



At the La Jolla, California, home of Liz Anne and Phokion Potamianos, designed by Eddie Lee, a metal sculpture by Jeff Koons frames breathtaking views of the sea. The sofa is by B&B Italia, the pair of Arne Jacobsen chairs are by Fritz Hansen, the three-part cocktail table is by George Nakashima, and the purple armchair is a vintage Nanna Ditzel design; the blue floor cushions are by Ligne Roset, and the wall cabinet is vintage Jean Prouvé. For details see Sources.

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NEW HORIZONS

For the past two decades, Liz Anne and Phokion Potamianos have lived a metropolitan life. They met, dated, and held one of their two wedding celebrations in New York's SoHo district, before career opportunities for Phokion—a former private-equity partner who now runs a family office—lured them to San Francisco, London, and then back to Manhattan. During that time, they made seasonal escapes to Switzerland and to the Greek island of Spetses (the site of their first wedding ceremony). The idea of putting down roots in Southern California never occurred to them, even though they made regular visits with their daughter to La Jolla, where Liz Anne's sister used to live.

"SoHo was such a big part of our lives, and we'd returned to the city to live in the former gallery," says Liz Anne, referring to the third-floor space at 420 West Broadway, where the late pioneering art dealer Ileana Sonnabend once had her gallery. In the 1980s, Sonnabend had adopted Phokion's father, Antonio Homem, who served as her longtime employee and is now the director of the Sonnabend Collection Foundation. Liz Anne and Phokion—both members of the foundation's board—inherited that loft space a few years ago and hired designer Eddie Lee to draw up plans for a renovation to make it their new home. But then a job offer for Phokion popped up in the Bay Area and got the couple thinking about a West Coast reset. "We considered moving back to San Francisco," says Liz Anne, "but we really love the ocean and wanted to be where you can swim and surf all year round."

As the couple had their sights on Southern California, Phokion came around to the idea of trading an airplane commute for 365-day surfing and paddleboarding. He got all the convincing he needed the moment he saw the views from a midcentury cliffside bungalow in La Jolla. Designed by Frank Lloyd Wright protégé Frederick Liebhardt in 1958, the spectacularly sited house overlooks Windansea Beach, the legendary surf spot made famous by the titular toughs in Tom Wolfe's 1968 nonfiction collection *The Pump House Gang*. "The culture of Wolfe's day no longer exists," says Phokion. "Appreciation for good surfing and beautiful waves are constant, though."

So eager were Liz Anne and Phokion to move in that they pressed Lee to drop everything and get the property ready—in just four months' time—for the start of the school year. It was a tall order, given the brief: transforming the 6,300-square-foot two-bedroom into a comfortable, contemporary four-bedroom family home.

That meant carving out two new en suite bedrooms, one from a solarium and another from a storage area. A bunch of basic updates were also needed, including swapping out the A-frame living room's moldering wood-laminate ceiling for planks of vertical-grain hemlock and replacing rotted wood on the teak deck. And there were other custom tweaks, like removing kitchen cabinets to accommodate a table and plush modern banquette to make the space more family-friendly.

"They didn't want a shabby-chic beach house. They wanted a sophisticated home with a beachy vibe," says Lee. Though they stripped away most of the touches of Park Avenue exuberance introduced during an early-'90s makeover by legendary decorator Mark Hampton, they kept his white oak floors with travertine inlay and the sunken leather-wrapped bar.

Rooms throughout are painted in shades of white, providing a neutral backdrop for the impressive art, which draws from the Sonnabend Collection. Among the marquee works are a Jeff Koons aluminum sculpture of pool inflatables, an Andy Warhol *Flowers* tapestry, and a Jim Dine abstract landscape. "We opted for works that were personal, that had been in Ileana's apartment," says Liz Anne.

For the furnishings, Lee paired standout vintage pieces with new seating that emphasizes comfort. In the living room he balanced the rigor of a 1950s wall-mounted Jean Prouvé cabinet and the monumentality of a three-part George Nakashima table with royal-blue Ligne Roset back cushions placed directly on the pewter shag rug. The vibe gets truly relaxed in the family room, where Lee configured a Patricia Urquiola sectional sofa around a Willy Rizzo cocktail table, while a wall of family photos underscores the casual mood.

Another imperative for Lee was injecting color—specifically purple, Liz Anne's favorite. "We wanted to use it as an accent throughout," says the designer. The chromatic pièce de résistance is the lounge's 11-panel fireplace surround, coated in high-gloss violet lacquer—the Finish Fetish quality a nod to California surf and car culture.

"The setting, architecture, and lifestyle are all conducive to entertaining in a way that wasn't possible in New York—easy, relaxed, spontaneous," says Liz Anne, noting that she and Phokion regularly open up the house to guests. Over the past couple of years, they've hosted 16 events, including fundraisers for a school in Haiti, a cocktail reception for the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, and even a yoga party on the deck.

"We want people to wander through wearing flip-flops and shorts and appreciate the beauty of the house but not feel overwhelmed by it," she says. "People just want to hang around." □

The living room's monumental travertine fireplace showcases a Greek bronze helmet from the fifth century B.C.; a Hans Wegner chair and ottoman, an Eames stool by Herman Miller, and a Phoenix Day floor lamp are grouped on a rug by Patterson Flynn Martin.





A photograph by Lawrence Beck overlooks a vintage Milo Baughman burl-wood table and Jorge Zalsupin chairs in the dining room; the oak floors inlaid with travertine were installed by Mark Hampton during a previous renovation. **Opposite:** A wall lacquered in a high-gloss violet by Benjamin Moore dazzles in the lounge; the chair and ottoman are upholstered in a Holly Hunt fabric, and the rug is by Patterson Flynn Martin.



A porcelain enamel-on-steel work by Roy Lichtenstein adds punch to the kitchen, which features colorful stools and chairs designed by Ettore Sottsass for Emeco; the cabinets are finished in a Benjamin Moore paint, the countertop is by Silestone, and the sink fittings are by Dornbracht. **Left, from top:** An array of family photos has pride of place in the family room, which features a sectional sofa by B&B Italia, a revolving Willy Rizzo cocktail table from the '60s, and Ligne Roset armchairs. A Candida Höfer photograph is displayed in the sunken bar, which is topped with travertine and leather; the stools are by Alvar Aalto.





On the deck, dining chairs by Brown Jordan are grouped around a weathered-teak table by RH, Restoration Hardware. **Below:** The pool area's table and chairs are by Gloster. **Right:** Phokion's bath is clad in Emperador marble; the sconces are a vintage Mark Hampton design.

