

Desert Style

Revel in the “Mad Men” world of sleek lines, sophisticated decor, and fine architecture during Modernism Week in Palm Springs.

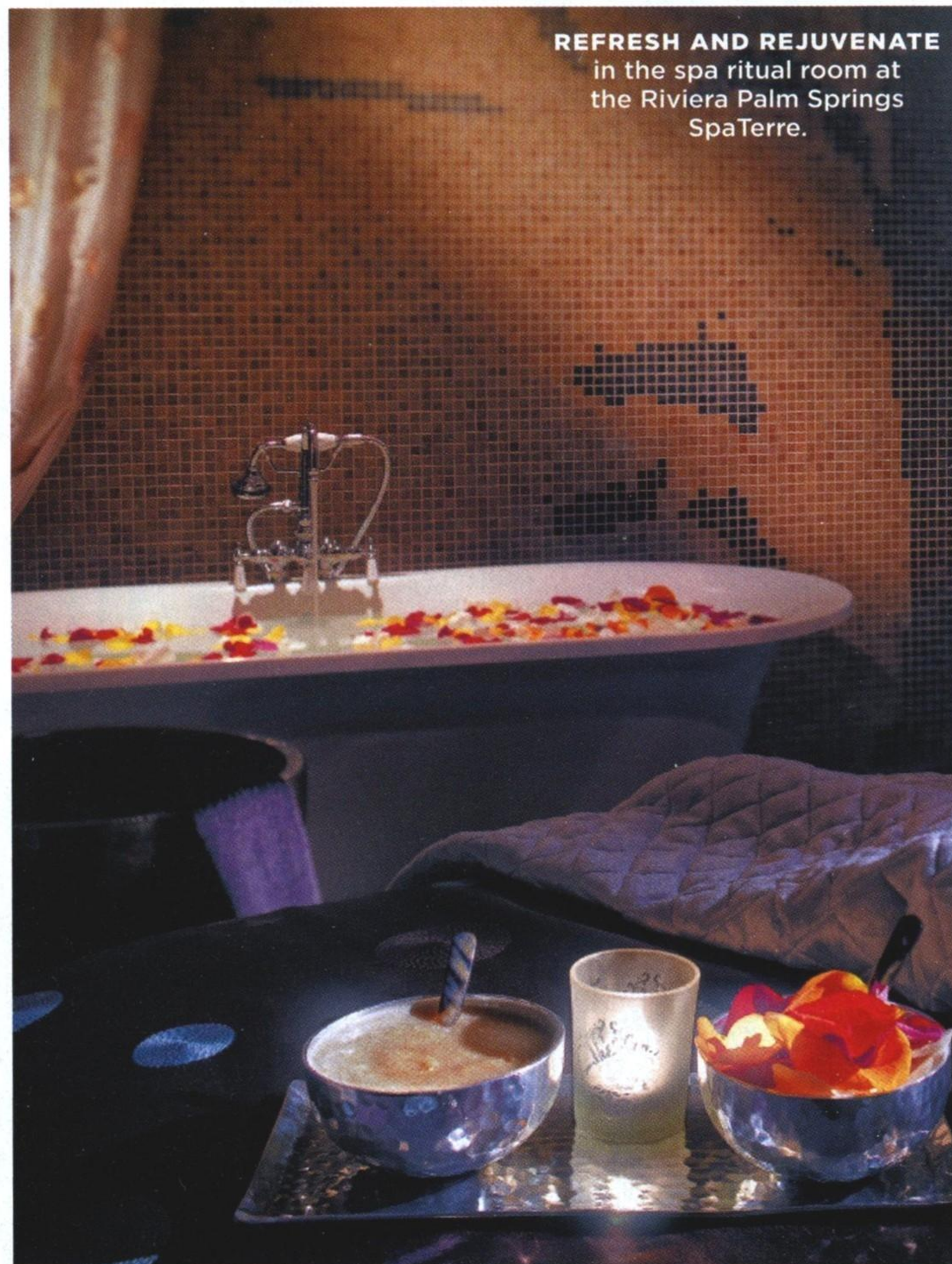
By JEANNE BOYER

Take a trip to the middle of the last century during Palm Springs Modernism Week Feb. 16 to 26. The event has become so popular that it now extends more than a week, to accommodate visitors from around the world who come to admire marvels of mid-century modern architecture.

You can tour mid-century homes, shop for mid-century furnishings, and sleep in a mid-century hotel. Gaze at Airstream trailers and cars with fins, while imagining yourself in a “Mad Men” world of sleek lines and sophisticated design.

Architects like Paul Williams, Albert Frey and John Lautner are among those who created homes for Palm Springs stars and business owners. You can attend tours and cocktail parties in their designs, including a party at the round Elrod House, a Lautner home seen in the movie *Diamonds are Forever*. Or raise your glass at a retro martini party Feb. 24 at the Gull Wing House, designed by Val Powellson for Ester and Leo Marantz. Leo invented the Tastee Freez soft serve ice cream machine. The home is now owned by Jazzercise CEO Judi Sheppard Missett, and the event benefits the Palm Springs Preservation Foundation.

The hot tour ticket is Sunnylands, the famed estate of fabulously wealthy Walter and Leonore Annenberg, who collected art when they weren't playing golf, hosting parties, and donating to worthy causes. If you can't make it during Modernism Week, a limited number of



REFRESH AND REJUVENATE
in the spa ritual room at
the Riviera Palm Springs
SpaTerre.

public tour tickets for the 25,000-square-foot home will be available beginning in March. Visit sunnylands.org to reserve tickets. Free tours of the visitors center and desert garden are also available. Distinctive pink walls surround the 200 acres where the Annenbergs entertained Hollywood royalty and the British royal family in 22 lovely guest rooms surrounded by 12 lakes and a private golf course.

You can stay in hotels designed by mid-century notables, like the Hotel Lautner in Desert Hot Springs—once a private home designed by Lautner, now an inn with four elegant units and luxurious amenities. In Palm Springs, The Movie Colony Hotel was designed by Albert Frey, and serves Dean Martinis by the pool. The Orbit In hotel serves “orbitinis.” You can also check out the Ace Hotel and Horizon Hotel for a mid-century vibe.

Shop for your own retro look in the Palm Springs Design District, where numerous shops sell authentic mid-century modern furniture or reproductions. You'll note orange is a frequently-used Palm Springs color, as part of the mid-century trend, and because it was a favorite of a couple of trendsetters, Leonore Annenberg and her friend Frank Sinatra, according to local lore.