



come together

A NEWPORT BEACH RESIDENCE EXPANDS ONTO AN ADJOINING LOT AND BECOMES AN INDOOR-OUTDOOR OASIS MARKED BY TEXTURED ISLAND INFLUENCES.

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INTERIOR DESIGN Sheldon Harte, Harte Brownlee & Associates

ARCHITECTURE David Kaech and Stephen Kaech, David A. Kaech & Associates, Inc.

HOME BUILDER Don McKeenan, McKeenan Construction | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE Chris Fenmore, Garden Studio Design

BEDROOMS 5 | BATHROOMS 5 | SQUARE FEET 4,969



Interior designer Sheldon Harte chose sophisticated pieces with texture to appoint a Newport Beach house. In the dining room, Harte refinished the owners' table and paired it with Gregorius | Pineo sea-grass-and-oak armchairs. The painting is by Mark Strickland.



In Southern California, where the island breezes of the South Pacific are not so far away, creating a tropical-inspired getaway can easily become a cliché. “The trick is to create something that is not so obvious,” says interior designer Sheldon Harte, who has offices in Laguna Beach, San Francisco and Palm Springs. Harte kept that in mind as he approached the design of a retired couple’s oceanfront retreat in Newport Beach. “They wanted something that felt beachy, but not the typical tropical style, something sophisticated yet livable,” he says.

Though the couple lives full time in the Pacific Palisades, their second home, a 1950s residence in Newport Beach, had been working overtime with year-round visits from friends and family, including their six grandkids. When an adjacent property went up for sale, the owners saw it as an opportunity to spread out. Harte was brought in to help them combine the two neighboring parcels into one seamless retreat.

Harte worked within a palette inspired by the oceanfront locale. In the living room, a weathered Paul Ferrante floor lamp pulls up to a woven tête-à-tête by John Himmel Decorative Arts covered with a fabric by Christopher Farr Cloth. The coffee table is by Robert Kuo.



Custom mahogany offset pivot doors with fish-eye glass inserts open onto the entry courtyard, which is defined by hand-aged beams and an antique Thai urn. *Opposite:* Harte Brownlee & Associates designed a custom tree-like étagère for displaying books and objects within the pavilion's living area.



*"THE NATURAL AND TACTILE MATERIALS ARE CALMING
AND EVOKE THE ELEMENTS AROUND THE HOUSE."*



On two adjoining properties, the existing house and new pavilion are given a cohesive feel with stucco exteriors and tile roofs inspired by Sri Lankan architecture. Weiland doors fold away to give the structures an open-air feel.



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To help realize that goal, Harte suggested the father-and-son architectural team of David and Stephen Kaech. For inspiration, Stephen, who was the lead designer and project manager, started with Sri Lanka. “Sri Lankan residential architecture has a charm and care for detail that provides a calming sense to those that inhabit it,” says Stephen, who had visited the country several times. He shared books on the island’s architecture with the owners, who responded to the natural airflow, materials and open spaces of the buildings.

As the existing house has five bedrooms, Stephen designed a 1,155-square-foot pavilion to accommodate additional living and entertaining space. A small kitchen and a Murphy bed keep it self-sufficient. Because the owners liked an open-air feel, “but also wanted to be able to close things off,” Stephen explains, he installed state-of-the-art glass doors, which can fold away and disappear, in both structures. For continuity, both the house and pavilion were sheathed with Sri Lankan-style stucco walls and tile roofs.

The entrance to the main house is defined by custom woodworking, including a screen and a floating staircase, both in brushed Brazilian cherry. Harte Brownlee & Associates designed whimsical custom hemp-covered ottomans with porthole-like openings.



In the grandkids’ bedroom, a custom bed is upholstered with Arabesque, a bold linen print by Peter Dunham Textiles, and dressed with bedding from International Down & Linen. The custom wenge-and-mahogany side table is topped with a lamp by Visual Comfort.

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The landscape of the property also helps to visually connect the two structures. "The architecture is so beautiful, I didn't want to compete with it, just complement it," says landscape designer Chris Fenmore, who used plantings sparingly and worked with the same hardscape materials throughout the adjoining properties "so it all appears as one homogenous space."

While Sri Lanka influenced the architecture, Harte drew inspiration from a different tropical island in creating interiors with a "modern Balinese" feel. In both the existing house and the new pavilion, Harte kept the material palette cohesive and embraced the weathered, the textured and the worn. "That look works well at the beach, is easy to live with and doesn't feel fussy," he notes. Aged ironwood shutters and Brazilian cherry for a staircase at the entry of the main house add to the informal feel. In the kitchen, Harte took the granite countertops from polished to weathered, and the bird's-eye maple cabinetry from smooth and golden to driftwood gray. "The natural and tactile materials are calming and evoke the elements around the house," says the designer, who carried the textured thread into the pavilion by covering the ceiling with a woven-grass matting. Builder Don McKeehan remarks, "A lot of these highly specialized finishes were fairly challenging." However, elements such as the custom-textured limestone floors contribute to the home's "one-of-a-kind" feel, he says.



The new pavilion houses a living area, anchored by a custom-raked limestone fireplace surround by Concept Studio, and an eat-in kitchen area. Harte Brownlee & Associates designed the wrought-iron globe pendants, fabricated by Paul Ferrante, and the cabinetry, which was executed by Dan Luna Woodworking.



In the master bedroom, a Santiago four-poster bed by Formations gives the feeling of a room within a room. The custom television cabinet at the foot of the bed is wrapped with a Manuel Canovas linen and adorned with nailhead trim. The mirror is by Made Goods.

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When it came to the furnishings, Harte worked within a soft palette of sandy neutrals with accents of blue and green to reflect the waterfront setting. In the main house, he paired a woven tête-à-tête with a Robert Kuo coffee table in the living room. The owners' existing dining table was given a new driftwood finish, and for the master bedroom, Harte placed a textured four-poster bed against a wall sporting a wood-like Nobilis covering. For the pavilion, Harte slipcovered a sofa with an outdoor fabric and chose a teak-and-sea-grass-rope dining table. "The owners didn't want to have to worry about a stray wet bathing suit in the pavilion," says Harte of the worry-free solution-dyed acrylic fabrics and area rugs he selected.

"Sheldon brought in so many ideas on the feel and direction of the house," says the homeowner. "He really brought it all together." And it came together in a way that manages to fit in with—and stand out from—its beach locale. "The owners wanted something that was thought-provoking and visually stimulating," says Harte. "We were able to incorporate all of the elements they asked for, and no one walks in and says they've seen this look before. It was all done with their vision in mind, and it gives me great joy that we were able to accomplish that." **L**