

THE HOME & DESIGN ISSUE: STEP INSIDE 5 AMAZING ROOMS

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Their At-Home Style*

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designed to WOW

Take a peek inside five Laguna Beach dream homes with over-the-top features that surprise and inspire.

By Debbie Lavdas

THEY SAY ONE'S HOME IS ONE'S CASTLE, OR IN THIS CASE, ONE'S BAT Cave or Rock House. From a secret car elevator/art-installation to a rock star kitchen to a stately library, the rooms in these five phenomenal Laguna Beach homes wow with function and clever style. Learn what's design-possible and get insight from some of the town's top designers and architects about their ideas behind building these rare rooms.

It's amazing what some can dream up, and you may find yourself inspired to take some arresting architectural cues and artistic solutions to create your own spectacular space—in your own home, your next home or your when-I-win-the-lottery home.



LOFTY LIBRARY

This space features a bit of “Professor Plum, in the library, with the candlestick” formal British style. Who had a clue that to-die-for offices like this really existed—and in the cottage-chic town of Laguna Beach? The study/office/library comes complete with a secret, stately bathroom concealed behind one of the wall panels and a wet bar discreetly tucked into a corner. The exquisite office commands respect, conveys dignity and promises quiet seclusion when needed. Located near the entry of this Smithcliffs house, the owner and CEO of substantial corporations can meet in this

space with business partners discretely without interrupting his private and personal family life. The cherry wood paneling is finely finished to a luster, and the large, north-facing window washes the room with a soft natural light that warms the space. A grand circular wood staircase leads to an open loft library that encircles the study and houses hundreds of volumes of books cherished by the owner. As for the team of whodunit? No, it wasn’t Miss Scarlett or Colonel Mustard. It was Brion Jeannette Architecture, Pridemark Construction and interior design by Robert Ricker.



SECRET-AGENT ENTRANCE



Why saunter through the front door with a mediocre “Honey, I’m home,” when you could make a dashing entrance that says, “Darling, I’ve arrived,” through a James Bond-style car elevator that parks your stealth ride on display in your own entry gallery? This secret subterranean hydraulic-lift/art installation belongs to the Laguna Beach home known around town as “The Bat Cave,” “The Spy House,” or “The Secret Tunnel House.” Magnificent machines from Ferraris to Jaguars to Fisker Karmas have graced the impressive gallery entry area that connects to an underground tunnel leading to the main house.

With parking at a premium in Laguna Beach, this \$10 million home on Point Place accommodates one more spot in a unique and stylish way. “It’s really like something from a spy movie,” says architect Paul McClean of McClean Design. “Driving in, coming down

the elevator, it’s a Bond-like entrance. There is a two-car parking garage entrance on top, and an elevator takes the car to the lower level.”

Few guests can figure out how the car got there, as the only thing you see from the quiet, tucked-away street is a wooden garage door; the home is completely hidden.

The entire cliff-side dwelling is a stunner. Everything is sleek and streamlined with lots of steel, glass and wood. “The house itself took five years to build, and an additional five years to build the underground tunnel,” Paul says. Another fabulous room is the meditation room, with disappearing walls of glass, ocean views and natural light. It’s a floating harmony of surf and shore—hence some of the other names you may know the house by: “The Glass House” and “The Floating House.” Learn more about the house, currently on the market (and calling all James Bond types), at 32013pointplace.com.



LAP OF LUXURY

It's indeed a luxury to have room for a pool in Laguna Beach, so designing a 74-foot lap pool for your backyard paired with a wealth of entertaining space around it is quite impressive. Entertaining is elevated to an art form in the backyard of this Mystic Hills home that shows off its multi-level, modern ways and 270-degree views of the Laguna Beach coastline and Catalina Island. At night the space is particularly party-worthy with the city lights and loads of privacy. The Pacific Avenue home is on a 20,000-square-foot lot with nothing but natural hillside views and ocean vistas as far as the eye can see. The elegant lap pool has a walkway bridge above it and the outdoor room is paired with a large spa and a second built-in barbecue.

If that isn't enough room to entertain guests, the white-hot great room inside offers even more. White furnishings, white flooring and

white walls with a 30-foot ceiling and 25 feet of curved floor-to-ceiling windows give the space enormous presence. The house—of marble, granite, steel, slate and glass—has 9,500 square feet of living space. Everything about the rooms and house was designed so that the view would not be obstructed; nothing was to detract from the owner's line of view. All windows in the house had to be higher than the line of sight, and the curve of the house was also designed so as to take advantage of the panoramic view. The owner wanted to be able to see the entire coastline, not just the view in front. It's spectacular inside and out. And, yes it could all be yours for a cool \$7,795,000. More at 1255pacificave.greatluxuryestate.com. By the way, don't forget your Laguna Beach Magazine friends when you throw your first pool party or great-room bash.





INDUSTRIAL MAN CAVE



An amazing modern-day, open-air man cave was recently completed at a Montage Laguna Beach private residence. The room, like almost everything inside the \$27.5 million oceanfront home, is contrary to what you might expect from a breezy coastal abode at Montage, well known for its iconic craftsman style. The man cave/gentleman's quarters/cigar bar has industrial touches that almost feel like Oakley's design bunker headquarters. (There are no ejector chairs, but maybe there could be.) The futuristic slant takes the credit for making the space so cool, in a sophisticated manner. Exposed concrete walls with circular stamping and a futuristic fireplace dress the room with a dichotomy of warm and cool touches.

As you enter the eccentric yet striking home, the first room you see is one that subliminally summons you to toss your keys and throw back a stiff drink after a hard day. International designer Shelley Starr decorated the space.

"I decided to pay homage to the 'good old men's smoking room,'" Shelley says. "I incorporated the industrial vibe with a shelving unit of floating glass shelves and stainless steel structure, while bringing in the subtle texture and materials of a more vintage room. I chose beautiful unique leathers for the strapping under the glass shelves and custom metallic Italian leather for the swivel chairs that I designed specifically for the room. Even shopping for the style of buckle that I would incorporate onto the chair was very important to me—it came from a small dress shop in Manhattan."

The textures, proportions and materials break from traditional comfort zones of design. Of course, the most important aspect is the contents of the bar—stocked with scotch (Lagavulin 16, Bunnahabhain 21) and specialties like Hine Antique XO cognac. The home, overall, is a unique 7,500-square-foot residence that's never been lived in; the property is listed with The Stanaland Group.

CULINARY STAR KITCHEN

The kitchen in Laguna Beach's "Rock House" is rock star worthy. The truly "green" home is built within a massive natural rock that's surrounded by the beach and opens wide below to spectacular beach and ocean views. The kitchen was designed to complement the uniquely eco-conscious home. The owner of this home is a Le Cordon Bleu-trained chef who desired a kitchen that allowed family and guests to interact easily. "I wanted to create a kitchen as unique as the house, where everything is ideally and efficiently located," architect Brion Jeannette says. "And the space needed to be as dramatic and enticing as my client's culinary treats."

A skylight was strategically placed above the hanging pan rack over the cooking area to flood the kitchen with daylight. The unique, earthy kitchen floor is a combination of terrazzo and seashells with stainless steel bands separating the different colors and materials. The floor is paired together to form a nautilus shell pattern. For added wow factor, the dining area is situated in front of the fully receding patio doors that open to give the kitchen breathtaking beach views and cool breezes. Creative kitchen kudos go out to the entire team of Brion Jeannette Architecture, Butch Witek Construction and Jamie Manners for interior design. **LBM**



PHOTOS BY CHRIS LETOURNEAU