Mediterranean Style: Relaxed Living
Inspired by Strong Colors and Natural Materials by Catherine Haig

Vivid colors, bold simplicity, textural contrasts, stone, tile, and stucco--these are the hallmarks of this refreshingly unpretentious style, which is easy to live with and surprisingly simple to evoke at home. Vibrant photos and detailed, practical text explore all the elements of the look and explain what to do with your own walls and floors, windows and doors, furnishings and accessories to re-create the look. And the 12 step-by-step projects (including sand-textured or distempered walls, a pebbled floor, a fretwork window screen, studded doors, and a mosaic tabletop) prove that it doesn’t take a huge effort or a huge budget to achieve the relaxed grace of this popular decor. The sun-drenched rooms filled with natural materials and accented with the occasional exotic touch (a filigreed lantern, Moroccan dishware, a kilim rug, Moorish arches, Spanish-style wrought ironwork) are extremely inviting—you’ll want to sprawl on a cushy divan and sip a cool beverage as you drink in the enticing warmth of this wonderful style. --Amy Handy

My Personal Review:
Due to unforeseen circumstances whereby my lower living area was suddenly subjected unceremoniously to several feet of murky moisture, I found myself in need of a partial home makeover, but with a shoestring budget and a short time frame.

Fortuitously, this book came through it unscathed, and I took it as an omen that Mediterranean was the way it should be.

The pictures are strikingly beautiful, the colors breath-taking, and my family may not be over-excited to hear that the foyer will now be a washed purple color with an earthen colored roof, accented by a canary yellow metal staircase. The book banishes all fear of the lavish use of color, clearly
illustrating how color can enhance your surroundings, making a cozy nest of warmth and harmony.

The furniture and accessories are all rustic and simple, the formula being wood, iron, stone, tile and carpet.

If you're the Victorian or romantic type, there's no toile de joie in lavender and pink in this book, no overstuffed chairs or furniture bearing the legs of any deceased monarch. If however, you're into relaxed, simple, harmonious, rustic and durable decor, this is a good book to use as a guide.

Amanda Richards, February 3, 2005

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