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# PARADISE FOUND

WITH THE HELP OF LOS ANGELES INTERIOR DESIGN FIRM LANE-McCOOK, TV AND MOVIE PRODUCER-MANAGER SANDY GALLIN CREATED A NANTUCKET-STYLE BEACH HOUSE THAT FRAMES THE PACIFIC OCEAN AND CALIFORNIA SKY.

BY **SUSAN MORGAN** PHOTOGRAPHY BY **RAY KACHATORIAN**



credit his wife's great sense  
of style and KC McCook of  
Alfred Martin and designers  
Richard Scott Mitchell, interior  
commissioned for Angler's  
Harbor, Sandy Galin  
designed his home in the  
third of some four years



ABOVE LEFT: A grand piano and a towering potted tree illustrate the immense scale of this 10,000-square-foot home. Each room is generously sized, but the 28-by-21-foot living room that opens onto a lap pool with French doors and unobstructed views of the Pacific Ocean is by far the largest. ABOVE RIGHT: Oversize furnishings like this coffee table are paired with antiques in a seating area adjacent to the main living room; the balance of the proportions between old and new pieces is harmonized with custom-built reproductions of antique pieces that are scaled up to suit the space.



When Sandy Gallin first arrived in Los Angeles from New York in 1965, he found himself an apartment on a quiet street in the heart of Beverly Hills. With a few style tips provided by Bill Lane, an antiques dealer and interior designer, Gallin transformed that starter apartment into a comfortable, memorable home. "It really was just a simple decorating job," Gallin, a high-profile entertainment producer and manager, recalls. "A simple decorating job on a very small budget," he adds with emphasis. Now, 40 years and more than 40 houses later, Gallin has completed the fine-tuning on his latest project, a custom-built Malibu beach house—a traditional home reminiscent of an idyllic rambling cottage somewhere on the New England coast. "Houses started out as a hobby of mine," he remarks, as a way of explaining his well-known penchant for creating one outstanding domestic setting after another. "It was a way of escaping from the pressures of managing people."

"Sandy knows property. He can visualize completely what he is going to do," observes Bill Lane, whose L.A. firm Lane-McCook & Associates continues to work closely with Gallin

and collaborated most recently with architect Scott Mitchell on Gallin's bicoastal residences (his other home is in the Hamptons). In 1998 Gallin had purchased a dull "teardown" on a spectacular bluff overlooking Malibu's suitably named Paradise Cove, and he set to work rebuilding from the ground up. After the existing house was razed, construction work and new landscaping were set into motion simultaneously so that the house and garden were able to grow up together. "We went to great lengths to restore the natural ecology of the bluff, reintroducing indigenous plants," explains Mitchell, who is well versed in both classic architectural history and progressive environmental concerns.

After nine months of construction, the new house at Paradise Cove blends the timeless atmosphere of an East Coast seaside retreat with the indoor/outdoor flow of Southern California living. Taking its inspiration from Northeastern seaboard design, the house's exterior was covered in whitewashed shakes, the classic cedar shingle's more rustic cousin and a cladding material common to New England cottages and farm buildings; its roof was tiled in gray slate. A portico at the rear of the house





Walls throughout the house are hand-distressed bleached heart pine. The pair of vintage Fenian club chairs in this sitting area were made nearly new again by rehabilitating them with their original reconditioned leather and brass upholstery tacks. The painting over the fireplace is by Eric Freedman.



ABOVE: A burl walnut reproduction of a 19th-century English partners desk was made from reclaimed timber and finished with a hand-tooled leather inlay top. The desk is accented with an antique glass lamp by Emile Gallé and an antique child's rocker.

is supported with unadorned white columns resting on a stack of Pennsylvania fieldstone. The narrow lap pool, edged with the same fieldstone, is subtly inscribed into a lush green lawn. On the house's second story, a deck—with a white balustrade suggestive of a Nantucket widow's walk—extends the upstairs bedrooms into the out-of-doors. Along this rugged stretch of the Pacific coastline, where boxlike structures balance on stilts and walls of glass prevail, the house is a world unto itself.

