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COURTENAY COX'S PRIVATE PARADISE

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A painting by Matthew Heller, vintage leather chairs by Charles Pollock, and a poured-concrete floor in the tennis house. **FACING PAGE:** In the master bedroom's sitting area, a painting by Matt Palmer hangs above a custom-made daybed; the throw is by Hermès, and the rug is by the Rug Company. See Resources.



Her new home has a traditional shape and had been painted a rich brown by the previous owners. "It was beautiful," says Cox. "But I don't like things to be too dark, and I knew it needed a big revamp for my taste." Actress Laura Dern referred her to architect Michael Kovac; Cox then hired her good friend Trip Haenisch to helm the interior design. "There was a good balance between Michael and Trip," says Cox. "Michael is definitely more modern; Trip tried to make the house look like it had been here forever." The result, she says, is "very simple, with bronzed-steel trim, white walls, and wood floors. Nothing too cluttered and not a lot of fancy details."

In the spirit of Monica Geller, the driven, perfectionist chef she played on *Friends*, Cox sure-handedly led the team through "intense" once-a-week planning meetings that lasted three hours. "I've been overseeing renovations of my homes for a long time, and I have strong opinions about what I want and why." She scrutinized every detail, down to the smoky color of the tennis courts. Kovac recalls a visit from the tennis court surface company representative, who displayed his 10 stock colors. None quite fit the bill. "Courteney got him to bring a sample of the pigments of every color they had, along with some paintbrushes and paper plates, and everyone on the building team worked on mixing the pigments into new combinations. She had to get it exactly right." That level of exactingness only impressed her collaborators. "She's passionate and clear about what she wants," says Haenisch, "but she's open to hearing what you have to say. She pushed us to give her the best we could. I think we taught each other a lot just going through the process."

Cox has fond memories of growing up with 20 first cousins and Sunday-afternoon family gatherings at her grandmother's house. "I've been carrying on that tradition of having a family-and-friends day for years," she says, with Sunday get-togethers built around dinner and karaoke.

