

LUXE

THE LOS ANGELES HOME REDEFINED™



NELSON DANIELS
AS FEATURED IN LUXE INTERIORS + DESIGN
LOS ANGELES EDITION

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VIEW FROM ABOVE

WRITTEN BY JAKE TOWNSEND
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC FIGGE

ONCE A QUIET COLLECTION OF POST WWII BUNGALOWS PERCHED ON A GIANT, SLOPING SAND DUNE, MANHATTAN BEACH HAS EVOLVED INTO A VIBRANT CITY THAT HAS HELD ON TO ITS BEACH-TOWN CHARM. And it is there, at its heart, on the bustling stretch of road known as The Strand, that one couple decided to build their perfect home.

Creating a wish list that included an acoustically true home theater, an authentic Finnish sauna—built by an authentic Finnish spa master, no less—and a garage that could fit at least five cars, among them a 19-foot-long Rolls-Royce Phantom Drophead Coupé, the couple purchased a beach-front lot, razed the house that stood there, and placed a call to Warner Group Architects. “We gave them everything they wanted,” says Thiep Cung, principal architect and CEO of the Santa Barbara-based firm.

The first order of business: melding the clients’ desire for an Italianate-style house, something they insisted upon, with a design that would take advantage of the phenomenal views. “You’d normally want to do a contemporary home on an oceanfront lot,” says Cung. “In fact, I always advise my clients to do so because the lots are often quite narrow—and in this case it was merely 30 feet wide.” A traditional Mediterranean-style house, which calls for small windows, just wouldn’t do. “You’re paying millions of dollars for that view,” he points out.

ARCHITECT Thiep Cung	HOME BUILDER Shawn Nelson
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INTERIOR DESIGNER Jessica Bridges
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BEDROOMS 5	BATHROOMS 4	SQUARE FEET 7,000
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GET THE SKINNY

The office features furniture chosen just as much for its style as its size; the home is so narrow that most furniture would have overpowered the rooms.



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Rising to the challenge, Cung and his team rolled up their sleeves, dove right into their research, and came up with the answer. "We realized that a Venetian palazzo was the solution," he says. "Classic Venetian homes are right on the water, with lots of columns and many floors. We knew that we could put in a traditional façade with Ionic and Corinthian columns, yet still include a large glass wall to capture the view of the ocean."

Designed in much the same way that Palladio designed the Venetian palazzi of the 16th century, this Manhattan Beach version is essentially a 30-foot-wide, five-bedroom, 7,000-square-foot rectangular box whose design is so well thought out, and so compact that nearly every inch of space has been utilized to maximum efficiency. "It's like a submarine," jokes Cung.

And many of the exterior materials chosen are just as seaworthy. "Any house built by the ocean takes a lot of abuse," Cung says. "In this case, careful consideration was given to the selection of all of the materials, especially

MAGIC MIRROR

In the living room, the chairs and sofa were specially designed to fit the space. The mirror above the fireplace conceals a plasma television screen.

ENTER SANDMAN

The master bedroom is located on the top floor, and boasts one of the home's most dramatic views. The fireplace is made of limestone salvaged from a chateau in France.





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because the clients wanted minimal maintenance on the house. We used solid bronze for the doors, the windows, the interior and exterior railings, and all of the outside lighting fixtures.”

Inside, the rooms feel at once grand, welcoming and very intimate. Interior designer Jessica Bridges, also of Warner Group Architects, used a mixture of hard and soft materials to convey a sense of timelessness and strength. “One of my favorite things in the house is the spiral staircase,” she says. “It goes from the basement to the second floor and it’s topped off by a beautiful domed ceiling, which is a traditional Italian feature.” The unique walkway serves a technical purpose as well. “The staircase is how we separate the air in the house; it gets moved from the upper floors of the house to the heating and cooling units in the basement,” explains Cung. “In addition, because of the big staircase, we were able to do very large windows. They flow from top to bottom, making the house feel very airy, and very light.” And airy and light is exactly what the design scheme has accomplished. **L**



STYLE SELECTION

This classically styled polished-brass pendant works well as a light source in a foyer or on a covered porch. *Mount Vernon*, starting at \$5,775; urbanarchaeology.com



BUILT TO LAST

French limestone, sealed wood elements and solid bronze fixtures will help this oceanfront home weather any storm.

VIEW FROM ABOVE

ON PAGES
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INTERIOR DESIGNER Warner Group Architects; Santa Barbara, CA; 805.969.5074



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