOW:** The villa's master bedroom is laid out with a built-in bed and cabinetry. "My interiors are very tailored, with a focus on details," remarks June Goldfinger.

"Once a villa has been rented, it's all yours," explains Rebecca Eggleton. "We never rent individual rooms."



tamer's two courts, while others use wi-fi poolside.

"I'm very proud of our 80 percent guest return rate," says Rebecca Eggleton. "We haven't been open long, but we've had people come back six times. Some return to the same villa. Others try out a different villa, but they request the butler who already knows that they prefer kiwi fruit and croissants for breakfast and that they drink sparkling water rather than still water. I'm also proud of our close-to-zero staff turnover." □

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"The projecting bridge from the second floor bisects the swimming pool below," comments Myron Goldfinger. "I used reinforced-concrete construction everywhere to withstand the strongest hurricane." Terra-cotta tiles were used inside and out. A spa is at the end of the bridge.

