





Approachable and livable: For interior designer Chris Barrett, that's how her clients summed up their vision for their La Jolla home's interiors. Simply enough, the couple requested inviting spaces for themselves and their large family. Beyond that, Barrett says of their wishes, "They weren't specific about a look." So the home and its setting on a picturesque stretch of coastline informed her approach. "It needed to be complementary to the architecture but we also wanted to play to the ocean," says Barrett, "and a neutral palette and natural materials just felt right for a beach house."

The clients' brief to architect Drexel Patterson was a bit more detailed. Active grandparents who relish time with their loved ones, they needed a place that could accommodate the family but they also wanted to be mindful of the neighbors on their snug La Jolla street. To that end, the architect excavated the basement for an underground garage with a car elevator, resulting in a home that appears to be two stories from

the street when it's actually three. "The house doesn't loom over the street or the beach; it organized itself with how it was wedged into the site," says the architect of the design, which steps down toward the ocean, creating terraces on every level. "The residence itself wasn't difficult to build, but the lot was difficult to access," adds general contractor Tom Waters, recalling that the street's narrowness didn't leave much room for concrete trucks and lumber drop-offs.

Entered through an antique door and a courtyard complete with blue-and-white tile and a burbling fountain, the house is Spanish Colonial in spirit—an aesthetic driven by the clients' wish for a structure that related stylistically to the origins of La Jolla. "People still like the idea of a traditional home, and this is an authentic revival in its massing and thickness, but it's stripped back and has an open flow for today's lifestyle," explains Patterson. "It's an inspiring architectural problem to solve. It's about editing unnecessary clutter but if you over-edit, you lose the poetry."

Above: In a La Jolla home by interior designer Chris Barrett and architect Drexel Patterson, beams from Vintage Timberworks line the ceiling of the open great room. The living area includes multiple pieces of Barrett's own design: the sofas and armchair, all from Posse Furniture and covered in fabrics from her Chris Barrett Textiles line, and the coffee tables by D&J Custom Benchworks. The shades are Hunter Douglas.

Opposite: An olive tree is a sculptural focal point in the courtyard. Barrett chose a pair of Paola Lenti sofas from Niche Beverly and accented them with pillows in fabrics from Chris Barrett Textiles. The custom lanterns are from Paul Ferrante. The stone paving is from Exquisite Surfaces.



"Easy, relaxed furniture and fabrics with the vintage timber beams and floors all lend themselves to be approachable and inviting," says Barrett of the living area's concept. The lamp is from Mecox; the rug is from Mark Nelson Designs in New York City.

There, landscape architect Theresa Clark worked hand-in-hand with Barrett and Patterson to create a space that seemed like a natural extension of the interiors. "Knowing the color scheme and how busy or how simple the interiors are helps me decide what to do," she says. The project required a balance of functional hardscaping (seating areas, the pool, the barbecue) with lush greenery that evoked a 1920s feel. Clark opted for heirloom camellias, roses, olive trees, yucca gloriosa and a fragrant magnolia champaca tree that prompted the intrigued husband to ask, "Can we get five more of these?" when

he first caught a whiff of its spectacular tropical scent. And at the rear of the house, to maximize the stunning view, Clark installed seating atop sand just off the terrace that overlooks the sea below.

Ironically, it was the very desirable locale's beachy climate that proved to be Barrett's greatest hurdle. "This is one of the easiest couples I've ever worked with," she reflects. "Truly the biggest challenge was just the salt air and making selections that could stand up to the environment. But to live on the ocean like this?" the interior designer ponders for a moment, "It's a dream house." **L**

