

RIVIERA

SAN DIEGO

Sweet Melissa

We're hot on the trail of sizzling Food Network star Melissa d'Arabian.

| By Amy Finley | Photography by Noa Azoulay-Sclater |



TEN SPOT
Food Network star Melissa
d'Arabian, the queen of the
Ten Dollar empire, at
Searsucker downtown

Somewhere between a Williams-Sonoma (where she's been signing copies of her *New York Times* best-selling cookbook, *Ten Dollar Dinners*) and her beloved Coronado bungalow, Melissa d'Arabian has her driver pull into a roadside rest stop, where she dashes in and pulls a fast one: So long, DVF dress and stilettos. Hello, T-shirt and flip-flops. "It's been like George Clooney in *Up in the Air*," jokes the TV vet of her whirlwind 20-city book tour. She craves San Diego's casual comfort. When she's not moving at a frantic pace for her seven-seasons-strong Food Network show, *Ten Dollar Dinners*, she hides out at home with her French husband, Phillipe, who also travels extensively for his Microsoft job in finance. "We have to come home well rested," says the mother of four girls, all under age 7. She's the Doris Day of daytime cooking shows—the perky, blond girl next door doing budget-friendly coq au vin for the Kroger crowd. "I take full advantage of hotels so that when I walk in the door, I'm ready to be on." When the chauffeured car pulls into her driveway, the Manhattan celebrity is replaced by a Mayberry homebody

whose upcoming backyard renovation was designed for alfresco family meals to include neighbor/sister Stacy's brood. "We just love living in this little community. A friend of mine recognized Phillipe's and my bikes parked outside the Village Theater the other night," says d'Arabian, who cherishes family dinners at Burger Lounge and has hankerings for the chocolate bread pudding at Tartine by the ferry landing when she's on the road. "You know, we've lived in Paris, Chicago,

Texas, Seattle," she says. "This is actually my least favorite house ever—the kitchen is teeny-tiny! But it's by far my favorite home."

D'Arabian's Hots

*Petit Bateau T-shirts,
Saiko Sushi, Searsucker,
J Six, Village Theater,
Shellac manicures,
smoked paprika, Dog Beach*

D'Arabian's Nots

*Artificial sweeteners,
frappuccinos, foam*