

# MAXIMUM MINIMAL APPEAL

This beach cottage in Del Mar captures the best of Cape Cod and California cool

BY THOMAS SHESS · IMAGES BY BRADY ARCHITECTURAL PHOTOGRAPHY



**Previous pages:** Impeccable beach-cottage décor by homeowner/designer includes accessories and the Dunn Edwards' *Cold Morning* off-white hue that complements living room furnishings, all from Kreiss, La Jolla.

**T**HERE IS A LOT TO LIKE about this clean-lined Del Mar on-the-beach maxi cottage: it deftly juggles the traditional-design bloodlines of cozy Cape Cod with modernist architectural elements; it has laid-back interior charm; spaces are open, light-filled, airy; and the views are to die for.

Plus, given California's coastal-zoning limits, at 4,000 square feet it's about as big as a beachfront home gets.

The homeowners are retired. He was a developer and she was an interior designer — which is clearly evident from the home's stylish appeal.

As interior designer, the wife did her homework. Blending custom light-grey hues that appear white with dark accents is on pace with what local and national color fashionistas are touting.

The interplay of light walls with dark, chocolate-brown teak flooring merged traditional warmth with contemporary cool. She calls the look "soft contemporary."

Her product research paid off as well. Noteworthy is the selection of Kreiss Collection furnishings throughout. The California-look championed by Michael Kreiss is accented here with original art deco commissioned oils and accessories.

Lighting choices also are a prime asset throughout the home. From the circular dining room's chandeliers to accent lights in the kitchen, nothing here can be called cookie cutter. The kitchen's row of elongated bar lights maintain the kitchen's openness and lighting placement doesn't interfere with spectacular views to the sea.

Interestingly, the kitchen sits on the main level between the dining and living rooms; two bedrooms and laundry make up the top of two levels. Upstairs there is a terrace outside the west bedroom and another off the laundry room.

All the elements pull together in a very attractive interior package. A savvy reader will note all of the architecture has been designed with square lines — not one inch of bull nosing exists. The only curvilinear elements are found in the furnishings.

"That comes from my admiration of modernist icon architect Ludwig Mies van der Rohe," she says. "Less is definitely more in this home."

The empty nesters asked the Del Mar-based architectural firm of Bokal-Sneed to design the remodel, while Solana Beach-based Wardell Builders handled the construction.

Typical of a Bokal-Sneed residence, this home has no wasted space. Each square-foot earns its keep. For example, a tightly designed courtyard incorporates a pocket-sized pool (with clever fountain jets) and a splashy spa that seats a small crowd. Placement of the courtyard is well thought out, too: it's on the east side to capture the sun's warmth and it's situated behind the west elevation to block the chill from the pervasive wind off the ocean, especially after dusk. That common-sense design enables com-



fortable chaise lounging year round and lengthens the indoor-outdoor season for the home.

But the hallmark of this home is the unobstructed vistas. Bokal-Sneed did not miss a chance to incorporate ocean views throughout the interior. Most obvious is the *troika* of open living room, dining room and kitchen, where sightlines extend through the house, to the pool and courtyard, and beyond to the Pacific Ocean only a few steps away across the sand.

In order to achieve such excellent views, the west-facing façade is lined with windows and glass doors. When doors are open the breeze cools the home. But for those 60 days out of the year when the sun doesn't shine in Southern California, the closed doors and windows still honor the gorgeous Del Mar beach and the orange-red sunsets beyond.

A seasonal chameleon, this remodel defines what most Californians want: ownership to the great outdoors while never leaving home. ♦

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More photos follow

**Above:** Kitchen island is centered in a free-flowing great room amid a sea of Calcutta marble countertops. Appliances include custom La Cornue range, Gaggenau refrigerator, dishwasher and coffeemakers. Tile, hardware and kitchen/bath fixtures throughout are by International Bath & Tile.

**Right:** Sunny view to east patio, spa and pool through Kreiss dining room setting with an elegant overhead light by Fine Arts Lamps.



“Less is definitely more in this home.”



**Top:** Architectural firm Bokal-Sneed's signature indoor/outdoor mastery has opened this once-shuttered cottage to the sea and sun. Wardell Builders easily mastered coastal requirements, including extra effort touches like the roof's eye window to the world.

**Above:** East-side patio is often degrees warmer with the home buffering chilly west winds away from pool and spa. Poolside furnishings by Kreiss. Front deck chaises and firepit by Restoration Hardware.

**Opposite:** Under-counter lighting highlights breakfast bar. Barstools are by Kreiss. Repurposed teak flooring throughout is stained in walnut. Stylish lighting overhead via Black Whale Lighting.



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