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FROM SEA ISLAND TO CARMEL

NOVEMBER 2016



BEACHFRONT BRILLIANT!

Designed for primo sand-and-sea access and easygoing weekends, an airy family beach house offers a front-row seat to the action along Los Angeles's spirited South Bay

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THE VIEWS AS ART

"Picture windows make great art," says designer Tim Clarke, who suggests adding a good-looking trim like teak, which has a warming effect on conversation areas.

"From our breakfast table,

I can see the pool and the ocean, and then the pier and the mountains in the distance," says the owner of this three-story Manhattan Beach home. It fronts the lively shore along the bike path known as The Strand, arguably the frontline of Southern California's culture of sun, surf, and—perhaps most notably—beach volleyball. With public courts (drawing pros from all over the country) located right in front of the property, "we wanted to build something special—there's so much energy; it's such an animated scene," the owner says.

But for the entrepreneur and father of two, just as important as embracing the action was instilling a sense of warmth and coziness for his family. He hired Santa Monica-based interior designer Tim Clarke and architects Grant C. Kirkpatrick (KAA Design) and Erik Evens (Evens Architects) to strike the right balance between big, action-packed views and relaxed livability. Here, the design team shares their oceanfront style essentials.



A BAREFOOT BEACH PARTY VIBE

Clarke hung vintage aloha shirts in the entry hall to set a come-as-you-are tone. "And what says 'beach party' more than a Hawaiian shirt?" asks Clarke, who chose the owners' most rare and unusual prints, and mounted them in thin, wooden frames. "That's the trick to keeping fun collections from feeling kitschy: Minimal display details make them feel like modern art."

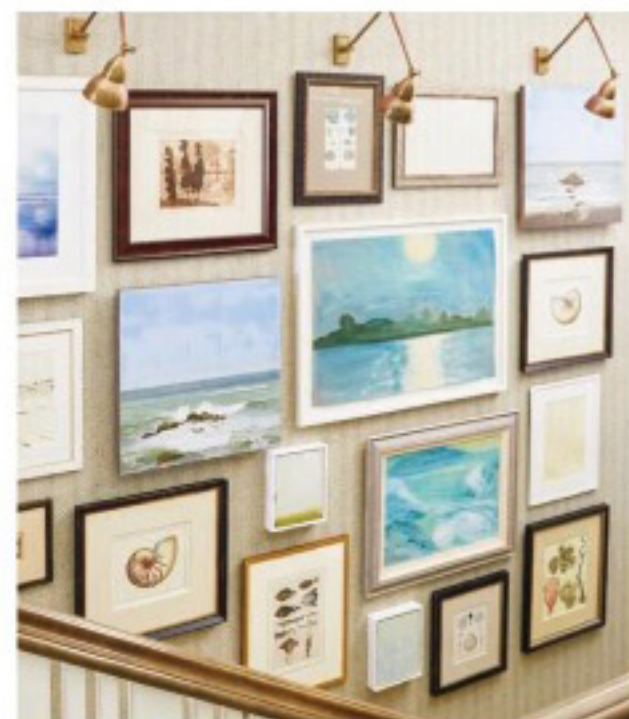
A SHELTERED ESCAPE

"Sometimes the wind and sand blowing in off the ocean can be brutal," says Clarke, "so I like to create at least one outdoor area that's sheltered from these elements—not to mention away from beach traffic." This interior courtyard is on the street-facing side of the house, made private by a stone fireplace (ideal for chilly evenings) and a stucco wall. "Just make sure to incorporate plenty of green, like palms, ivy, and potted plants, to bring nature into all the hardscape."



RUSTIC FURNITURE

Organic, unpolished pieces mirror the beach's raw beauty. "Rustic wood furniture implies ease of use," says Clarke. He had the dining table made locally using old wood. "You never want to design a home that feels too precious to really live in, especially at the beach," he says.



A HUGE KITCHEN ISLAND

Top, left: This combo prep and hosting counter is 8 feet long. "Because of its size, we went with a wood counter to add warmth—sometimes large expanses of stone can come off cold," says Clarke.

INDESTRUCTIBILITY

Top, right: The breakfast room chairs were inspired by a design Clarke spotted in Mexico City and adapted for the beach (and kids) with vinyl upholstery. Reclaimed wood floors are rock solid for handling beach traffic.

WATERY BLUES

Bottom, left: Clarke mixed a reproduction Indian batik quilt with other indigo textiles and a painting by MaryBeth Thielhelm. "Water is restorative," he says. "It sets the tone for a good night's sleep."

A SALTY COLLECTION

Bottom, right: The unifying element in the stairwell gallery wall is the ocean, but the artistic mediums mix it up to include paintings, photographs, decorative prints, and stencil drawings.



BEACHY GREENS

Above, left: Hardy palms, sage shrubs, and succulents border the swimming pool, which anchors a second-level courtyard overlooking the sand. The funky swirling design in the pool is a mosaic tile pattern.

A COOL SPOT TO RINSE OFF

Above, right: "Skylights" in the pool floor stream sunlight into this beach-level grotto lined with river pebbles and outfitted with brass ship lights. "It's a great spot—you look up and see people swimming around above you," says Kirkpatrick.

STREET CRED

Left: "A beach house like this, in the middle of the action, needs to look like it's always been there," says Kirkpatrick, whose team referenced traditional 1930s bungalows and West Indies design features in sketching a plan for the multilevel house.



GROOVY DECK FURNITURE

The low-profile seating on the third-floor deck is genius for preserving the view (the best in the house), and it's modular. "It can be easily shuffled around, depending on the gathering," says Clarke. The turquoise rug softens and brightens the teak porch flooring, which is set in a large-scale basketweave pattern. ■

Stephanie Hunt writes home stories, features, and essays from her home near the beach in Charleston.

