



Cork oaks frame the front entryway. The light fixtures by Paul Ferrante are washed with a deco flair.

BEVERLY CHILL

In this Beverly Hills home, Haus of Design marries elegance and ease with a subtle touch of whimsy

Story by *ABIGAIL STONE* Photos by *SAM FROST*



CLINT NICHOLAS AND LENE SCHNEIDER of Haus of Design are known for creating luxurious, understated homes. The pervasive sense of calm their designs radiate is catnip to a roster of busy celebrities and captains of the design industry.

Characterizing these spaces as “move-in ready” barely scratches the surface. From flickering candles and vases of perfectly arranged flowers to fully stocked bars and refrigerators and merchandised closets and drawers, the duo ensures their clients feel completely coddled. It’s something Nicholas picked up from his first boss, Michael Lee. “He used to call me his ambiance producer,” laughs Nicholas, who learned from his mentor and previous partner, Sandy Gallin. “That’s the service we provide,” says Nicholas, “It’s a lifestyle that we’re creating.” In fact, Nicholas has been known to live in a home before unveiling it to the client, ensuring that every last piece, from the coffee table to the bedside water glasses, are perfectly placed. “Things that I thought were in the perfect spot three days earlier, I end up rearranging.”

Great is an apt description of the new 10,500-square-foot Beverly Hills home. But it didn’t start out that way. Though ideally situated—just north of Sunset, near Los Angeles’ famed “bird streets”—with a large motor court on a generous piece of property, the 7,000-square-foot house itself needed work. “It had a smaller footprint and was dark,” Nicholas remembers. The client, who was used to Malibu beach living, wanted this home to have that same expansive feel of ease and comfort yet washed with refinement appropriate for city living. “We added a pool house and basement, which included the theater, bar, spa and gym,” says Nicholas. “Once we opened it up and added the steel windows and doors throughout, everything felt much lighter and had a better flow.”

New tall steel-framed windows and doors settle a modern edge over the home, opening it up to the sprawling grass backyard. Inside, white oak bleached floors and Venetian plaster walls help bounce light around the newly enlarged interior. “We didn’t go crazy with color, we just used beautiful fabrics and kept



LEFT: The breakfast room's Jeanneret dining chairs were found at Galerie Half.
RIGHT: Wood-clad cabinets contrast with the dark stone surfacing.



THIS PAGE, ABOVE: A chandelier by Serge Mouille dangles above antique upholstered Italian dining chairs with leather backs discovered at Lucca Antiques. **BELOW:** Brutalist concrete wall panels discovered at the Brimfield Antique Market are illuminated by an Aquarius constellation light fixture by Jane Hallworth. **OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP:** An intimate seating group in front of the fireplace pays homage to Nicholas' former business partner and mentor, Sandy Gallin.

everything very simple and brought in the color with accessories and art," says Nicholas.

In the double-height entry, a whimsical light fixture purchased from David Weeks Studio sets the home's sophisticated yet playful tone, underlined by a whiskey-stocked bar with a purple-lacquered interior, which is revealed at the touch of a button "It's quirky and fun and super cool," says Nicholas.

"Because they're a young couple, we wanted to keep it fresh," explains Nicholas. That meant mixing vintage and custom pieces that clearly reflect the client, like a light fixture by Jane Hallworth that crawls across the den's ceiling. On closer inspection, the seemingly random scattering of lights, connected by brass arms, is revealed to be the constellation Aquarius, the client's sun sign.

Here, elegance and ease go hand in hand. "It's not just showpieces everywhere," Nicholas stresses. "It's really important for us to have that eclectic mix but it has to be comfortable." That means not only paying attention to how a house flows and how the pieces interact but keeping in mind how they will be used. "We do different fills for the upholstery depending on what rooms they'll be used in. The den is always much more lounge-y and softer than the more formal rooms," says Nicholas.

An emphasis on the interplay of lights and darks, rather than on color, imbues the home with a subtle but distinct sophistication. That extends to the kitchen, which combines dark stone with light wood cabinetry and vintage fixtures. The living room's Loro Piana drapes and the cashmere fabric that covers the screening room walls reinforce the feeling of sumptuousness that permeates every corner of this home. "We're paying attention to every detail," says Nicholas "It's creating a feeling." And that feeling is home.



"I wanted the theater to be sexy, dark and moody," says Nicholas, who wrapped the walls in cashmere. As in the rest of the home, texture trumps color, with the rooms "painted" in stone, wood and plush fabrics.



THIS PAGE: The custom hand-scraped bed by L'Artigiano Studio was inspired by Jean-Michel Frank. It's paired with an oversized Milo Baughman lounge chair in crushed velvet; "We wanted to keep the landscaping very minimal," says Nicholas of the backyard that houses low chairs covered in dark fabric. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** The master bathroom features a custom vanity, limestone floors with a hammered finish and Greek wool shag ottoman from Harbinger.