The house's dramatic two-story entry hall serves as the core to a series of adjacent spaces on the ground floor—den, living room, kitchen, breakfast area, expansive deck and patio—all geared to entertaining. Up a sweeping staircase, private bedrooms and an office stretch outward from the second-floor landing, which is lined with bookcases and divided into cozy seating areas. A large square skylight in the vaulted ceiling has been fitted with a whitewashed bamboo shade that fills the space with gently diffused sunlight. "Everyone wants a skylight," says Lane, "but the light can be blinding. So we had the idea of putting in a shade to soften it." The effect is a glowing entrance that instantly imparts the grandest type of welcome.

"One of the fundamental devices in the interior design is contrast," says Mitchell, noting the house's white walls and dark wood floors. "Contrast sets the stage for all the furniture and fabrics." Wide-planked walnut floors throughout the house are finished to a lustrous, dusky brown, and each of the six bedrooms is painted white and dressed with brilliantly white bed linens, damask-covered duvets and oversized pillows as billowing and bright as clouds. Intentionally uncovered windows let sunlight and ocean breezes pour in uninterrupted.



ABOVE: The formal breakfast room—which exists in addition to a breakfast nook in the kitchen—is bracketed by two towers of firewood set within a steel frame, an idea that Gallin also used for his East Coast home.

A congenial mix of formal elements and casual attitudes prevails throughout the interior. Downstairs, in the rooms designed for entertaining, the walls are covered in heart-pine paneling, old growth wood that has been wire-brushed, bleached and waxed with a subtle green pigment. Similarly, the exposed ceilings—constructed of staggered-width whitewashed timbers—have a distinctly cottage look. Towering stacks of firewood, piled in custom metal-forged frames, flank the windows of the breakfast room. As Mitchell points out, the consistent presence of wood—ranging from the essential building materials to the highly polished patina of the 19th-century dining chairs—delivers considerable warmth and character to a freshly built house.

Though the house is filled with classical pieces, its overall atmosphere retains something of a beachy weekend vibe. "It's not a formal house at all," insists Bill Lane. Antique Oriental rugs, displaying their age with grace, add color to the house's neutral palette. The brass hardware—used in all of the bathrooms and custom cabinetry—was left unpolished to tarnish slowly in the salt air. English antiques cohabit happily with recent reproductions—as around the dining table, where the chairs are a matched set of certified antiques and well-turned impostors.





to Collins's country property.  
The island has two tiers  
of professional Wolf range and a  
corkboard for easy access to the  
kitchen's favorite recipes.  
The island is a fine example  
of country living that brings  
to life a professional kitchen  
with a farmhouse table. The  
island is finished and installed  
and is available in a variety of  
options.



ABOVE: An Indian daybed covered with a striped linen cushion offers a place to lounge in the master bath. In lieu of a bathmat, the designers chose an antique rug to add warmth outside the marble steam shower.

In their collaborations, Gallin and Lane-McCook choose all of the furniture—some of it from the homeowner's cache of antiques—specifically for the project at hand; it's intended to stay with the house and, in time, be sold with it. One piece, an original antique deemed too small for the scale of the house, served as the model for an amplified version: an enormous, newly built, glass-fronted sideboard in the kitchen. "We brought out furniture while the house was still being built," says Lane. "We try things out before the house even exists, when just the studs are up and the carpenters are looking at us like we're insane."

"Good design is all a matter of layering," Mitchell says. "You start with the house and that sets the stage." Thus, no detail is spared. Upstairs and down, antique occasional tables (a staple of English country homes) serve various functions, from breakfast dining to cocktail service. In the living room, an asymmetrical 18th-century settee—an elegant piece with, inexplicably, only one arm—displays an original, eccentric charm. Thoughtfully installed suites of contemporary art (including works by painter Ross Bleckner, sculptor Gene Highstein and photographer Herb Ritts) add another level of visual richness; this part of the homeowner's collection, however, will not be sold with the house. □





antique woodbed with off  
bed design. Inset: a view of  
the room's elegant, classic  
style. The room is a blend of  
old and new, with a touch  
of modernity.