

HOME

FALL 2024

A WATERFRONT JEWEL IN PARADISE

Compact rental home renovated to live large,
splashed with color and coastal flair

HOME

on the cover

With their client being a sailor, yogi and musician, mother-daughter design team Eugenia and Emma Jesberg wanted the color palette for the remodel of this St. Thomas Way house to pull from the expansive blue sky and water seen from the home. They also wanted the home to feel airy and tranquil. MARIO SERAFIN PHOTO

FALL 2024

A special section of The Ark

Serving Tiburon, Belvedere & Strawberry since 1973
thearknewspaper.com

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The Ark is a newspaper of general circulation as adjudicated by the Marin County Superior Court on Dec. 19, 1973, case No. CIV69007.

Published and delivered by mail on Wednesdays.

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ISSN 2833-5341 (Print)
ISSN 2833-5384 (Online)
USPS# 0120310



MARIO SERAFIN PHOTOS

The kitchen of this St. Thomas Way remodel includes subtle nautical touches in the bar stools, which also provide a pop of color in the otherwise neutral space.

Designers turn Paradise Cay home into a waterfront oasis

The high Douglas fir ceilings are all that remain of the original 1,500-square-foot house in Paradise Cay, which was completely remodeled with the aim of making the compact footprint more functional with a coastal flair. The focal point of the room is a large scale oil painting by Marin artist Sharon Paster.



By HEATHER LOBDELL

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When Eugenia and Emma Jesberg of EJ Interior Design were enlisted to transform a longtime Paradise Cay rental home into a modernized waterfront jewel, they immediately embraced the challenge of making the compact footprint live large and with coastal flair.

“Our client is a sailor, yogi and musician,” says Eugenia, who works with her daughter out of an office on Tiburon Boulevard. “We wanted to create an airy, tranquil mood that would speak to their lifestyle and lifelong connection to the water.”

The client first saw the St. Thomas Way home in March 2020, a week before the initial pandemic lockdown. It was the perfect size and location for their needs — but that’s where the positives ended. The deck was in need of work, the light fixtures were mismatched and unimpressive and nothing was level inside the home.

The new homeowner originally dismissed the house as needing too much work, but as the pandemic dragged on and the real-estate market became more

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complicated, the client decided to take a risk, buying it without even viewing it a second time.

The Jesbergs teamed with the homeowner and San Francisco architect Marshall Schneider to breathe new life into the old structure.

Generously high Douglas fir ceilings are all that remain of the original 1,500-square-foot house. A fireplace that interrupted flow between the living room and dining room was repositioned to create subtle definition between the spaces while keeping things light, bright and connected. A second fireplace in the primary bedroom was simply removed because it crowded the space. A tiny galley kitchen with a peek-a-boo pass-through to the dining room was opened and enlarged, and a tumble-down solarium was completely rebuilt, as were the two wide decks that flank it.

Because the house sits so dramatically at the water's edge, with a 180-degree view that stretches from the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge to the north across the bay to Berkeley and the East Bay hills and south to Oakland and the Bay Bridge, the designers knew that the blue of the water and the sky would inform the palette.

But it was a gallery visit before demolition that crystalized the home's color story.

"We asked our client to take a field trip to the Maybaum Gallery in San Francisco," Emma says. "They initially pushed back, saying it was too soon, but then agreed to come." The client was captivated by an ethereal landscape painted by Marin artist Karen Smidth.

The large-scale canvas was a splurge, but worth every penny. The Jesbergs pulled the blue, along with the splashes of orange and pink, from the painting to tie the furnishings together.

The goal, they said, was to choose foundational design elements that created a calm, timeless backdrop. Pale, wide-plank oak floors run throughout the house to create a new seamless flow; and shiplap, used in the entry, for inset kitchen cabinetry, for a new fireplace that bridges the living and dining rooms and for a wall-length run of custom closets and drawers in the primary bedroom, gives the home a subtle nautical flair.

The team then focused on bringing color, pattern and texture into each room. The Adriatic blue tile used as the backsplash above the kitchen's induction stove was set to mimic the movement of water, and it lends



a pop of shine, bold color and surprise to the otherwise monochromatic white kitchen.

Rope-back barstools with pale blue cushions, the living room's deep blue custom sofa and a pair of swivel chairs upholstered in light blue with a subtle wave pattern amplify the blue notes, as does a second large-scale oil painting by Sharon Paster, another Marin artist. Pink and orange woven fabric on the dining room chair cushions, bright orange tassel-trimmed pillows with pink and blue flowers in the living room and an abstract contemporary carpet with orange and yellow elements in the newly rebuilt solarium set between two broad decks also serve as eye candy.

"The carpet is almost like the reflection of sunset on the water," Eugenia says.

Carefully chosen lighting adds another layer to the home.

"We used it as an element of art and sculpture here," Eugenia says. An all-white beaded chandelier with coral branches adorns the entry, a double-tiered chandelier with illuminated solid glass "pebbles" hangs above the dining room's oval sugarberry dining table and glass pendants with hand-turned clear maple and cut brass fittings combine function and form above the kitchen island. In the primary bedroom, a drape-knot rope pendant by San Francisco fiber artist Windy Chien creates a whimsical



Clockwise from top left, purple was introduced to the primary bedroom to set it apart. The 'refined but bohemian' look includes Indian block-print draperies, a textural upholstered bed, glazed ceramic bedside lamps and bone-inlay bedside tables. Next, the Adriatic blue tile used as the backsplash above the kitchen's induction stove sought to mimic the movement of water. Pink and orange woven fabric on the dining room chairs also lend a pop of color. Finally, the overarching goal was to create an 'airy, tranquil mood' that would speak to their client's lifelong connection to the water, designer Eugenia Jesberg says.

MARIO SERAFIN PHOTOS

nautical touch above a two-tone white-gray desk paired with a caned chair with an Indian block print that echoes pillows on the bed.

The primary bedroom's palette and style diverge gently, a move that signals serenity.

"We carried the blue over from the rest of the house but introduced purple to set the room apart," Emma says. "The mood is refined and bohemian."

Indian block-print draperies, a textural lavender upholstered bed with a shapely headboard, luminous blue-glazed ceramic bedside lamps and ornately patterned bone inlay bedside tables all conjure an exotic feeling, while a nubby ivory wool rug creates comfort and warmth under foot.

The homeowner says they're thrilled with what the Jesbergs did to fashion this restful space and beauty all throughout the house, noting they feel gratitude for such special access to their waterfront views from the tranquility of their home.

Contributor Heather Lobdell of Tiburon has worked as an editor and writer for several home and garden magazines.