

## HOME &amp; DESIGN

HOME OF THE TIMES

## Takes in a wider view



Photographs by JAY L. CLENDENIN Los Angeles Times

**SUSAN HARBERT** takes in the view from her backyard after a remodel of her Pacific Palisades home. Before, “you wouldn’t even know the ocean was there,” she says.

**By Carren Jao >>>** A home on the mountains with a commanding view of the Pacific Ocean is a shame to waste, which is why architect Takashi Yanai took on the remaking of Susan Harbert’s Pacific Palisades home. ¶ Yanai, a partner of Ehrlich Yanai Rhee Chaney Architects, said his firm doesn’t normally accept renovation projects, but “they don’t make any more Pacific Ocean view properties.”

Built in a traditional style, the Pacific Palisades home failed to take advantage of its great location. “When you walked in, you wouldn’t even know the ocean was there,” Harbert says of her home’s former configuration.

Now the home is a three-bedroom, three-and-a-half bathroom picture of subtle modernity.

Inside, what started out as separate family, living and dining rooms and kitchen were all combined into a single 40-foot-wide space. A 40-foot wide motorized sliding glass door that pockets completely away also was installed, welcoming the outdoor views with wide-open arms, as it were.

“When you’re inside, you still feel like you’re outdoors,” says Harbert, who usually keeps the doors secreted away.

Rather than an old-school grass lawn, the new entry designed by EYRC Architects in collaboration with landscaper David Godshall’s firm, Terremoto, retained Harbert’s privacy while evoking a beach vibe.

A plant palette with silvery gray and blue tones, plus flecks of seasonal color, inspired by the Santa Monica Mountains, has low water needs. The decomposed granite in warm tan complements the home’s cool gray, giving it a “dune-inspired feeling,” Godshall says.

But grandeur wasn’t just the goal, so was comfort. Harbert’s grown children and their friends often stay a few nights. So Yanai also designed the home to be comfortable in many situations — for two people, for a family when children were over, and for hundreds of people during a party.

Yanai kept the ceiling heights below 10 feet, creating a more intimate atmosphere for such a large open room. Rather than going for height, Yanai went horizontal, drawing the eye outward. Full-height teak frames at the sitting area, fireplace and the portal to the hallway leading to the bedrooms done by Martin and Carter Woodworking also add warmth to the space.

The interior design by Debbie Minchenberg reflects the home’s minimalist leanings. Only four materials are repeated throughout: teak wood, concrete, Calcutta stone and white glass. “I didn’t want to fight with the scenery,” says Minchenberg. “I didn’t want the house to look overly designed. The fabric selections for the furniture that I designed are quiet — sand tones and blue like the sea. I selected chairs, tables and bar stools as sculptural elements.”

Now the home is an oasis for Harbert, who says, “I feel so lucky to come home to a house this peaceful and calm every day.”

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## Continue the tour

Go online for a more pictures of Susan Harbert’s Pacific Palisades remodel and photo galleries from other Homes of the Times.



Ehrlich Yanai Rhee Chaney Architects

**BEFORE** the remodel, at top and above. Now, above right, the entry to the home is framed by climate-appropriate landscape design and board-formed concrete walls. At right, a specimen olive tree is the focus of the entry courtyard.



**A CUSTOM** teak counter, left, in front of the white lacquer and back-lighted glass wet bar in the home. Takashi Yanai, right, of Ehrlich Yanai Rhee Chaney Architects in his recent remodel. A 40-foot wide motorized sliding glass door that pockets completely away was installed along one wall of the home. It opens to an outdoor deck and seating area.



**TO GIVE THE FEEL** of arriving at a beach house, a board-formed concrete wall, far left, and a boardwalk-like walkway were added, leading to the home entry. At center, Harbert’s collection of black-and-white photography lines the hallway to the bedrooms. At right, a vintage leather chair sits in a guest room, contrasting with custom teak cabinets.



**DIRECT ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS** in every part of the house was integral to the remodel. The master bedroom, left, features a leather backboard/wall, and the master bathroom, right, opens up to sunlight and ocean breezes. “When you’re inside, you still feel like you’re outdoors,” homeowner Harbert says.