



GATHER 'ROUND

In Carmel Valley, a palette of soothing materials serves as a serene foil for a boisterous household of six.

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Architecture: William Hayer, Hayer Architecture **Interior Design:** Kari Arendsen and Tory Peterson, Intimate Living Interiors
Home Builder: Mark Agee, Mark V. Agee Construction

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ostering a sense of togetherness has always been the most important thing for one Carmel Valley family—and they wanted their home to not only reflect that conviction, but encourage it. “They’re a big tribe of six, plus a dog, and the whole

house circles around fun and family activities,” says Kari Arendsen, the founder and design principal of Solana Beach-based Intimate Living Interiors. “That’s a huge part of who they are,” explains her partner and the firm’s lead interior designer, Tory Peterson.

What began as a modest refresh to their northwest San Diego Mediterranean-style abode (“we were just going to add a bedroom and expand the kitchen,” remembers the wife) quickly spun larger, culminating in a nearly full-home renovation as the couple’s dreams expanded. “We love to entertain; we’re the house that hosts all the family functions and where all the kids’ friends come,” the wife says, noting a wish list that included a home theater, game room, wine cave and vast outdoor kitchen, among other ideas. “Our intention was to create a real gathering spot.” Or as Arendsen puts it, “They wanted this house to have everything. Our goal was to keep it organic and seamless, yet have surprises tucked around every corner to optimize their desire to have fun in every room.”

Architect William Hayer reimagined the family’s home to realize their vision, recasting the existing layout as well as adding square footage—and to do so, the house was taken down to the studs. “They needed more bedrooms, more outdoor activity areas and more indoor ones too,” he says. The kitchen was extended with pocket doors connecting it to a sprawling outdoor cooking and dining loggia; the family gathering space was expanded and linked to a new game room and wine cave fitted with a secret speakeasy. The garage was reimagined as a home theater and a new children’s wing designed to contain a lofted

playroom and additional bedrooms. “There wasn’t really anything we didn’t touch,” says builder Mark Agee. “It’s practically a whole new house.”

Open to the outdoors, the renovated home now takes full advantage of its semi-rural setting. “It’s tiered and perched on an acre, so there are different levels to this experience,” Peterson explains, pointing out the variety of outdoor spaces that balance the diverse and expansive interiors. The exterior property has morphed into a play space for children and adults alike: There’s a futsal court, a viewing pavilion with bleachers and an underground trampoline, as well as a grotto and an infinity pool looking out over the canyon. An exterior living room with custom channel tufted sectionals and a television creates another space to gather around.

In keeping with the family’s vibrant lifestyle, Arendsen and Peterson reined in the home’s palette by relying on natural hues and organic materials such as marble, white oak and limestone. “It’s very neutral, with tones that are native to the area,” explains Arendsen. Confirming the home’s kid-friendly vibe, the interior designers upholstered custom pieces in high-performance fabrics and conceived case goods (including the dining room’s arresting buffet and a plethora of dining and coffee tables) that comfortably welcome the active clan and their guests. These bespoke pieces are interspersed with vintage finds either sourced on buying trips that ranged from Texas to Bali or pulled from the inventory of Intimate Living Interiors’ retail showroom, ILI Be Home.

To top off the project, the firm designed a wall-mounted ring toss game, customized with a family logo and fitted into the game room. “We always try to do something special for our clients that nods to how we interpret them,” explains Arendsen. Adds the homeowner, “They definitely captured our family’s personality, how we’re all about fun and active entertaining. Plus, it’s a comfortable, very livable and functional home. It’s exactly what we wanted.”



In the living room of this renovated Carmel Valley residence, interior designers Kari Arendsen and Tory Peterson arranged an elegant entertaining area beside their clients’ baby grand piano, with custom armchairs and a bespoke sofa upholstered in a Perennials performance fabric, both from the curated collection of their retail showroom, ILI Be Home. The vintage carved wood coffee table was found in Bali and the hand-knotted rug is from Jaipur Rugs. Sherwin-Williams’ Futon, a creamy white used throughout the home, adds a warm tone.



Left: A custom farm-style table from the ILI Be Home Collection, fabricated from reclaimed oak, is surrounded by patinated metal-frame chairs covered in a performance fabric that can stand up to the brood of six and their frequent guests.

Opposite: The family room's cozy seating arrangement—composed of an extra deep sectional upholstered in a Perennials fabric, leather swivel chairs and oversize oak nesting coffee tables, all custom pieces from the ILI Be Home Collection—creates an inviting spot in the airy space. Architect William Hayer utilized reclaimed oak beams from Vintage Timberworks throughout the house to add texture to the home's high ceilings.



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The Lynx outdoor kitchen, with all appliances purchased at Pirch, is equipped with a teppanyaki grill, an Alfresco pizza oven and beer taps. Integrated heaters and plenty of ILI Be Home Collection custom seating make the covered outdoor living space an ideal spot for year-round entertaining.



Left: In the primary bedroom, a mirror standing on a vintage bench—two pieces sourced during the interior designers' travels—reflects a custom bed covered in Pom Pom at Home linens. The pulley pendant beside the bed is a find from Hector Finch in London.

Opposite: "It feels cocoon-like," Arendsen explains of the choice to extend the primary bedroom's upholstered headboard from wall to wall. Describing the space as "a place of refuge, comfort and calm," she completed the look with vintage finds, including a teak bench and reclaimed wood nightstands. The wool area rug, adorned with a medallion motif, is from Jaipur Rugs.

