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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



NAPA VALLEY VIBES

Wine country aesthetics inform the look and feel of a new ocean-facing, ranch-style home in Corona del Mar.

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Architecture: Christopher Brandon, Brandon Architects Interior Design: Denise Morrison and Rachel Morrison, Morrison Interiors
Home Builder: Andrew Patterson, Patterson Custom Homes



In the entryway, a Studio A media cabinet and table lamp, Century Furniture chair featuring Kravet fabric and vintage rug from Eliko Rugs by David Ariel welcome guests. The artwork is from Lucca Antiques. A slatted screen by Generations Finish Carpentry conceals a hallway.

The lure of California wine country is as much about the lifestyle as it is about the virtues of a plummy Pinot noir. From alfresco meals with the freshest farmer's market ingredients to the rustic, relaxed aesthetic of its famously inviting homes, the region has much to savor. It was precisely the draw of *la vida vintner*—and its architecture—that infused homeowners Glenn and Lauri Welling's vision for their ground-up new build in Corona del Mar. "The laid-back lifestyle of Napa was a big inspiration for the overall design and mood of the house," Glenn confirms. But in this area of Southern California, there's a key difference: "Instead of looking out onto vineyards, here we have the ocean."

With the Pacific as the main attraction, architect Christopher Brandon and general contractor Andrew Patterson devised a contemporary ranch that wraps around an open courtyard facing the waterfront. Because the neighborhood is terraced into a hillside, a height restriction mandates no new construction can block the views of the houses above. Working with that condition, they built down instead of up, creating a walk-out basement level that nearly doubles the home's square footage. And, thanks to an abundance of wall-to-wall steel-framed glass doors, the resulting two floors of indoor-outdoor living offer seaside scenery and crisp ocean breezes from most vantage points.

For the home's exterior palette, the design team ran with the Wellings' wish of bringing a Northern California feel to their Newport Beach neighborhood. Take the wood framing, an architectural element for which Patterson incorporated exposed beams of Western red cedar that will acquire a patina over time, giving it a subtle modern farmhouse feel. "As far as the materials go, we wanted the house to feel a bit earthier, with stained wood, stucco and painted brick," Brandon says. "The idea was to bring in more of that wine country vernacular."

Designer Rachel Morrison worked closely with the couple on the development of an interior material palette that echoed these exterior selections. "Overall, our aim was for high contrast,

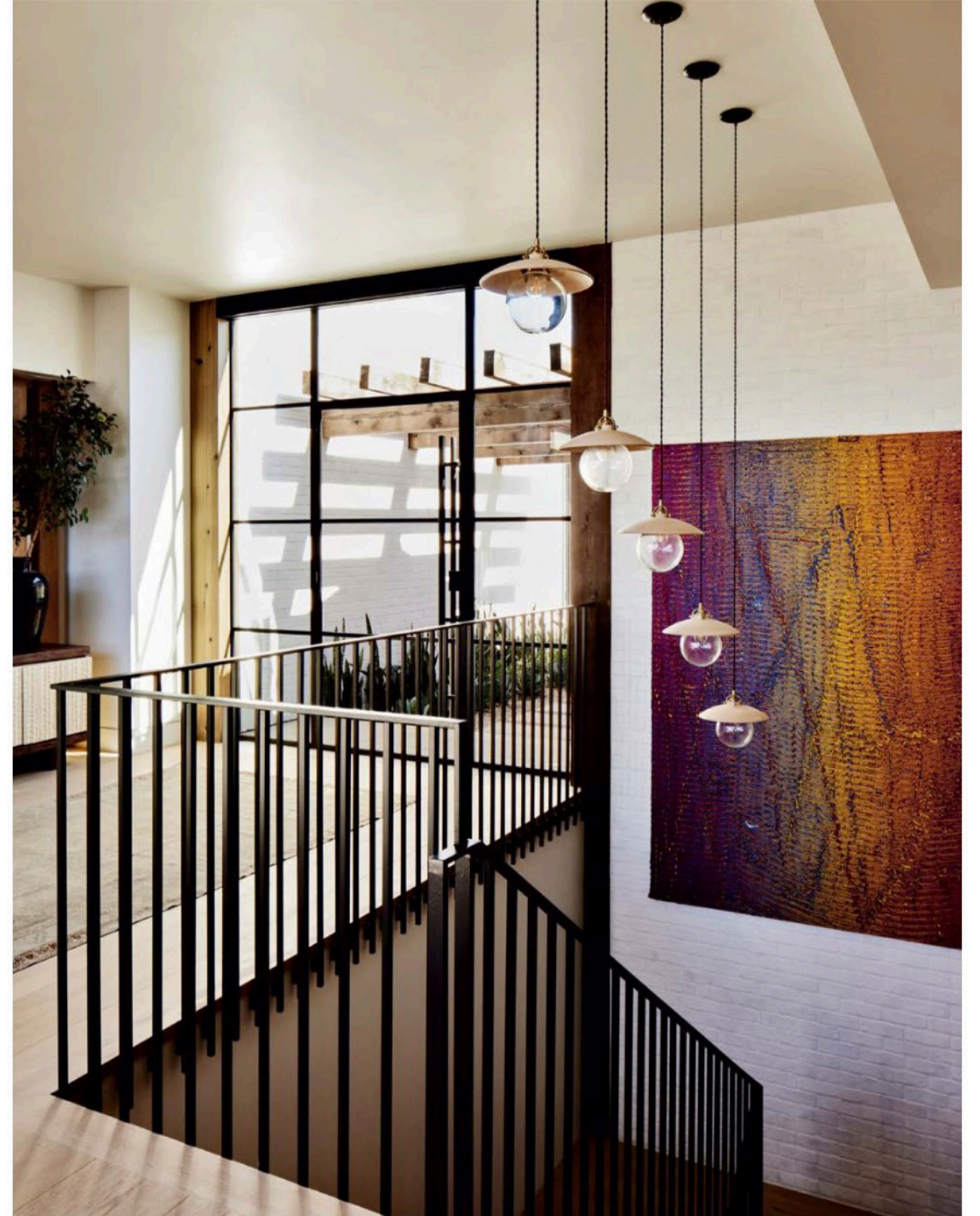
lots of texture, interesting lighting moments and touches of industrial-leaning elements," comments Rachel, who helmed the project under firm principal Denise Morrison.

