



HOME+DESIGN



CALIFORNIA
STYLE

Life's a Beach

Nicole Gordon imagines a graceful, restful retreat by the ocean for her well-traveled clients

by **ABIGAIL STONE**
photography by **ROGER DAVIES**

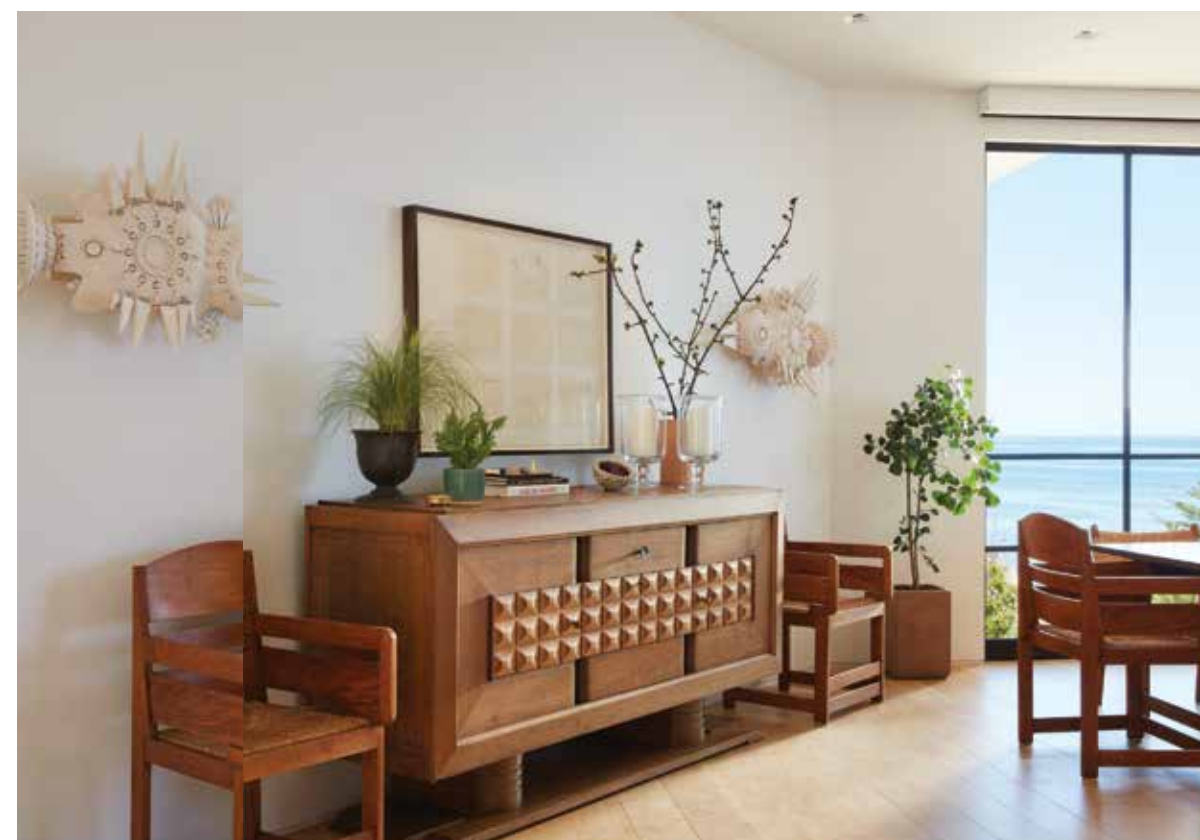
The house, hidden from the highway and nestled at the end of a private driveway, offers a stunning view of the coastline that was integral to its remodel.

It was dark with upholstered walls, prints and heavy woods,” recalls interior designer Nicole Gordon on the overhaul of a massive Malibu dwelling she was tasked with converting into a beach home with architect Mathieu Ribaut. Adhering to the city’s strict guidelines required the duo’s ingenuity to conjure up change within the home’s original footprint. “How do we open it up and make it feel connected to the outside?” Ribaut questioned from the start.

The renovation began by removing a central circular staircase that bisected the living room. The upstairs entry, which funneled visitors through the private quarters, was banished. They turned dark to light with the placement of white oak floors, doors and cabinetry, while Rammed earth walls brought the variegated pale colors of the sand inside and Riviera Bronze doors fully opened the back of the house. To emphasize the interiors merging with the landscape, Ribaut designed a deck that protrudes toward the Pacific Ocean.

Acutely aware of how salt and sun can wreak havoc on materials, Gordon populated the outdoor spaces with stylish pieces from Harbour Outdoor, Janus et Cie, Room & Board and John Himmel that are designed to withstand the harsh elements. “Working out here has different rules,” she notes. “Things will corrode, oxidize, weather and fade.” She pauses. “That has to be dealt with up front.” Inside, that meant installing polished chrome fixtures throughout that sparkle in the kitchen and bath spaces that have direct access to the outdoor conditions.

To highlighting the air of casual chic that pervades this coastal enclave, Gordon and her colleagues, Daniela Schmetzer and Amy Michael, sourced vintage and antique finds from around the globe, mixing them with custom pieces and select work from celebrated craftspeople that integrated with the family’s art collection. “Designing a home is a group effort,” says Gordon. The result is an inviting, eclectic mix that is at once relaxing and elegant. “It’s my client’s favorite house,” Gordon beams. “They use it, they love it and they’re so grateful for it.”



THIS PAGE, TOP: The custom kitchen cabinets created from white oak are surrounded by stools from Reform Gallery.
BELOW: In the dining room, a console, discovered at Timothy Brown Studio in New York, is flanked by two vintage Danish chairs from Obsolete. The whimsical fish sculptures were found at Leclairer in Los Angeles.
OPPOSITE PAGE: In the living room, a custom rug from Mark Nelson, a sofa from Christian Liaigre and Rammed earth walls bring the colors of the sand inside.



In the master bedroom, bolsters from Pat McGann and linens from Deborah Sharpe covered the bed, which has a custom carved headboard. The bedside lamps are from William Laman in Montecito.



ABOVE: The materials used in both the master bathroom and the kitchen, including the white rift oak used for the cabinets and the polished chrome fixtures, bring a feeling of unity to the home and add to its feeling of expansiveness.
BELOW: In a powder room, a handmade bronze sink, set in a custom reclaimed wood vanity, is one of a few pieces sprinkled throughout the house that Gordon found in San Miguel del Allende.





OPPOSITE PAGE: A grouping of four woven chairs, upholstered in a Perennials fabric from John Himmel Decorative Arts. **THIS PAGE, ABOVE:** Chairs and a sofa from Janus et Cie, surrounding a resin table from CB2, extend the living room outdoors. **BELOW:** Three French-style steel doors from Riviera Bronze open the back of the dining room to the front entryway, welcoming guests and encouraging air circulation. All of the home's exterior lighting was found at The Urban Electric Co.





Gordon created multiple seating areas throughout the property to take advantage of the views and form a deeper connection to the environment.