

interiors



STEVE LERUM

SEASIDE REVIVAL

ARCHITECTURE: HORST ARCHITECTS
INTERIOR DESIGN: ARIA DESIGN
TEXT: ERIKA HEET





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ALONG A SECLUDED COVE BEACH in Southern California, overlooking a famous surf break, is a cliffside enclave of homes in an eclectic range of styles, from charming shingled bungalows to postmodern boxes. Among these, perched above the sand, is a house that Laguna Beach-based Arianna Noppenberger of Aria Design and her husband, Horst—an architect she met on a job site 25 years ago and with whom she collaborates often—modernized for a couple and their large family.

"This house was very challenging, but luckily I like challenges," says Noppenberger. The team faced extremely rigorous restrictions with the building envelope of the original 1920s structure: Walls had to stay put, oppressively low ceilings could not budge even one inch, and the original 3,500-square-foot plan actually had to come down slightly to match the recently reduced lot size. Still, says Noppenberger, "We did the best we could to make it feel a lot larger and more connected to the views."

Among their approaches was, per the wife's request, a plan by which the ocean could be seen from every room in the house. This concept begins outside, where a lush green wall gives way to a generously sized Trespa-clad door that swings open to reveal—beyond concrete pavers that appear to rest in a shallow pond—the first glimpse of the sea. A quick turn leads one to the massive steel-and-glass pivoting front door, each of its staggered circular cutouts revealing more peeks through the house and to the water. "As soon as you enter the house, you see all the way to the ocean," says Noppenberger.

The entrance hall is grand yet simple; the floors are limestone and the walls are lined with travertine—its long, fluid lines evoking patterns in the sand—punctuated by small niches and accented with delicate Caesarstone strips the color of driftwood. Above, a thin skylight invites in more light, while milk-white pendants from Micucci, encased in leather netting and recalling antique glass fishing floats, dangle above. A modern staircase leading up to the master suite anchors the space; a second staircase leads down to the guest quarters.

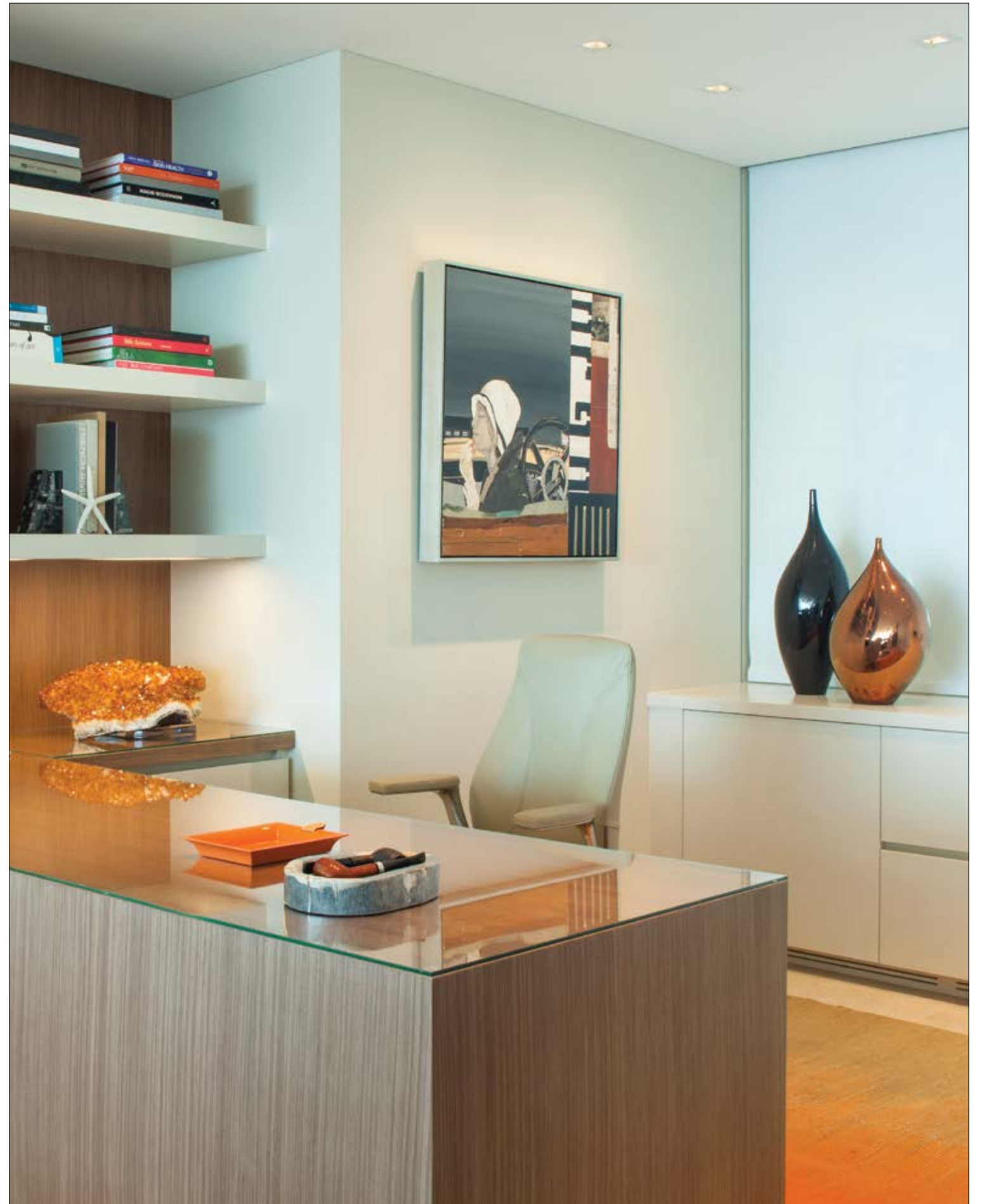
The main floor, which gained floor-to-ceiling glass walls on the ocean side, is entirely attuned to the magnificent views. In the open living area, Noppenberger kept the furnishings understated, with a sofa, armchair, coffee table and pillows from Minotti. Overhead, voluptuous Mae West silk lighting fixtures from Aqua Creations grip the ceiling like barnacles. The School of Light pendant from Terzani is reminiscent of fish darting above an Arc dining table and Glove chairs from Molteni. Near the custom Boffi kitchen is an intimate onyx bar lined with barstools by Patricia Urquiola for B&B Italia. Tucked behind the large main space are two small bedrooms outfitted in soothing blue and white hues, with fabrics from Duralee, Casamance and Donghia, and fixtures from Slamp found at Lightopia.



