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French-Country Villa in Malibu

After an extensive renovation, this Old-World abode features an authentic transformation.

When a Houston, Texas, couple purchased their second home right off the Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu, California, one thing was for sure: the home was in store for quite a renovation. Previously described as a “mutt” of European styles, the home needed a transformation that focused on authenticity and heritage-based style with a layout that fit the homeowners’ lifestyle. To achieve this, they brought in interior designer Cathy Chapman, who designed their primary residence, and Greg Roth, senior designer for Home Front Build, to join their team.

The transformation started in the home’s sunken courtyard. The horseshoe layout of the house is reminiscent of a French-country villa and a feature that Greg and Cathy wanted to highlight. They added a stone fountain in the middle of the area and antique French limestone pavers as ground cover. Changing out windows and doors was a necessity throughout the home, with the benefits seen from the courtyard. To maximize the home’s gorgeous view of the Pacific Ocean, Greg had black-trimmed steel French doors and windows installed.



Throughout the home, guests will notice the unique texture of the walls, which are covered in plaster with a soap finish that is unique to Home Front Build's artisans. After preparing the drywall, the artisans hand-trowel multiple layers of plaster, sanding in between each application and finishing with a soap-based sealant. An added benefit is the clean, fresh scent after the sealant is applied.



Upon entering the home, guests immediately see the family-centric redesign. Knowing they wanted to host family for the holidays in their new home, the homeowners decided to make the main living room into their dining room, which was also the inspiration spot for Cathy's interior design. "The dining room table started the whole design," Cathy shares. The 17-foot-long piece, along with most of the antiques in the home, was purchased in Texas. "The client loves antiques," Cathy explains. "So, we wanted very clean, neutral, minimal trim so that the antiques were really the focal point."

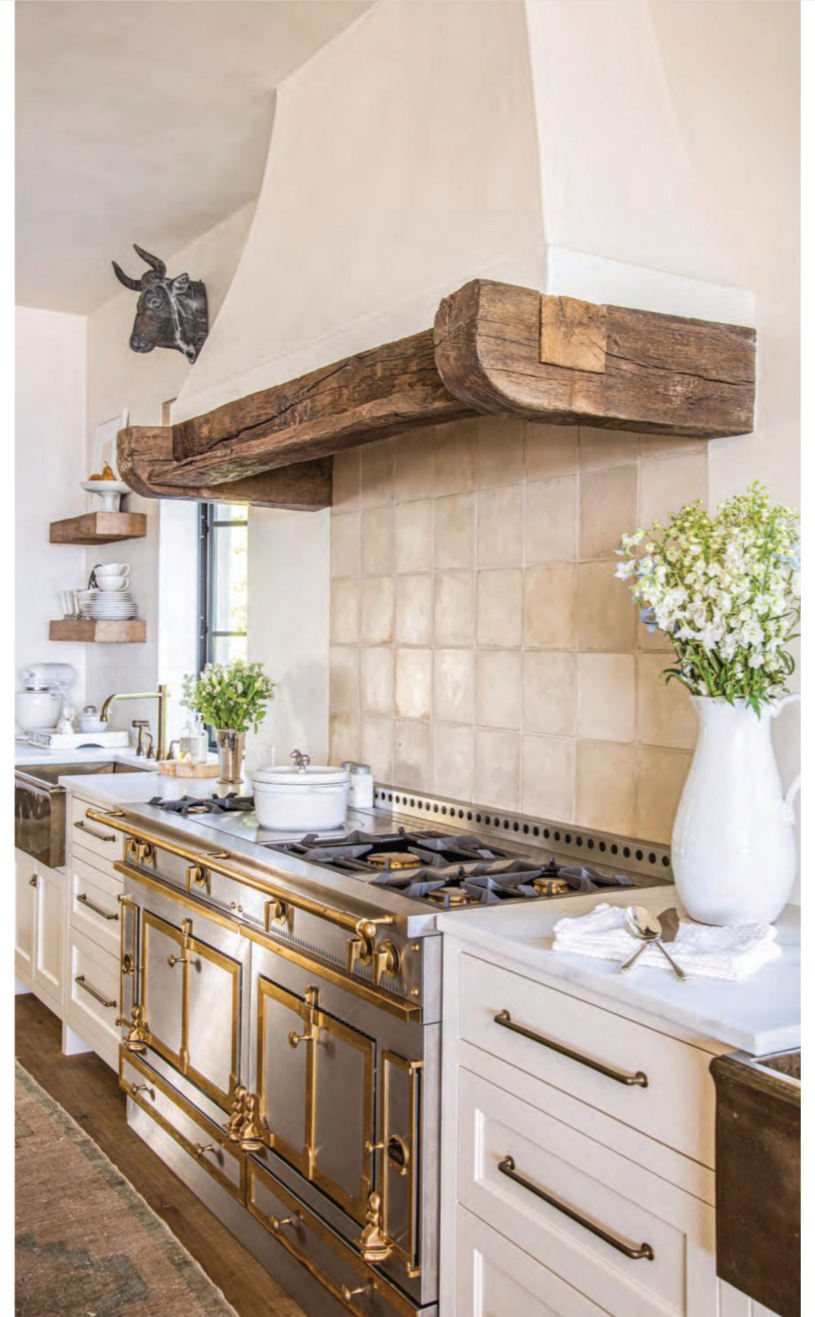
The family room takes full advantage of the ideal location overlooking the water. Anchored by a large, rustic coffee table, the space features plenty of seating for family to gather and an entire wall of accordion-style bifold doors leading out to the pool and patio. "The idea was to face the view as much as possible and have it neutral and quiet so it's all about the view," Cathy says.





The kitchen is a focal point of the home, with antique white oak floors and an antique Italian sculptor's table that acts as an island. Greg and Cathy installed double cast-bronze sinks on either side of the range and open shelving to let in more natural light. "We really wanted to retain the windows so that you could get good light in there," Greg shares. "We also wanted to balance out the large range and hood beside the sinks."

An homage to the homeowners' primary home in Texas pops up in the kitchen above the windows in the form of antique bull-head sculptures. The La Cornue range is one of the homeowners' favorite features.





ABOVE: The small living area off the kitchen is a favorite spot to gather for morning coffee and afternoon iced tea. Cathy added a chic touch of dark blue in the accents to give the room a bit of a contemporary edge. BELOW: A small departure from the rustic neutral tones of the rest of the home, the powder room features a graphic Pierre Frey wallpaper in varying shades of blue.



While the living room fireplace was an existing feature, the master bedroom and dining room fireplaces were completely renovated with antique surrounds.



A love for antiques is at the forefront of the design, with evidence of the homeowners' passion in nearly every room. Cathy shares that most of the antiques were purchased in Texas, either at local Houston shops or at the Round Top Antiques Fair. Surrounded by so much history and character, the authenticity of the French-country style shines through in every room.

TEXT BY HANNAH NANCE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CRIS NOLASCO

The master bathroom includes a private patio that the homeowners showcased by adding bifold doors. Antique French limestone pavers match the rest of the home's style and are beloved for not only their appearance but also their durability. A crystal-laden chandelier brings a bit of glamour to the neutral space.

