



BOLINAS BEACH HOUSE

AN ECLECTIC MIX OF RUSTIC
FURNISHINGS AND SOPHISTICATED DESIGN MAKE
THIS BEACHFRONT PROPERTY SPARKLE

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LIKE A BEACHCOMBER gathering up treasures from the sea, designer Roger Harned collected an eclectic assortment of home furnishings for his Northern California beach house. One of only two homes built directly on Brighton Beach in Bolinas, the house showcases an assemblage of attractive “found” furnishings. But it took more than surface decoration to salvage the wrecked shell of the house.



Harned recalls that when he moved into the home in 1996 the roof leaked so badly that there were more than thirty buckets placed around the house to catch the dripping rain. “The foundation was in poor shape, the plumbing and electrical were shot and the exterior shingles were rotten,” says Harned. “It took a year of work just to repair the basic structure. But then I was able to do what I like best—the interior design.”

Since the beach was just steps away from the house, Harned wanted the interior design to be both casual and comfortable. “I wanted the home to be a place where people could come and go from the beach without worrying about the house,” says Harned. Accordingly, the fabrics and furnishings were selected for their durability as well as their beauty. Chenille upholstery is both easy to clean and pleasant to sit on while wearing shorts or a swimsuit. The wool sisal carpet is easy to vacuum and comfortable to walk on with bare feet. And the rustic furniture doesn’t demand finicky upkeep.

Harned combined both warm and cool colors in the home but chose a subdued background palette that would showcase more vivid furnishings. For example, a soft gray-green wash on the old growth clear heart redwood paneling in the living room complements the sand and the sea outside the windows but recedes into the background so that the light upholstery pieces sparkle. The color also helps ease the transition between the lighter dining room area and the brightness of the exterior light pouring in through the living room windows.



Home owner
and interior designer
Rodger Harned.

RIGHT PAGE: The expansive living room (40x25 feet with 16 foot ceilings) is a wonderful place to entertain a crowd. The sofa and three upholstered armchairs were custom-designed by Harned. A Madonna figurehead rescued from an old ship’s prow peers down on the living room from above the waterfront window. An antler chandelier from Salsa in Larkspur, California adds a lodge-like feeling to the room.





The furnishings speak to a number of different styles but there is a definite emphasis on things southwestern. "I wanted the home to have a Southwest beach home feeling," says Harned. "But I used the Southwest references sparingly and only for their rustic, handmade quality." Traditional Mexican furniture is paired with fine European antiques or contemporary sculpture. Accessories such as a carved Madonna figurehead or an elk-antler chandelier evoke disparate images of Eastern seaboard inns and Rocky Mountain lodges. And wherever possible, there is a combination of different materials—metal, stone, glass, wood and fabric—to add visual variety and textural interest.

"Everything was collected over time," says Harned. "The design was not all that premeditated; it evolved comfortably over a period of years."



LEFT PAGE: The inviting dining room includes a mix of custom and retail furnishings. Wicker chairs from Pier 1 surround a table from Larkspur's Salsa. An ornate 19th century Mexican side chair from Sloan-Miyasato in San Francisco sits in front of a custom painted hutch from Arte de Mexico in Los Angeles. Wool sisal carpeting from FloorDesigns in San Francisco is barefoot-friendly. ABOVE RIGHT: The breathtaking view of the Pacific Ocean and Stinson Beach can be seen from a number of vantage points within the house. Gray-green wood blinds add color while blocking out the intense sun when necessary. The twelve foot sofa designed to accommodate the large space beneath the window is covered in soft beige chenille from Henry Calvin Fabrics. The sofa pillows are made from a richly patterned fabric by Clarence House. LOWER LEFT: Informal landscaping surrounds a flagstone patio that affords a beautiful view of the ocean. A glass tabletop is paired with a carved stone base for an unobtrusive table that blends well with the paving materials. Harned chose the white seating with gray upholstery to blend in with the flagstones, allowing the casual plantings and ocean view to take center stage.



The one area of the home that departs from the casual beachfront sensibility is the bedroom. Here, a deep red carpet that Harned found at an estate sale years ago anchors a sophisticated room filled with tailored pieces, many of them custom-designed by Harned. "I wanted it to feel like you were going to a more refined space when you entered the bedroom," he says.

Add to this a luxurious bath-spa that opens onto a garden, a completely renovated chef's kitchen, and two welcoming guest bedrooms with bathrooms and you have an ideal home for entertaining a crowd or quiet self-reflection.

Now that the house is once again shipshape, Harned has moved further up the coast to Sea Ranch where he is again gathering a mix of beautiful but functional "treasures" to furnish his new beach front digs. "Maybe because I grew up in Indiana and was deprived of the ocean growing up, I cannot seem to get enough of water locations," says Harned. ☼

LEFT: Sophisticated colors and furniture make this bedroom into a luxurious retreat. The dramatic bed was designed by Roger Harned and made from alder wood, then outfitted with bed linens from Ralph Lauren and custom suede pillows. The Southwest theme continues in the rustic table lamps from Arte de Mexico. At the foot of the bed stands a small gilded ottoman with black leather upholstery from Traditional Imports.