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Exotic Beauty

A SoCal design duo creates
an Indonesia-inspired refuge for a
well-traveled Manhattan Beach family



The living room coffee table is from Plantation, and the ottomans are from Charles Jacobsen.



Thanks to its open floor plan, vaulted ceilings, rich woods, and woven furnishings, this Manhattan Beach house looks more exotic than most you see on the streets of the Southern California beach town. “I wanted it to be almost like a Polynesian longhouse or a palapa—with one big open space,” says the owner, a real estate agent with a passion for travel to Africa, Asia, and the South Pacific. At the same time, he didn’t want the home to feel totally out of place in this all-American coastal community known for its contemporary architecture. That was the challenge facing designer Alana Homesley and architects Grant Kirkpatrick and Patricia Baker of KAA Design, all based in Los Angeles: to bring a bit of the far-flung to the home their client shares with his wife and three daughters for a vibe that feels natural, not over the top or contrived. The result of the collaboration is a 4,500-square-foot home with an inverted plan (the main living spaces are on the top floor, the bedrooms are on the middle one, and a casual den is on the ground level) that capitalizes on ocean views. Here, Grant and Alana share six tips for harmonizing a rich, tropical tone with clean, SoCal-modern style.

1 Mix warm and cool materials.

Grant used teak for the floors and kitchen cabinetry. “Teak has a beautiful color and grain,” he says. “It’s also stable and holds up well when exposed to water, making it a smart choice for the beach.” White Calcutta Luna marble and limestone countertops are a slick counterpoint to the wood.

2 Go natural.

Because it’s widely used in Southeast Asia, sea grass brings in the feeling of a tropical destination,” says Alana. So as not to overdo the world traveler theme, she balanced casual items, such as the breakfast room’s earthy wicker chairs, with more traditional pieces, such as the dark-stained teak table. >



The breakfast room's sea grass rug is from Decorative Carpets. The wicker chairs are from JANUS et Cie, and the table is from Warisan. Opposite: The kitchen barstools are from Pottery Barn.

COASTAL **HAVENS**



The antique Indonesian daybed is from Berbere World Imports; the chair is from Warisan.



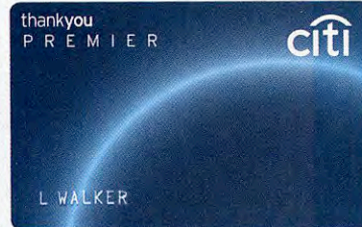
The hallway's Chinese console table is from Charles Jacobsen.

3 Establish a relaxed vibe.

In the outdoor room (a porch lined with retractable Balinese shutters), Alana imported a laid-back feeling with plush seating that encourages gathering around the fire. Simple cushions in cool shades such as gray, white, and green allow the built-in bench and hot tub to function like daybeds; concealed lighting that shines on the wood ceiling enhances the warm glow.

4 Edit your souvenirs.

"Items from travels can give a worldly feel, but limit yourself to only things that are truly beautiful and have a purpose," says Alana. "Otherwise, your house ends up looking inauthentic, like a theme park." She chose a kudu antelope trophy for the stair hall wall, a Tibetan prayer rug, an African mask, and a carved chair. >



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The master bedroom walls are painted Buff by Frazee Paint. The bed is by Jiun Ho, available through Thomas Lavin.



5 Lighten up. In at least one room, perhaps a bedroom, take a break from all the wood with light, bright decor. To give the narrow master bedroom a more open, airy quality, Alana painted the walls a light, refreshing off-white. A mix of soft textiles in neutral tones of creamy ivory, sandy taupe, and cool pale blue cast a soothing, serene mood.

A photograph of an outdoor deck. The deck is made of dark wood planks. There is a table and four chairs on the deck. A black metal railing with a decorative top rail surrounds the deck. The background shows lush green trees and a body of water.

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The teak patio furniture is by Sutherland.



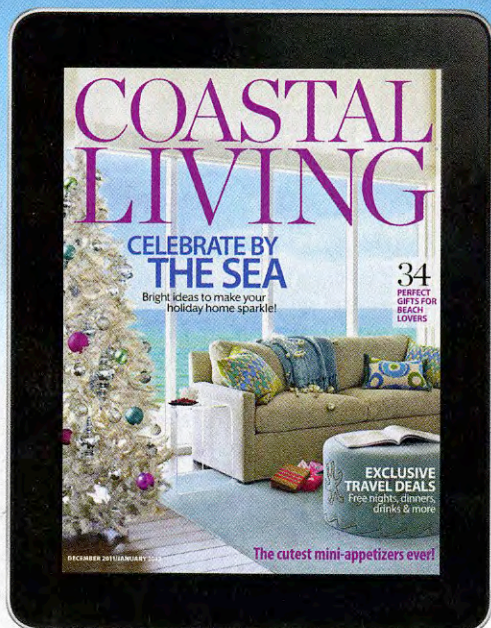
"I WANTED OUR NEW HOUSE TO FEEL LIKE A POLYNESIAN LONGHOUSE, OR A PALAPA—ONE BIG OPEN SPACE"

6 Think outside the house.

Engage in indoor-outdoor living by choosing furnishings so comfortable the patio feels like a den. With hand-carved teak furniture and streamlined, weatherproof upholstered cushions, Alana created several spots to get cozy outside, giving the impression of more space and letting the owners enjoy the SoCal climate. 🌿

For more information, see Sources, page 110.

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