



MANHATTAN BEACH MODERN

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Named for the hometown of an early developer, Manhattan Beach, located a few miles south of LAX, is a rare, still-sleepy seaside enclave at the edge of the bustle of greater Los Angeles. It is on one of the small town's charming, pedestrian-only "walk" streets—an architectural mishmash of Spanish-style villas, modern boxes and tiny beach bungalows—that Vicki and Seth Kogan came upon what would eventually become their home.

"It was a typical '80s beach house," says Vicki, who brought in architect James Meyer of Lean Arch to help the couple reimagine the home. "The house was clumsy, heavy and overscaled," says Meyer, who took it down to the studs with the intention of "bringing more light into the upper floors. I imagined the house as an elegant, glowing lantern."

Both inside and out, the house begins with a robust base and rises to a more delicate, light-filled crescendo. On the exterior, Meyer retained the existing textured blocks at the base, but traded the '80s nautical references for a striking blend of wood, steel and glass. Inside, the "lantern" would take shape with the help of designer Annette English, who created a seamless indoor-outdoor transition, adding layers of materials, finishes and furnishings to complement the couple's fast-growing collection of art curated by consultant Victoria Burns. "They wanted an open plan that allowed the top floor to feel as spacious, airy and light as possible," says English.

"It was like a fresh start," says Vicki, whose previous home, where she and Seth, a doctor, spent two decades raising their three grown children, Emily, Michael and Alexander, was very traditional—dark woods, antiques, color. When they came to the beach, Vicki said, "I don't want any of that. I wanted it to be light, contemporary and warm, so nothing but our clothes came from the other house." For this project, "Vicki and Seth allowed us a lot of creative freedom," says English. "They were gently nudged outside of their comfort zone."

The house is grounded by a rec room downstairs, with floor-to-ceiling glass doors that can be covered by blackout shades when the family watches movies on the large screen. Enveloped in a Gilded Cork wallcovering by Innovations, the room is anchored by a custom sofa of English's design, above which hangs one of the couple's favorite pieces, a large city street scene photograph from Alex Prager's *Face in the Crowd* series. The game room has a custom walnut-and-leather table that at first glance reads as a dining table, opening to reveal all the accoutrements Seth needs to host his poker nights. The nearby powder room is sheathed in Zebrino strié marble, with an Italian oval mirror from Eccola that just fits the compact space; another powder room upstairs repeats the same stone, adding a daring mirror, supported by a substantial leather strap, from Ralph Pucci. The latter, says Vicki, "encapsulates the house—everything I think is beautiful about this house comes together in this room."





Another set of stairs reveals the entrance landing, occupied by what Vicki calls “our paparazzi,” a life-size self-portrait sculpture in glass and resin of the artist, Daniel Arsham, holding an imaginary camera. The hall’s soaring height is tempered by Venetian plaster walls covered in Whisper White by Dunn-Edwards, a tapestry depicting swirling smoke by artist Pae White, and an eight-foot-long Seed Cloud chandelier by Ochre that sets the space aglow. “We wanted drama for the entry,” notes English.

Another half story up, the bedroom level holds the master suite on one end, with kids’ and guest rooms joining Seth’s office on the other. The intimately scaled master bedroom is visually extended outward via a deck overlooking the ocean. English designed the built-in oak bed frame and tables flanking the quilted headboard, which she covered in Calypso fabric from Thomas Lavin. Quartz crystal pendants by Shakuff replace the expected reading lamps (“they’re like little jewels,” says Vicki), while a Metro Bench by Vioski rests at the end of the bed.

“This is where we live,” says Vicki of the top floor, which contains, on one side, an open living and dining area that gives way to an angled window wall and deck that holds Echo lounge chairs from Thomas Lavin accented with Missoni pillows, and a metal-and-rock sculpture by Jaume Plensa that was so heavy and awkwardly sized, it had to be craned into the space—as did the oversize live-edge reclaimed acacia dining table from Design Around Objects (DAO). “The fact that we can open up the doors to the patio completely and have a real indoor-outdoor space makes me truly feel I live in the world, not just in the house,” says Seth. A Giacomo 3-Door Buffet from Twentieth adds a touch of modern elegance to the dining area, as do custom chairs covered in an oyster leather from Holly Hunt. In the living area, a bright-orange oil-on-linen 3D painting by Donald Moffett hangs above a Grand Repos Chair from Vitra and an unusual coffee table: a Standard Pouf by Caste Designs via Holly Hunt.





A series of stacked glass globe lamps by Venini from Minotti provide a subtle division between the living area and the nearby family room, outfitted with a Michael Berman sofa, a pair of 1950s chrome-and-wood chairs from Downtown, and a petrified wood side table from DAO. Just off the Bulthaup kitchen with Miele appliances is one of the brightest areas of the house, the breakfast room. Here, beneath a large pendant lamp from boutique New York design firm Rich Brilliant Willing, surrounding a custom table designed by English, are El chairs by Antonio Citterio from B+B Italia and a Velin Banquette from Christian Liaigre, covered in a hardy upholstery by Pollack. Dominating one wall is a piece by Glenn Kaino, its deconstructed and gilded machine parts shining against the white background and appearing to reflect the setting sun. Says English, "It's a slice of design nirvana." ■

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