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# IN MARIN COUNTY: AN ODE TO GREY

Designer Ann Lowengart created elegant new interiors with artful lighting, chic woven textiles, and thirty shades of grey.

BY DIANE DORRANS SAEKS







Ann Lowengart is admired for creating highly original color schemes for her clients throughout Northern California. But for a recently completed project she rose to the challenge of working in a low-key hue, juxtaposing muted tones of gray in principal rooms. The result: chic classic interiors with a timeless, tranquil feeling.

“Grey is the new neutral, and I love the way it updates today’s interiors,” notes Lowengart, whose firm was commissioned by a family with three young children to outfit their new Tiburon hillside house. The designer’s brief was to decorate turn-key interiors complete with all furnishings, a custom-designed kitchen, a fully-

stocked pantry, bedrooms, family rooms, children’s rooms, a gym, and curated photography and art collections.

The house, in the gracious classic shingled Hamptons style, has beautifully sunlit rooms, elegant proportions, and a relaxed mood. “Grey is versatile, and it’s softer than pure white with a more modern family-friendly edge,” says Lowengart.

Her harmonious color palette ranged from the palest dove gray and soft blue-gray in the living room, to very rich charcoal and muted silver as accents, with shimmering metallic tones and bronze and white-gold finishes for the custom-crafted furniture.

With her soothing grey wash of color as the background, Lowengart gave each room dramatic, one-of-a-kind light fixtures.

In the breakfast room, a globe-shaped “twig” chandelier by

While working with such a restrained color palette, Lowengart made sure to play up textures to add interest. In the living room (left) she mixed silk and wool velvets with raw wood accents like the chandelier, sleek metals and gleaming glass. The dining room, too, features marvelous textures from the raw beauty of a live edge table to the undulating surface of the highly stylized credenza.





San Francisco artist Shirley Robinson hovers over a made-to-measure table. In the dining room, a chandelier with a cluster of eight hand-blown glass orbs was custom made by Philadelphia artist John Pomp. “Another theme was bringing the beauty of nature inside,” points out Lowengart. Her plan was interpreted with a light touch.

The large-scale satin finish walnut dining table, by Urban Hardwoods, was made using hand-selected timber from a fallen tree. The dramatic reverse-matched tabletop has a natural unfinished live edge. A sculptural cast bronze base was crafted in a specialist workshop in Oakland.

In the living room, wallpaper by Trove, with a muted pattern of tree silhouettes, frames a bold chandelier sculpted to look like tree branches and twigs. Swarovski crystals glimmer among small, concealed lightbulbs.

Her focus on natural materials included gray honed marble

for countertops, jute carpets, natural wool rugs and pillows, pure cotton bed linens, silk curtains, marbled patterns for wallpaper, and a white-gold burnished finish on a coffee table for a spark of glamour.

The effect is tranquil, controlled, cohesive, and balanced. “The family was wonderfully inspiring to work with, and the interiors are a reflection of their dreams and enthusiasm,” says Lowengart. “They were involved every step of the way—including selecting woods, visiting art studios, and encouraging specialist craftspeople to experiment and invent new finishes and original sculptural lighting.”

The family’s immersion in the project was balanced by Lowengart’s professional polish and precision. The result is an exuberant family home, a place for repose and inspiration. And with the designer’s orchestration of grey as background, there’s never a dull moment. ♦

“The home has incredible views of San Francisco and the Bay,” notes Lowengart. “We made sure to keep the interiors simple to let the views take center stage, but also to be inviting and luxurious. The kitchen (above left) features a cozy curved banquette, “perfect,” says Lowengart, “for lingering over coffee in the morning.” A sleek home office (below left) is wrought in shades of white and the master bedroom (below) is a serene space in varying shades of ivory and taupe with floor-to-ceiling drapes and custom shades that open to Tiburon’s abundant sunshine.

