



# VIVA LA FIESTA

Long live the party in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, where the mountains meet the desert, the desert meets the sea, and the fun never ends

WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY KRISKA ROSSBUND PHOTOGRAPHY BY ADAM ALBRIGHT

**Y**ou never know what geographical cues Barclay Butera is going to bring to the table. The design giant could come armed with the coastal vibes of his home base in Newport Beach, California; the midcentury leanings of Palm Springs, California; or the cold-weather coziness nudged by his ski abode in Park City, Utah.

But for a summer soiree, he chose to host guests well across the Mexican border at his home, Villa Blanca, in Cabo San

Lucas, where tropical warmth wafts through the air along with the aromas of one of the world's most beloved cuisines.

"In Cabo, nothing has to be perfect," says Barclay of the relaxed and carefree approach toward entertaining. "And I am so inspired by the offbeat palettes of Mexican pottery. In the States, we so often apply a formula to design. But here, anything goes."

*Designer Barclay Butera adds floral flair to the courtyard. The pool area presents guests the opportunity to take in city and water views.*



Barclay's relaxed gatherings commence with what's perhaps tequila's most popular achievement, the margarita. Here, it's served in iconic Mexican glassware with cobalt blue rims. Tiles throughout the interiors of Villa Blanca influenced the marriage of colors in the table setting for the occasion. Sunny yellow scalloped trim adorns linen napkins in a natural oatmeal hue. Gazpacho verde achieves its fresh green color from a delicious blend of spinach, avocados, cucumber, celery, cilantro, green onion, lime juice, salsa verde, and papaya.



Flavorful entrées turn up the heat. Mussels in a garlic, wine, and butter sauce get eye-watering flair from jalapeño chile peppers. Red rice that pulls its coloring from ancho chile pepper and salsa gains crunch, too, from grilled vegetables such as onions, peppers, and zucchini. Barbacoa beef is folded into soft tortillas. A trio of sauces offers varying degrees of heat for dipping. "I prefer the kind of entertaining that allows guests to mill about between the indoors and outdoors," Barclay says. "With our views here, I like to think it's like dining at the penthouse of the Eiffel Tower."



The architecture of Barclay's home, including support columns, frames the ocean views as if they are a photograph. *Opposite:* Barclay embraces the design of Mexico that celebrates a less formal blend of bold colors, such as the flowers he arranged for the table. He also didn't shy away from inviting design elements from another country. He hung a collection of electrified Moroccan lanterns, purchased during a trip to Marrakesh, from the portico.



I AM SO INSPIRED BY THE OFFBEAT PALETTES OF MEXICAN POTTERY.”  
—designer Barclay Butera



Cabo encourages a vacation mode mindset and also inspires creativity to run in high gear. Zero weather concerns allowed Barclay to pull an indoor table and chairs outside for this party. The table itself, an old wooden door that was cut into a round top and set onto an iron base, speaks to Mexican craftsmanship. The table's top, beautifully flawed with history's markings, supplied a foundation of texture for colorful pottery. A mélange of flowers, unbridled in its arrangement, celebrates the boldness of the nation's aesthetic culture.

The menu achieved the plentiful flavors of Mexican cuisine without getting fussy. Classic cocktails were a must—negronis

for a moment of orange and margaritas for a burst of salt after sour. Gazpacho verde delivered vegetables, lime, and spice at room temperature before the sizzling dishes of mussels with jalapeño, red rice with grilled vegetables, and barbacoa beef were served. Traditional churros paired with frozen coconut horchata for a sweet finish as a sunset turned evening into night.

“Villa Blanca enjoys some of the most magnificent views of Cabo,” Barclay says. “There's not a push to go to a restaurant. It's more special to bring in a chef and dine among the spectacle of the Sea of Cortez and the magic of the town's lights below. It's the perfect environment for friends. Olé!”



“THE CAREFREE BOHEMIAN LIFESTYLE MAKES IT THE PERFECT GETAWAY.” —Barclay Butera

The gates of Villa Blanca, Barclay's property in Cabo San Lucas, open to a courtyard that's a cool and verdant oasis and contrasts the sun-drenched heat on the other side of the house. *Opposite:* Caramel slivers cap frozen coconut horchata with extra sweetness and are served with churros for dessert. A tequila negroni twists the classic gin-and-vermouth-based cocktail. The suite of Mexican pottery mixes three patterns, plus a fourth design on the centerpiece vessel, proving that in Mexico, imperfection is the key to creative allure. "There is no matching here, only mixing," Barclay says. 