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Mini Spree

A family downsizes by half the square footage—and doubles the glam

By Audrey Davidow | Photography by Lisa Romerein

It's one thing when your 16-year-old daughter barely acknowledges your presence when you're standing in the same room. It's a whole other ball game when you have to send out a search party in your own home just to locate her whereabouts. Cathy Waronker (wife of Lenny, the music titan behind acts like James Taylor, Rickie Lee Jones and Elvis Costello), once lived in one of L.A.'s more jaw-dropping residences: a 6,000-square-foot English Normandy estate on a private drive in the Palisades. The opulence worked—for a while. But the family eventually tired of needing a GPS tracking device just to locate one another. "We were just way too disconnected in the house," explains Cathy, a jewelry designer.

So, they traded down for a smaller slice on the Venice canals—3,000 square feet, to be exact. As a girl who grew up on the beaches of San Clemente, Cathy had always dreamed of living closer to the water. She also wanted a neighborhood where you actually saw your neighbors.

They found their answer in a three-story, light-filled modern box designed by German architect Holger Schubert. Soon after snapping it up, Cathy put

Beachy boho mingles with seriously sophisticated in the living room, where a McGloin-designed sofa is topped with a handful of John Robshaw pillows. Floor lamp from Twentieth; Hermès wood chaise; painting by Kelly McLane at Angles Gallery.



her favorite designers—green architect David Hertz and interior designer Katie Leede-McGloin—to work. Having worked on the Waronkers' previous home, McGloin knew just how to transform the modestly sized space into something the family would love: a cross between a cozy Hollywood bungalow and a chic, bohemian-tinged penthouse.

To achieve the former, Hertz warmed up metal stairways and concrete terraces with rich slatted oak and Ipe woods, and McGloin settled on a serene palette of greens and blues, not only to echo the canal views, but to help calm the all-over-the-map energy of her jet-setting clients. But it's not all soothing serenity: There are also punches of play, like a coral-colored African feather headdress above the microwave and bright Suzani tapestries used to upholster the headboard and the ottoman in the master bedroom.

For the couple, both avid art collectors, setting up their humbler abode was like

moving into a gallery, with walls upon walls of stark white area to showcase their favorite pieces, including a dramatic 18th-century battleship scene in the dining room by up-and-coming local artist Allison Schulnik.

Which isn't to say the home operated with a pristine look-but-don't-touch policy. From the get-go, client and designer were determined to buck the stark clichés of modern design. Does it really need to be so serious, so cold, so downright uncomfortable?

So, in the name of creating something warmer and friendlier, McGloin filled the place with organic, textured pieces like the rough-edged wooden Japanese dining table and the cowhide-covered director's chairs in the dining room. Then she plopped in lots of fluffy pillows and rugs, and topped it all off with splashy hits of color.

"I had this idea that everything would work around this theme of the 'fashionista empress,'" explains McGloin, who was careful



THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Xavier Llongueras' patio fountain, made from beach glass gathered by the client; the living room chaise covered in Raoul Textile's Tie Dye fabric; a collection of African beads; Designer Katie Leede-McGloin. OPPOSITE PAGE: A front-row view of the Venice canals.







to keep the look reigned in. “A place like that can’t take a lot of clutter.” Still, she managed to insert plenty of surprises, like the clear Lucite desk filled with magenta pigment powder in the master and the shaggy green rug meant to emulate grass in the younger daughter’s *Secret Garden*-inspired bedroom.

The home’s heart is the second floor great room—a dining area, living room and kitchen that functions as the family’s favorite place to cook, entertain and be. The sitting area features a comfy L-shaped sectional warmed up with a beachy linen slipcover and bright ethnic-print pillows by John Robshaw. The whole room opens up onto a glass-walled terrace that is essentially a little bit of Hawaii in Venice with a Polynesian vibe, copper tiki torches and Chinese porcelain drum.

But that’s only the beginning. What

makes this canal-side aerie so compelling are those three terraces—one apiece off the living room, the upstairs office and the master bedroom—each with its own standout elements.

On the upstairs terrace, McGloin and Hertz turned a blank, 7-foot-by-8-foot wall into a showstopping water feature with hundreds of sea glass mosaic tiles. But, it’s the first-floor terrace, the one off the master bedroom, that gets the most play. Decked out with a Zen-style bamboo garden, a 12-person spa and a fire pit surrounded by a cushy seating area, this outdoor room is, unsurprisingly, one of the couple’s favorite places to hang. Best of all? It’s often a family affair, says Cathy, who now has no trouble finding her daughter. “She and her friends just love coming over and sitting in that spa.” ■

ABOVE: David Hertz-developed “Syndacrete” recycled countertops are used in the bathrooms (and kitchen). OPPOSITE PAGE: In the dining room, an Allison Schulnik painting looms over the Christian Liagre chairs and Charles Jacobsen dining table.