

The TV mogul gives a tour of his sophisticated Spanish-style house, where Obama spoke, Diane Keaton lived and where he plans to raise a family with his new husband.

*This story first appeared in the Nov. 2 issue of **The Hollywood Reporter** magazine.*

Douglas Friedman
Ryan Murphy



While two Bernese Mountain dogs play in the courtyard where a white stucco fountain trickles in the sunlight, **Ryan Murphy** plunks down in a shadow-filled sitting room at his Beverly Hills house -- a space that was a kids' playroom when previous owner **Diane Keaton** lived there. He's eschewed his trademark cap, wearing a long-sleeved gray T-shirt and khakis. Even though he's overseeing an astonishing three primetime shows this fall, Murphy, 46, doesn't seem the slightest bit rushed, no iPhone or BlackBerry in sight over the course of nearly two hours during a visit that included a tour of his seven-bedroom, nine-bathroom house. The Spanish Colonial Revival residence -- where Murphy and designer **Cliff Fong** have created eclectic interiors mixing ranch-inspired, period-correct furniture, contemporary art and photography and *American Horror Story*-worthy objects -- was designed in 1927 by **Ralph Flewelling**, also the architect of the well-known fountain at the intersection of Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards.

The successful show creator -- whose *Glee* and *American Horror Story* have hauled in a combined 52 Emmy nominations and eight wins -- talks about how he *almost* bought this house 3½ years ago. In a rare bit of indecisiveness -- "I'm a really big yes/no person. There's no maybe with me" -- Murphy got cold feet. "I started escrow, but then I fell out. I was like, 'It's just too big,'" says Murphy, who was single at the time and in the middle of launching *Glee*.



Since then, he has created two more shows, *AHS* and *The New Normal*, and a little more than two years ago began a relationship with photographer and former location scout **David Miller**. "We started talking about family, and I had been haunted by the fact that I had not bought the house, so lo and behold, it was still available, and I bought it," says Murphy, who purchased the property in late 2010. The next year, the couple became engaged, and this year over the July 4th weekend wed on a Provincetown, Mass., beach, reportedly celebrating by catching a cabaret show by actress-singer and *Glee* guest star **Patti Lupone**. Murphy says that he and Miller had been friends for a dozen years before dating. "After years and years of dating people, we were like, 'What are we doing? We're the same age, we want kids, let's try it.' Thank God it worked."

The couple's house -- located in the flats below Sunset, a few blocks from the Beverly Hills Hotel -- had been faithfully restored by Keaton, L.A.'s most famous authority on indigenous Spanish Colonial architecture, documented in her 2007 book *California Romantica*. The actress bought it in 2007, adding archways and white plaster fireplaces to the two-story house, where four wings are arrayed around an interior courtyard. Murphy has been a fan of Keaton's taste for years. "When I first moved to L.A., a friend of mine was interested in buying a house of hers," says Murphy, who worked as a journalist for such outlets as *The Miami Herald* and *Entertainment Weekly* before breaking into TV. "It was 1992. We went to look at the house, and I remember going into the closet and seeing all her **Annie Hall** hats." (According to public records, he bought the house from Keaton for \$10 million; he also owns a two-house compound in Laguna Beach, Calif.)



The new house is a dramatic change from Murphy's previous midcentury residence in the Hollywood Hills by L.A. architect **Carl Maston**. (Murphy sold the contents of that house to its new owner. "The only things I took were my coffee cups and my art and my clothes," he says.) He and Miller -- whose portraits of various subjects populate the walls alongside works by **Doug Aitken**, **Robert Mapplethorpe**, **David Wojnarowicz** and **Ruven Afanador** -- refined the interiors room by room over the course of the next year and a half. "Our mantra was, 'What would Diane do?' I'd say we changed 40 percent of it," says Murphy, who calls Keaton's look "more monastic." Fong, whose clients include **Ellen DeGeneres** and **Portia de Rossi**, took the furnishings in a more comfortable direction. Where Keaton had wood benches and seating with leather cushions, for instance, there are now invitingly upholstered -- though all-black -- Spanish-style and Chippendale sofas.



An important visit this past summer forced them to complete the project. In June, Murphy and Miller hosted a \$40,000-a-couple fund-raising dinner for **President Obama** at their house, attended by the likes of HBO's **Michael Lombardo**, *Glee* star **Jane Lynch**, **Reese Witherspoon** and **Julia Roberts**, the star of Murphy's 2010 feature film *Eat Pray Love*. For an entire week before the 75-person event, the Secret Service "came in and checked it out. They take over your house. I even at one point had to show my ID to go back into my own house. Some of our

neighbors are Republicans, so they weren't exactly thrilled." Obama, he recalls, expressed his love for Spanish houses. "We gave him a little tour. It was thrilling."

Murphy became passionate about design growing up in the suburbs of Indianapolis. His father, who died last year, was the circulation director of a newspaper; he has described his mother as "a beauty queen who wanted to be an actress." Murphy subscribed to *Architectural Digest*, absorbing photos of houses owned by the late fashion designer **Bill Blass** and socialite **Nan Kempner**. At age 8, he designed his own bedroom. "I was very influenced by Studio 54 and **Diana Vreeland**. My mother thought I was insane, but my grandmother was like, 'Let him do what he wants.' I tried to turn it into a Marrakesh-meets-Studio 54 thing, so it was chocolate brown walls, a disco ball and olive carpeting."

Having the means to indulge that passion today "really feels like a fantasy to me," says Murphy. Adds Fong: "When he is interested in something, he likes to explore it in the most thorough sense." Murphy's love of Spanish Colonial style has extended to his newest show -- the sets he created for *The New Normal* are a near replica of his own house. Of course, the partnered couple on the show, one of whom is a TV producer, mirror his life as well: the two characters are in the process of having a baby via surrogate -- exactly what Murphy and Miller have in their plans. Given that, Miller has been adamant about his husband spending time at home. "He's pretty awesome about making sure he's home at a fairly reasonable hour, eight o'clock, which is amazing for a showrunner doing even one show," says Miller. Adds Murphy: "I never don't work. But a home life is so important to me now. I'm excited to have a family here."

<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/ryan-murphys-beverly-hills-home-382174>