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L.A. HOME DESIGN

Home Sweet Beach

THREE HOUSES THAT HAVE THEIR
TOES IN THE SAND ALSO SHARE A
MARITIME SENSE OF ADVENTURE

BY ANN HEROLD

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE LAURIDSEN





1 Ten-year-old Channing Devine plays with Woodstock the Labradoodle on the sunken patio of their Hermosa Beach home

2 Channing's sister, Lauren Pietz, in the living room nook that offers the cushiest view in the house



1



2

HERMOSA BEACH

Front Row Seat



3

LONG BEFORE his software business took him east and then across the pond to England, John Devine had resided in Hermosa Beach. Remembering its friendliness, he brought wife Susanne and children Wesley, Lauren, and Channing to the South Bay enclave on their return stateside. They found a larger-than-average property in 2002, but the house was an unremarkable stucco rectangle that they razed. With room to spare, Susanne dreamed of an interior courtyard; around the open space a modern home took shape, wrapped in wood and edged with bronze and copper.

The best part, they say, is still the neighborliness of the owners along the Strand, although there's no end to the stream of strangers on the public pathway. In their sunken outdoor entertaining area, a screen of horse-tail hides them from the passersby above. Inside, French-made motorized shades offer privacy and only a minor subtraction of light and view. For the floors, walls, and furniture, Susanne turned all her skills from London's KLC School of Design to blending elements—gold with beige, onyx with marble—that would speak of the nature outside. "We go on vacations, but then we get back and think, 'This is like a living spa,'" she says.

John's favorite seasons are spring and fall, when the crowds are smaller and the weather has moments of temperament. In spring the clouds drop their shadows on the sand or hover like mountains on the ocean. And autumn? That's when everything glows as if illuminated from within, when a cigar enjoyed by John on the balcony isn't the only light winking.

ARCHITECTS
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/KAA Designs

INTERIOR DESIGNER
Susanne Devine

CONTRACTOR
Baldwin
Construction

1 Woodstock watches the foot and bike traffic passing by on the Strand, the town's popular public thoroughfare

2 Channing by an edging of river rock that's used throughout the garden

3 The walnut table and mahogany cabinets in the kitchen-dining area were custom made for Susanne by Randy Landis

4 The master bedroom balcony—trimmed in copper—overlooks the inner courtyard

4



PUBLIC ACCESS

A Brush With Nature

➔ Every 18 months a crew arrives at the Devine home, brushes in hand, to replenish the wood's luster. The mahogany is sanded to remove salt and grit, then resealed with a UV-protective coating from Sikkens, the 18th-century Dutch company that pioneered wood care in Europe. The process takes days but can't be forgone when the Pacific is parked in your backyard. The fabrics on the outdoor furniture are replaced periodically as well. Susanne favors the Perennials collection at David Sutherland and is a convert to new materials from Trina Turk. She likes that they don't fade easily in the sun and that soap and water are enough for cleanup. She's even used the outdoor lines on a job indoors, covering the benches and ottomans at a Manhattan Beach dress shop with them.