Indeed, a decidedly moodier vibe prevails, upending the usual fundamentals that have come to be associated with coastal interiors. "There's often this built-in expectation of bright whites, blues, grays and cool tones," says Rachel, noting that it was clear from the get-go that the Wellings didn't want to go in that direction—which made the project more exciting. "Their desire for something different sang to our souls."

That "something different" includes unexpected artisanal details, such as leather strapping on certain lighting fixtures, vertical ribbing on the millwork and a statement coffee table that takes its amoeba-like form from cobbled-together slices of ebonized wood. Those features complement the largely neutral palette, which ranges from soft ivories to bold blacks, and favors texture over pattern and comfort over formality. "It's all meant to create a warm, welcoming environment," says Rachel. "They didn't want a house that had a 'don't touch anything' vibe."

Because the Wellings are both frequent hosts and the parents of three sons, two of whom live at home, the creative brief prioritized spaces for gatherings, both large and small. Those areas, most notably a full bar and game room in the basement, can pivot from holding a casual Friday night teen hangout to a more formal fête with high-top tables and a band. As those spots open onto the courtyard, patio and pool deck, landscape architect Travis Gramberg of Koheid Design worked with the homeowners to ensure sight lines would be directed to rewarding focal points. "We made it a goal to have the eye fall onto something magical, whether it's the ocean, a fire feature or a piece of art," he says.

Which nicely highlights one of the perks of having a residence with coastal views: Studies have shown that simply gazing upon the water can have a calming effect—a fact not lost on the family. "Obviously with three boys we have busy lives," Lauri says. "It was important that our home be a special place for us to decompress." Presumably, with a glass of wine in hand. ■



Above: Edmund pendant lights by Lostine are suspended above the stairwell, which is painted Farrow & Ball's Strong White. Loriel Beltrán's *Primaries (signs and color)* brings a rainbow of hues to the landing.

Opposite: In a bar area, Skylar Morgan Arc Lounge Chairs encourage conversation around a McGuire table, while accent tables from Four Hands provide spots for drinks. In the background are three pieces by Shelly Rapp Evans framed in plexiglass, as well as Kelcey Fisher's *Limitless*.



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The centerpiece of the game room is a pool table from Sean Woolsey Studio.
A Visual Comfort & Co. lamp sits atop a fluted column table by Global Views.
All seating and the center ottoman are by House of Morrison.



Left: The open kitchen features rift-sawn white oak cabinetry from G N A Cabinet with Rocky Mountain Hardware pulls. Aspen Grey Neolith countertops line the perimeter, while European oak flooring from Warren Christopher runs throughout the home.

Opposite: Adjacent to the great room, the dining area's elegant Calla chandelier from John Pomp Studios crowns House of Morrison's Montecito table. Bright chairs from Thomas Lavín complete the scene.





Left: An Élitis wallcovering strikes a graphic note in a guest bedroom, where an upholstered bed from Four Hands joins Robert James Collection's Avalon nightstand illuminated by an Ava wall sconce from Lostine. The rug is from Loloi.

Opposite: Custom pendants from Elegance in Lighting highlight a Native Trails tub and an antique stool sourced from House of Morrison. The primary bath countertops are Taj Mahal with a leathered finish from Ollin Stone. The Urban Electric Co. sconces frame the mirror.