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THE DOWNSTAIRS GUEST SPACE IS similarly airy, with low-slung convertible Escapade sofas, backrests and a Spline coffee table from Roche Bobois accompanying a cozy travertine fireplace. "The wife didn't want it to feel claustrophobic, so she asked for lots of glass and skylights everywhere," says Noppenberger, who worked with her husband to replace many existing, view-blocking interior walls with walls of soundproof glass and pull-down shades for privacy. More soundproof panels are tucked into the ceiling and covered by a layer of seamless fabric, which further dampens noise. The real test to this approach came during the installation, when Noppenberger stood in one of the rooms "and yelled at the top of my lungs, and the contractors in the room next to me couldn't hear a thing," she says. "We were constantly challenged by creating a house that needed to be open and comfortable, and this did the job." Set off by a bi-fold door that can be closed for privacy, the guest bedroom is finished with a Roche Bobois fabric for the bedding and Levo sconces from Cerno. A Caesarstone countertop continues from the custom kitchenette through the bar; across the room is a wine cellar with backlit translucent acrylic shelves that provide the illusion that, says Noppenberger, "the bottles are floating."

Noppenberger pays further homage to the sea in the master suite, where nothing competes with the best views in the house. A Denny armchair and stool from Minotti are among the only furnishings, save for built-in walnut cabinetry of her design. Underfoot, a Paola Lenti rug made up of circles conjures sand dollars, while the smooth, white fireplace hood undulates "like the waves in the ocean," Noppenberger says. Intended to draw the eye outward, the limestone hearth continues to the patio and becomes the fire pit, surrounded by woven outdoor furniture from Manutti. Above the bed is a simple phrase that Noppenberger introduced to honor the clients' connections to France, which encapsulates the overall feeling of the room. Made up of gold-leaf caps and hand-applied to the wall are the words *rêve d'or*, the literal translation being "golden dreams," a fitting sentiment for this idyllic seaside haven. ■ *Horst Architects*, 949 494 9569, horst-architects.com; *Aria Design, Inc.*, 949 376 5996, ariades.com

