



## Lifestyle



DESIGN BUZZ

# MID-PENINSULA MODERN

A couple transitions from Spanish Mediterranean to spare and sleek.

BY CAROLYNE ZINKO

PHOTOGRAPHED BY PAUL DYER

Empty nesters often want to downsize, but a mid-Peninsula couple working with Palo Alto interior designer Barry Johnson didn't go smaller. They wanted him to help their fancy take flight. The couple, whose home Johnson had styled a dozen years ago, enjoyed the process so much that when their kids were grown, they enlisted him for their next project, which swung 180 degrees from a Mediterranean abode into a modern direction. Unusually, it wasn't only Barry Johnson Design Inc. that was called in from the previous project, but the same architect, Judith Mattingly, of Mattingly Thaler, the same builder, the Farrell Company, and the same landscape architect, Bayer Garden Design, too. "We'd sort of proved ourselves the first time around," Johnson quips.

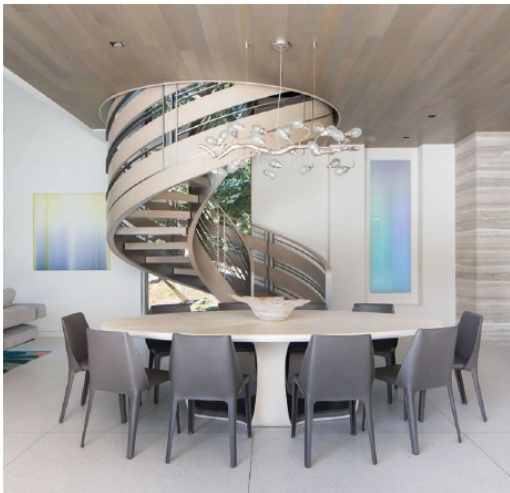
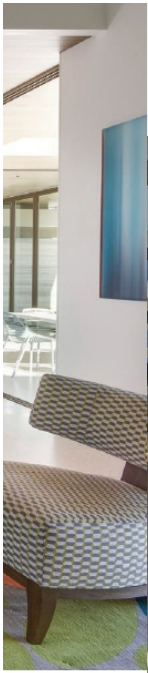
Whereas the previous home featured warm tones, the new home, for a new decade, is bright and white. "I don't know if it's the era," Johnson says, "but they wanted a fresh



approach—minimal, and to have the project speak about the artwork." Walls in the 5,700-square-foot house are of Venetian plaster; doors and woodwork are painted a creamy, warm Benjamin Moore ivory white; and off-white terrazzo flooring is used both indoors and out. Color, meanwhile, is largely introduced in the carpets, artwork and accents, and for color and texture, each bathroom contains slabs of exotic stone, such as quartzite and onyx. The master bath, done in sea green, has an outdoor shower and private garden. The one-level home

Clockwise from top left: The entry hall features a sculpture by Bill Barrett and a Seed Cloud chandelier from Coup D'etat, San Francisco; the living room is enlivened by boldly hued couches and carpets and a navy ceramic art piece by Maren Kloppmann on the dining room wall; a view of the backyard.





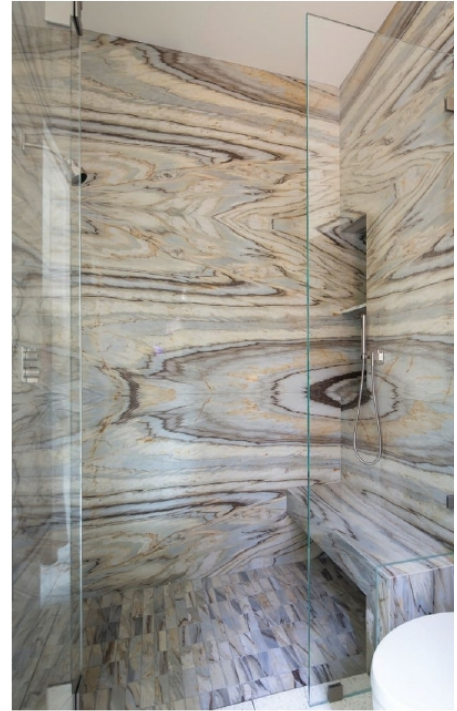
From top: The home offers indoor-outdoor living to allow its owners to take advantage of the mild Northern California climate; a winding staircase by a Seattle firm was so large it had to be transported from Washington to California in sections in an open-bed truck.

also has a statement-making, swirling staircase by NK Woodworking of Seattle that takes occupants up to a crow's nest of a room used for yoga. The floor there is stained black, for contrast and surprise.

Silver travertine was used for the exterior and interiors (sourced by Da Vinci marble in Italy and cut by Sticks N Stones in San Carlos). It's found on the fireplace and kitchen entry hall to lend visual interest and neutral warmth. Whole wall headboards in the bedrooms were created by Exotic Hardwoods and Veneers in Oakland, while Fox Marble in San Francisco fabricated all quartzite and onyx for each bathroom. Solar panels, LED lighting and in-floor heating are nods to energy efficiency. "They were trusting, smart, engaged clients who wanted a fresh, clean, modern look for the home," Johnson says. "They were very open to colorful art and exciting lighting."

The couple had a preexisting art collection but acquired new pieces for the new home with Tom O'Connor of O'Connor & Associates Art Advisors in San Francisco. Among the more interesting pieces, notes Johnson, is a commissioned work by Mads

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Clockwise from top left: Whole wall headboards in the bedrooms were created by Exotic Hardwoods and Veneers in Oakland for the homeowners, who enjoy the warmth of the material; Fox Marble of San Carlos provided and fabricated all quartzite and onyx for each bathroom, to stunning effect; the master bathroom lets the outdoors in with glass walls and a patio with a succulent wall; a view of the staircase, which leads to a yoga room.



Christensen, an ever-changing LED artwork—a multimedia light sculpture—that can be set with a remote to affect the speed of both change and intensity. “That, for this Silicon Valley client, was fascinating,” Johnson says.

A gas Kalamazoo pizza oven outdoors and a 5-foot galley sink in the kitchen indoors assist the vegetarian couple in their

entertaining efforts, which revolve around pizza- and pasta-making, Johnson says. In the backyard, Johnson eschewed a swimming pool in favor of something more architectural. “There’s a reflecting pool, rather than a swimming pool,” he says. “Since we were doing a modern house, it would speak to midcentury. I think that makes this house interesting.” ◉