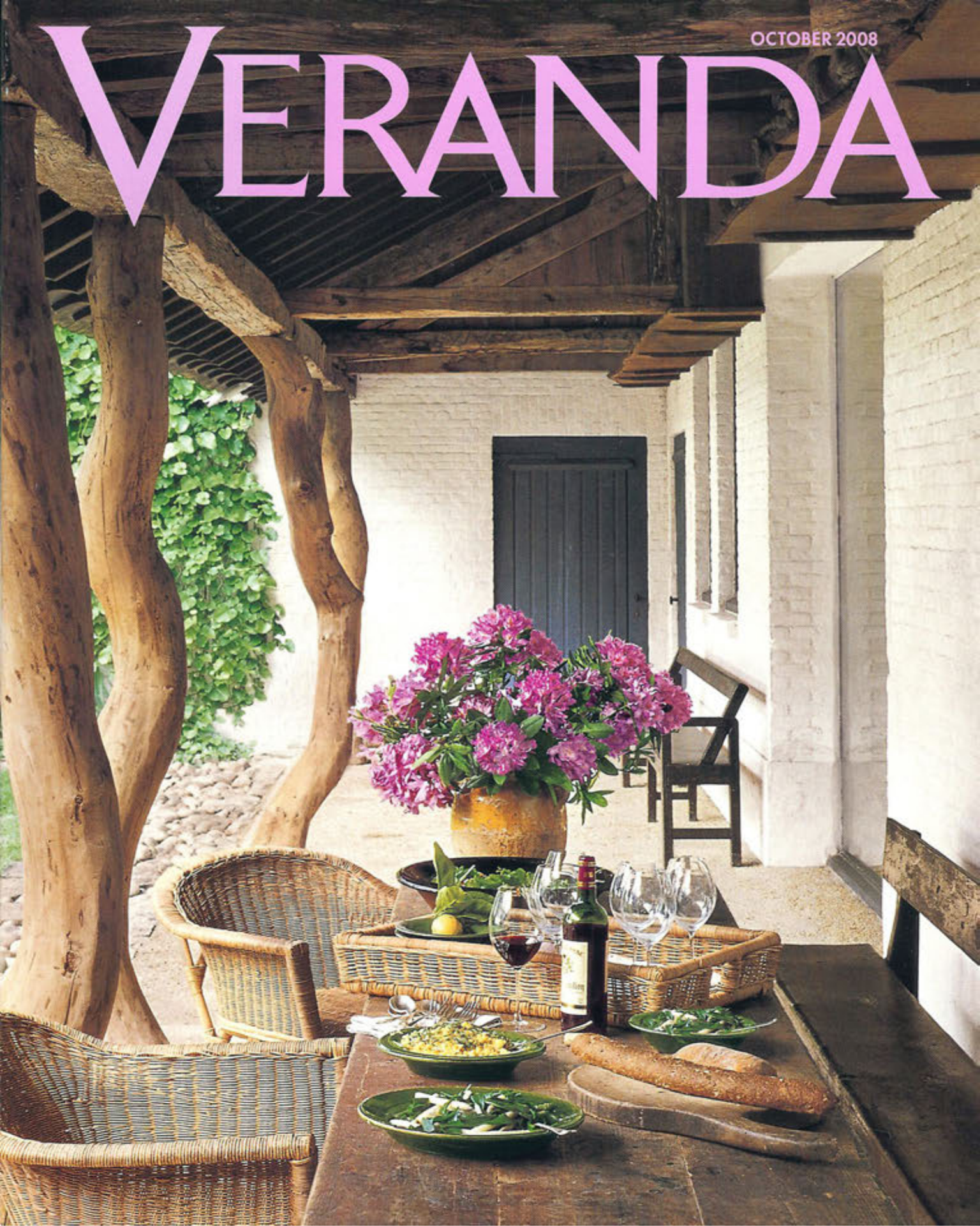
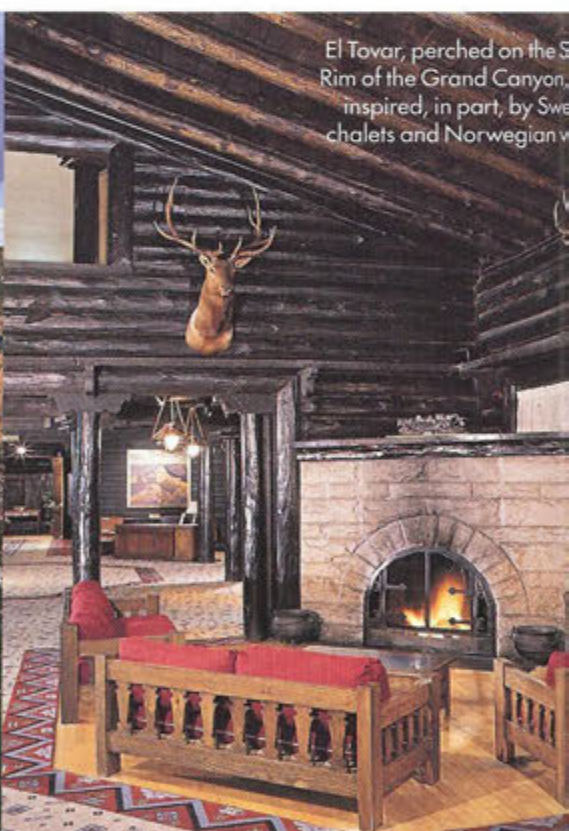
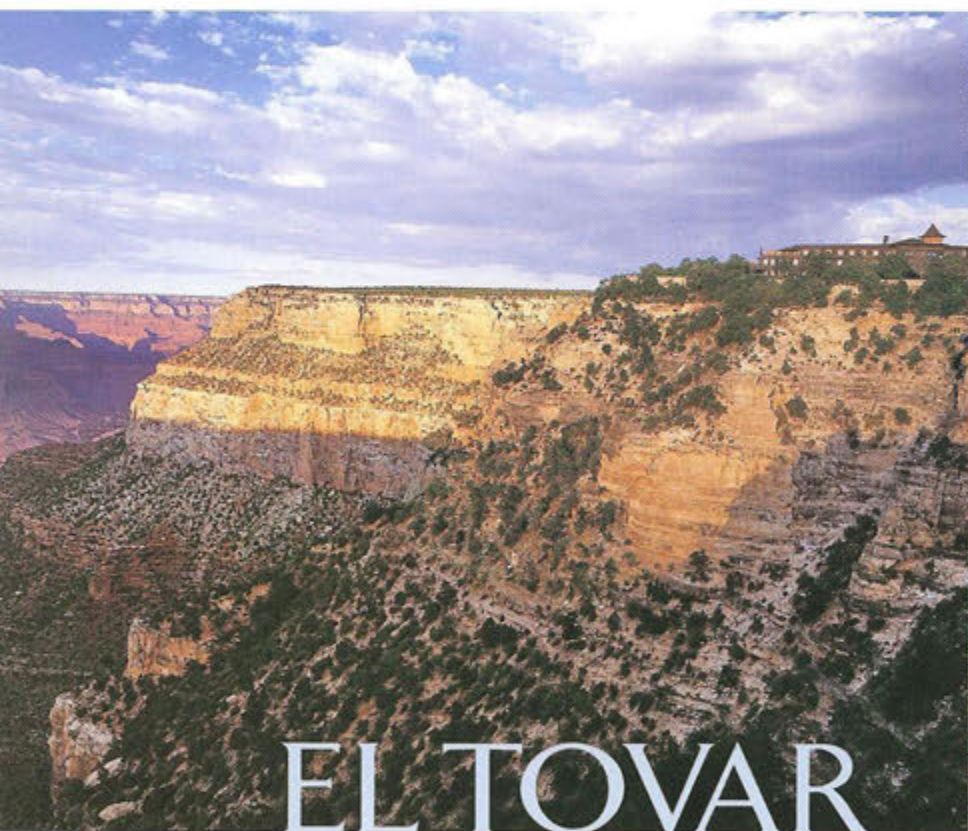


