

LOS ANGELES

luxe.

interiors + design



\$ 9.95 A SANDOW PUBLICATION | LUXE



0 74808 03333 1

MAR/APR 2019 | DISPLAY UNTIL 0

THE HOUSE WAS FALLING APART.

The yard, covered in weeds. Big Havisham energy. Incomprehensibly, the structure faced a side yard rather than the ocean view behind it. But when this Corona del Mar, California, home came on the market six years ago, architect Eric Olsen knew it was the one. Or, more precisely, that it could be.

Eric and his wife, Adriana, lived there for two-and-a-half years before tearing it down and rebuilding. At first glance, their new house looks a bit like its neighbors: wooden gate, single story, very discreet. But then the door swings open. All at once, you see a sunken, two-story courtyard with a firepit and trees; enormous hanging globe lamps right at eye level; and the Pacific Ocean, Newport Harbor, and Catalina Island beyond. It's enough to stun you senseless—exactly the kind of moment Eric worked to create. **“I wanted it to be a total surprise when you came through the front door,”** says the architect.



Architect
Eric Olsen
at home.



ENTRY

Light fixtures: Rattan Globes, [Inner Gardens](#).

Designing a U-shaped layout around the courtyard, Eric made use of floor-to-ceiling windows throughout. They highlight the view, sure, but also help the couple keep track of their lot. “We wanted to maximize the space without designing the house in a way that felt like, ‘Wait, where are the kids?’ and then yelling for them,” Eric says. “The house is very transparent. It feels connected from all vantage points.” He might have used all shades of gray (a favorite color) on the interior, but for their girls—who are six, nine, and 12—little pops of color were added throughout.

Still, the couple's style trends more European than Orange County. Adriana is a first-generation Italian from a family of restaurateurs: They had Calacatta marble slabs installed on the kitchen island for pasta-making, and outdoor heaters for year-round dining by the pool. She's also the one to thank for the home's urban undertones: “I've always been drawn to high ceilings, exposed brick, that kind of vibe,” says Adriana. “Living and studying in Italy, you'd see a really cool new villa with old brick and steel doors.” Eric and his team designed the dream house down to the details: custom cabinetry, hand-selected furniture, light fixtures from his collaboration with Chris Buzzell.

No doubt the 19-month project was a terrific undertaking, but it was also, apparently, a joy. “Many clients said, ‘Oh, it must be so hard designing your own house.’ But it wasn't,” Eric insists. “You know what you want, and you move forward. And my wife was on the same page. It was easy!” ■