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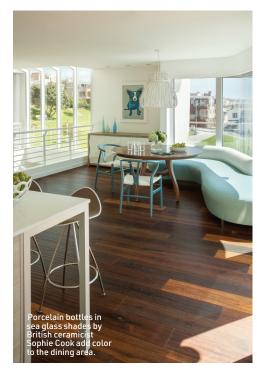


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■ INTERIOR DESIGN



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When Jill Najnigier's clients, a young family

of four from Massachusetts, called to say they purchased a West Coast getaway in Manhattan Beach, California, the designer was thrilled to collaborate on what would be their fourth project together. "He's so much fun to shop with and has a great eye for art and design," the Boston-based principal of JN Interior Spaces says about the husband, who took the lead on the initiative.

Although the clients sent photos,
Najnigier's vision jelled when she visited.
The Pacific Ocean would be the star, with the
adjacent green park playing a supporting
role. The interiors would be modern, but
relaxed, and incorporate a mix of materials.
"Not minimalist, but judicially edited,"
Najnigier clarifies. It would also feature
fabulous art. A specific piece from the clients'
collection—a signed, limited edition
lithograph of Blue Dog by George Rodrigue—
inspired the palette.

The Brutalist, three-story structure, which embodies the neighborhood's laidback, urban-meets-the-beach lifestyle, offered ample windows and an open layout. However, prior to the renovation, the views were an afterthought. The maize-colored walls, crimson fabrics, and blocky, brown







wood furniture forced the eye inward. Najnigier's breezy but sophisticated scheme-wide plank flooring with handscraped texture; warm white walls and sandy grasscloth wallcoverings; cerused wood finishes interspersed with lacquered surfaces; and neutral furnishings punctuated with ocean-hued accents-melds the sunny interior with the glorious outdoors.

The first order of business was to remake the kitchen to feel more open to the dining area and to embrace the view. Najnigier removed the awkwardly shaped peninsula that impeded the flow. In its place? A central island boasting a thin Ceasarstone countertop with aluminum legs on one side along with Stua stools. She also closed an unnecessary skylight as well as a small window that stared straight at another house, reasoning that both were more distraction than enhancement.

Nainigier's new design locates the sink under the picture window that looks to the ocean. Poggenpohl base cabinets with an indestructible finish that resemble cerused wood hug two walls. An induction cooktop and retractable hood barely register. The same surface integrates the refrigerator and

freezer on the third wall. Next to it, a frosted glass door leads to the walk-in pantry. The effect perfectly illustrates the designer's signature style: sleek and modern, but far from cold.

For the dining area, Najnigier designed a low-slung, Vladimir Kagan-inspired banquette to follow the curve of the floor-toceiling windows where the view stretches up the coastline. The piece, upholstered in a faux leather, is stylish, practical, and a space saver. Other furnishings are intentionally airy: a round, cerused oak table with a leggy base, turquoise lacquer Wishbone chairs, and a lacquered rattan pendant by Tomoko Mizu that makes a statement without blocking light.

Two seating areas occupy the back half of the house. Najnigier positioned a Mies van der Rohe Barcelona daybed-the client had long coveted one—in front of windows that overlook the park. "It's a wonderful spot to read with all the natural light," she says. Identical sofas upholstered in performance fabric means indoor lounging post beach isn't an issue. An oversize mirror reflects the view and separates the space from the media room where a family-friendly sectional, this one upholstered in a hide-like patterned vinyl, faces the TV.



Nainigier made the pantry deeper so its new frosted glass door sits flush with the fridge.

Modern floating stairs replaced the traditional, carpeted staircase, though Najnigier retained the rail, simply painting it white.

A mirror with a shagreen frame hangs over the custom lacquer dresser in the primary bedroom.





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The bedrooms are down one flight.
Najnigier used a wood grain linen wall covering by Cowtan & Tout, along with a wool and silk Stark carpet to infuse coziness in the primary bedroom. The Zeitraum oak bed with leather strapping is the star of the show. "They wanted a unique, modern piece," she says. Custom lacquered nightstands and a matching floating dresser tie back to the credenza in the dining area and the organic circles in the artwork over the bed serendipitously echo the tone-ontone pattern of the carpet.

In the ensuite bath, Najnigier cerused the existing vanity and retained its limestone top. The custom glass tile backsplash, which pulls colors from the home's overall palette provides an exuberant culmination of Najnigier approach of balancing simplicity with refinement. Still, she keeps her eye on the prize. "The sublime view is what this design is all about," she says, "It literally takes your breath away." *



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