VERANDA



SPECIAL PLACES



El Tovar, perched on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, was inspired, in part, by Swiss chalets and Norwegian villages.

EL TOVAR

THE GRAND CANYON'S ICONIC LODGE

ARCHITECTURE BY CHARLES WHITTLESEY TEXT BY LINDA SHERBERT

We travel to Grand Canyon National Park to gaze in awe at the chasm that the Colorado River slices deep into the earth and to marvel at sure-footed creatures zigzagging up and down its cliffs, from gung ho hikers and bighorn sheep to caravans of mules carrying sun-baked tourists in cowboy hats. After watching the sunset trace shadows across the canyon, we can dine and overnight at El Tovar, the grandly rustic hotel built on the South Rim by the Santa Fe Railway in 1905 to attract visitors to this remote natural wonder.

Designed by architect Charles Whittlesey as equal parts Old West cabin and Old World hunting lodge, then filled with Arts & Crafts furniture and local paintings and pottery, El Tovar has hosted a parade of presidents from Teddy Roosevelt to Bill Clinton. For the hotel's 100th birthday, Xanterra Parks & Resorts decided to spruce up the three-story, log-slab landmark while preserving its original frontier charms.

El Tovar has undergone a \$4.6 million overhaul

guided by Bob Powell, the National Park Service's historical architect at the Grand Canyon. "The proper word is rehabilitation," he says, "from the roof's new redwood shakes—made of already-fallen trees and old wine vats, from the same mill used in 1905—to the reproduction rocking chairs on the porch." Inside, Design Lines of Colorado revamped guest rooms and themed suites as well as the dining room and lobby. At last, no more fluorescent lights over the front desk.

Senior designer Clay Pryor refinished and reupholstered the lobby's vintage seating, selected new furniture such as a Ralph Lauren Home sofa for a suite and added historical touches including bedspreads in an archival botanical print, mule blankets and, in the Charles Whittlesey Suite, framed blueprints of the hotel. The lobby's trophy heads even got restuffed—sportsman Roosevelt would have approved. □

For reservations at El Tovar: grandcanyonlodges.com or 303-297-2757. For interior design: designlinesinc.com.