

CALIFORNIA COASTING

GIFTS FROM THE SEA AT A TRUE BEACH HOUSE



INTERIOR DESIGN BY RICHARD HALLBERG AND BARBARA WISELEY
ARCHITECTURE BY NEUMANN MENDRO ANDRULAITIS ARCHITECTS
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE BY KATIE O'REILLY ROGERS
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OUTDOORS AND INDOORS FREELY COMMINGLE AT THIS CALIFORNIA BEACH HOUSE—SO MUCH SO THAT IT'S ALMOST AS IF THE RESIDENTS HAD LET THE BREATHTAKING natural environment colonize their Santa Barbara home, situated on a spectacular sliver of land clasped between the ocean and a tidal bird sanctuary. A bowl of sand dollars on the entry table greets guests. A rough-cut limestone coffee table is strewn with fine flotsam: an African shell necklace, shell-encrusted bowls, terra-cotta doves and eroded stone spheres. And the multitude of pelicans, curlews, sanderlings and herons that poke and wade and idle outside in the marsh appear to have found new niches inside, represented by a growing collection of avian sculptures and figures that nestle on tables, shelves and books.

"It's not cutesy beachy," says former computer engineer Barbara Siemon, who lives in the three-bedroom, wood and glass house with husband Greg, a retired software entrepreneur. "All the things in here look like they were swept in by the ocean or the wind."

It was Richard Hallberg and Barbara Wiseley of Los Angeles-based Hallberg-Wiseley who actually did the sweeping in. Their work subtly captures the rough grace of the Pacific seashore. Indeed, sun-bleached off-whites, beiges and grays rule the interior color palette as surely as they blanket the beach. For the combined

Hallberg-Wiseley enhances a seaside house. OPENING PAGES: Gervasoni chaises; cushions in Holly Hunt outdoor fabric; pillows in African raffia with shells. Dennis & Leen stool. Formations driftwood sphere. Ipê wood deck. Lavender and Mexican feather grass. THIS PAGE: Custom chairs in Holly Hunt outdoor fabric. Vintage driftwood table. Antique folk art bird. OPPOSITE: Iron bench, reproduction stalactite side table and hurricane, all by Formations. John Himmel Decorative Arts chairs; cushions in Chella matelassé; pillows in Les Indiennes paisley. Exquisite Surfaces limestone table. Custom Mansour rug of antique linen.



FORMATIONS X-OTTOMAN F-OT11
FORMATIONS HANGING HURRICANE F-AC49



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Formations chair and ottoman; cushions in Dogwood fabric; pillow in antique textile; slate-top driftwood table; Pacific Hide and Leather rug. Bronze lamp, pillow and framed herbarium specimen, all by Formations; custom sofa in Chella matelassé. Vintage shell-encrusted planter; collages by Koschmider; Tizio lamps; custom headboard; Frette linens; pillow in African textile; Spanish antique leather trunk. Formations table with shell stone top; Tizio lamp; pillows in John Robshaw Textiles fabric; long pillow in antique textile; antique French coverlet; Frette linens. OPPOSITE: Custom chairs in Holly Hunt fabric. Custom banquette in Chella matelassé. Pillows in Les Indiennes prints. Fish pillow made from antique rug. Vintage wooden table. Antique Chinese stool. Coral reproduction by Formations.



Top Left Picture:

FORMATIONS STRATFORD CHAIR F-CH22

FORMATIONS STRATFORD OTTOMAN F-OT22

Top Right Picture:

FORMATIONS LARGE CUSTOM BOTANICAL, CALL FOR INFORMATION

FORMATIONS HANGING HURRICANE F-AC49

"ALL THE THINGS IN HERE LOOK LIKE THEY
WERE SWEPT IN BY THE OCEAN OR THE WIND."



In family room, custom chair in Great Plains linen. Castings of Roman capitals as tables by Formations. Custom banquette in Chella matelassé; pillows in Les Indiennes prints. Spanish antique leather chair. African tribal pieces at bookcase. Fossil whale bone. *Agave attenuata*. Hand-painted bowls by Formations. Pacific Hide and Leather rug.



Center:

FORMATIONS CAPITAL TABLE WITH LEAF DETAIL F-OC15

FORMATIONS SMALL FRENCH IRON CANDLESTICK F-AC69S

On Bookshelf:

FORMATIONS CHIPPIE BOWLS F-AC68



living and dining areas, the designers commissioned a rug of antique linen that picks up the shifting values of sand. There's an earthy, almost sensual feel to the furnishings, which include driftwood spheres, a reproduction of a chunky stalactite fashioned as a side table and a bench of woven iron—all by Formations, one of the designers' two furniture companies, along with Dennis & Leen.

Antiques chosen for their rustic authenticity—such as a Spanish leather chair and a rumpled leather trunk just as old—fit comfortably into the mix in this house.

"Part of design is responding to nature," says Hallberg. "All of our work is grounded in that it gives you a connection to the earth. I think that's why we're obsessed with spheres."

The shore-hugging, one-story house—redesigned by Mary Andrulaitis of Neumann Mendro Andrulaitis Architects in Carpinteria, California, six years ago—communes with the outside via wall-to-wall windows looking out on the ocean, nearby Santa Cruz Island and the Santa Ynez Mountains. "It's all about enjoying the scenes and not getting too stuffy about it," says Siemon, who has become a friend of both interior designers.

"We all come down here at least twice a week with our dogs and run on the beach," says Wiseley. "It's my favorite place in the whole world." Serendipity is the order of the day, with time devoted to collecting stones and shells, playing Frisbee and watching the always-fascinating flocks of birds.

And because sand is an inescapable fact of life here—"This is my third vacuum today," jokes Siemon—Hallberg and Wiseley covered all the sofas and chairs in outdoor fabrics. "You just brush it off," says Wiseley. "We made everything easy and carefree so you don't have to think about it."

Says Siemon, "Some people have a house at the beach, but this is a true beach house." □

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP LEFT: In hallway, antique Spanish vargueño; decoys; *Dendrobium* orchid; antique Portuguese leather-wrapped container; African iron ceremonial ornament; walking stick. Antique terra-cotta doves; African shell beads. On entry deck, Formations iron table with stone top; shell-appliquéd wedding box; vintage bird figures; woven roots; bowl of sand dollars; *Agave attenuata*. Overlooking bird sanctuary, resident Barbara Siemon with her dog, Abbie. On vintage driftwood table, antique folk art bird and succulent. Vintage French cement heron. THIS PAGE: Driftwood spheres by Formations.

