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East Coast aesthetics collide with cool coastal design in a Manhattan Beach, California home by Kate Lester Interiors.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMY BARTLAM

INTERIOR DESIGN BY KATE LESTER INTERIORS

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Kate Lester's clients came to her with a few simple requests for their new-construction house—that the home be fun, functional, comfortable, and reflective of their personalities. Bonus, they didn't shy away from color or pattern—the designer's M.O.—and were excited when warned some elements might be a little outside the box. "They didn't want a cookie-cutter home," Kate explains. "They wanted something curated and truly personal."

Kate's firm, Kate Lester Interiors, was hired in 2019. "Our clients had been living in the original tiny beach cottage and were working on plans to demolish it and start fresh," she recalls. Her team helped with everything from layouts and window placements to designing the bathrooms, living spaces, and kitchen. "I think the com-

GRAB A SEAT

There's room for the whole family in the breakfast nook. The lighting was sourced on Etsy, while the banquette is upholstered in a mix of Mark Tursi leather and McLaurin & Piercy fabric. The windows are Sierra Pacific. The living room (below) is painted in Benjamin Moore Simply White. The window treatments are by Brook Perdigon Textiles.



A CLASSIC MIX

The kitchen cabinets have a subtle shade—Farrow & Ball Green Smoke—which stands out next to the Portola Paints range hood. Lighting by Apparatus Studio adds glamour, while stools are upholstered in Sister Parish Design fabric—a heritage brand with classic patterns.



mon misconception is that designers only come in after to 'do the pretty,' but our team always comes on board very early to be involved in every design selection, from windows to baseboards and lighting to switch-plate covers. We are very annoying and detail-oriented, but I think in the end, knowing your design directive and making sure every element is working toward that creates a much more cohesive end result."

Kate infuses her work with a sense of humor, coming up with quippy descriptions for her signature style, like #Spanifornia and #TradlsRad. "We call this one 'East Meets West,'" she says. "The original architectural design concept was a play on a traditional brownstone-style home you may frequently see on the East Coast, but it was our job to infuse some 'California cool' so the home didn't feel too serious or stuffy. At one point, we were even jokingly calling it 'Project Pete Davidson'."

“We were calling it ‘Project Pete Davidson’ because it was a little New York, a little LA, and a little outside the box!”



COMING UP ROSES

The pink shade found in Brook Perdigon wallpaper contrasts with the soft green of Farrow & Ball French Gray paint for a look that's feminine yet funky. Overhead, a Visual Comfort chandelier adds the right dose of drama.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

"I think being so close to the beach, people are always looking for some sort of coastal influence in their homes," Kate says. "But these clients really wanted to be thoughtful and intentional about doing so." In the entry, a mix of art is hung above a textural console. The oversize mirror is by Gabby.



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The clients wanted to celebrate the relaxed, coastal vibes of Manhattan Beach, but in a thoughtful and intentional way—and they gave Kate carte blanche to do just that. "I mean, isn't it a designer's dream to be like, 'Hey, I want to paint your dining room a dusty green and then do purple-y pink wallpaper... cool?' And have your client be like, 'Yeah, sounds perfect!'"

It was a long process—the pandemic hitting smack in the middle of construction—but the designer is accustomed to going with the flow. "There was a bit of reselecting and some redesigning with new materials, but that's part of the challenge. As I always say at home: 'Perfect is boring.' The obstacles always push our team and, I think, make us stronger and more creative designers!"



SWEET DREAMS

The primary bedroom is a mix of comfort and style. The nightstands are from West Elm, the sofa is Urban Outfitters, the desk is Rowe, and the rug is Jaipur Living. The bed is outfitted in linens from Parachute.

KEEP IT CLEAN

A secondary kitchen makes entertaining a breeze, while the upstairs laundry room gets the same style treatment any other space in the house would. (Who wouldn't want to do chores here?) The wallpaper is from Forbes and Masters' collection at Mitchell Black.



CHECK, PLEASE

"I absolutely die for the black and white marble checkered floor in the primary bath," Kate says. "The black grout and clean lines kept it funky, but it's such a classic and fabulous moment."



COOL COMFORT

Kate's expert pattern-mixing is at play in the boy's room. Brook Perdigon window treatments are the right scale alongside a striped rug and bedding from Schoolhouse.

