

THE EXPERT



# ART OF COMPROMISE

AN ALIGNMENT OF THE STARRS TAKES PLACE IN HERMOSA

HERMOSA

PHOTOGRAPHED BY THOMAS SANDERS AND SIRI BERTING

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HOME DESIGNER JON STARR FACED THE ULTIMATE COMPROMISE WHEN PLANNING HIS NEW HOME IN HERMOSA BEACH. A NATIVE OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, JON'S AESTHETIC GRAVITATES TO THE PRINCIPLES OF SPACE, LIGHT AND MODERNISM. HOWEVER, HIS WIFE, TRACEY, GREW UP IN THE MIDWEST AND ON THE EAST COAST, WHERE BEAUTY IS MOST FREQUENTLY DEFINED BY CRAFTSMANSHIP, ANTIQUITY AND THE CHARACTER OF IDIOSYNCRATIC INTERIORS FORMED THROUGH GENERATIONS OF HANDS.



Clockwise from top: The family enjoys ample outdoor space; light pours in from multiple windows in the living room; soda bottles become chandeliers in the dining room.



Having lived in the South Bay for many years, the Starrs knew the exact street on which they desired to live, but they had to wait for land to become available in order to build their dream home. When a double lot went on sale, Jon scooped it up and built both his home and the one next door.

Within the context of perfect form and function, Jon instilled East Coast design principles and materials with a healthy dose of California ingenuity to create a home that mirrors their marriage. An 18th-century Salt Box-style roofline is now evident in their 21st-century Hermosa Beach house.

East Coast architectural features such as masonry box construction, wide plank flooring, beaded board and shingles are features of the Starr's home. Although the house is filled with light and the proportions are large, the materials used within the geometry of the floor plan give it the warmth typically found in historical East Coast homes.

From the front sunroom that opens to the street to the rear-facing family room that opens to an exquisite outdoor living area, the house is perfect for both entertaining and raising a family. The flow of the home provides a perfect setting to invite and engage guests of all ages, both inside and out.

Jon loves to cook, so the kitchen is a masterpiece and the heart of the house. Large enough to accommodate several chefs at once, it is a place for both creating and entertaining. Built-in banquettes are perfect for younger guests, while adults can gather around the large dining table adjacent to the kitchen.

Upstairs, large bedrooms and an office provide plenty of space for the growing family. With a soft color palette grounding the house, pops of color come in fabrics and art. The master bathroom is gracious in both proportion and style, with a genteel feeling that mixes modern and traditional.

Wendy Word of Wendy Word Interiors helped Jon and Tracey furnish the house. It is a delightful combination of high and low, old and new. Wendy took the opportunity to take traditional forms and update them with bursts of color not typically found in more traditional homes. Interspersed among contemporary pieces are memories from both Jon's and Tracey's families.





The spindle-turned bed in the guest bedroom was inherited from Tracey's grandparents who emigrated from Germany. Folk art and family paintings serve as decorations, while Jon's pottery pieces are present throughout the rooms. The house has contemporary furnishings that function well for this active young family, but every room contains reminders of previous generations.

Outdoor living is paramount at the Starr home, so there are areas for playing, harvesting and entertaining. An orchard has been planted on one of the higher terraced levels to remind Tracey of her youth in the Midwest, but the Starrs are not in complete agreement about whether Jon will be successful in constructing a chicken coop to accompany the orchard. Below, on the house level, a beautiful pool anchors one corner of the garden, but a large yard remains available where young ones can play.

With an open floor plan bathed in sunlight that incorporates materials and features of historic homes, Jon Starr succeeded in merging East and West Coast design principles. Surely this growing Hermosa Beach family will continue to embrace their family histories as they create their own memories in their new home. However, it remains to be seen if the chicken coop will make it into the annals of Starr family history. •

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