



The ice blue walls of the dining room set off the still life painting by Jules Pages and the new Murano glass chandelier. The seashell on the table is by Laguna potter Ron Dier. OPPOSITE A seascape by Jack Wilkinson Smith is over the fireplace in the family room. An antique English table is in front of the window.

# Modern yet Classic

The Fisher Home In Laguna Beach Combines The Traditional With The Contemporary To Form The Perfect Family Beach House

TEXT BY KATHY BRYANT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY AIDIN MARISCAL-FOSTER



*Beauty in all its varieties, including ocean panoramas, contemporary and plein air art and English antiques, permeates the Kathie and Larry Fisher residence in Laguna Beach. Windows showcase the Pacific Coast views, while custom upholstered furniture, English antiques and the Fishers' art collection create a tranquil mood in this 5,800 square foot house.*



In the living room a plein air painting by Dana Bartlett is over the mantle, with antique sculptures on either side. The chair is an Italian antique while an antique European inlaid mother of pearl box is on the coffee table. OPPOSITE An antique Chinese table in the entry holds seasonal floral bouquets. A sea grass carpet and an American antique bench that Kathie Fisher got at the Los Angeles Antiques Show completes the look.



**T**he interior designer Randy Boyd of Thurston/Boyd Interior Design in Laguna Beach was hired by the Fishers after Kathie Fisher had seen his work elsewhere. He began work on the project in its early stages, working with the architect on the interior details, like the mantles. “They wanted the house to have kind of an East Coast vibe to it and wanted it to be a clean design because of their combination of the ocean views and the art work. The house was to be simple looking, with a traditional feel,” says Boyd. “They didn’t want a house that screamed ‘look at me.’ They wanted a comfortable house that they could enjoy.” Kathie Fisher worked with both Boyd and Laguna Beach architect Marshall Innis to get the right look for this home with its traditional floor plan of a center entry hall with the living room and dining room on each side.

“I was very much involved,” says Kathie Fisher. “A lot of our Pasadena roots are here, but I also wanted a beach house that was suitable for a family and a place to highlight our art collection. We sited the house in the center of two lots because we wanted space around it. It was very challenging to build. There’s a lot of steel in the house.”





LEFT The floors throughout the house are white oak and the rug in the family room was custom made for it by Elizabeth Eakins. An 18th century English clock has a still life painting above it. ABOVE The Mark Beck Maine landscape dominates the family eating area which also has an antique English table with reproduction chairs. An antique English cutlery table is nearby.

Boyd met the challenges of the amazing ocean view and the museum quality artwork by keeping to a neutral color palette in the public areas of the house. "You don't want these things to be fighting each other. That's why we used a color palette relating to the ocean, the sand, the sky. Beach colors work perfectly here, like the neutral walls and the ice blue in the dining room," he says.

After the sweeping views from almost every window in the house, the art collection is what visitors notice. "I never worked with a curator and my husband and I picked out all the work together," says Fisher. "I'd always loved art and when we traveled we visited local art museums. But we didn't grow up with art and for a time we never considered buying it. I think I'm a frustrated artist. I've taken art classes and once you try to paint you realize how good these artists really are."

Kathie Fisher increased her art knowledge through college art classes and by being a docent at the Orange County Museum of Art. It was there she became attracted to plein air painting, so she and her husband started going to museum shows and visiting Laguna's Redfern Gallery to learn more. "Twelve years ago for Christmas my husband bought me a small plein air painting by Jean Mannheim and he told me he loved the art. That painting is in our master bedroom today," she says. From then on there was no holding them back and they bought another plein air painting six months later. Soon they had ten paintings and no wall space. "That's when we decided to build a house in Laguna around our art collection." From plein air works, they moved to contemporary ones, buying at Laguna galleries like Peter Blake and Sue Greenwood.



In another view of the dining room, a contemporary figurative painting by Santa Cruz artist Linda Christiansen is over a sideboard. In the corner a little Irish antique pub bench is used as a table for a sculpture.



“Beach colors work perfectly here, like the neutral walls and the ice blue in the dining room.”

—*Randy Boyd*







OPPOSITE The master bedroom has overstuffed comfortable furniture custom made for the house.  
 ABOVE A sculpture by Logan Wood has a figure gazing through her hands at the horizon while birds symbolizing flight and a ball representing the world are close.

“We like each work to have its own space,” continues Fisher. “I didn’t want paintings stacked on top of each other, salon style. These paintings were bought because we love them and we hope to pass them down to our children. Ironically they are all involved in the arts. One son is a film professor, another a movie director and writer and our daughter is a fine arts photographer.”

Through all the development of the house, Randy Boyd was important to the project. “He was always a catalyst in resolving problems,” she remembers. “I had never worked with an interior designer before and I originally thought I could do it myself. I quickly learned I couldn’t. Working with him was like being an apprentice on a project.” Fisher also hired Laguna Beach landscape architect James Dockstater to do the major architectural features on the gardens she so loves and worked with Anne Roth at Corona del Mar’s Roger’s Gardens on the plantings and color.

Although the house is a commanding presence on a hill overlooking the ocean, the Fishers have avoided pretension, and, instead, have a family home for their children and grandchild. “They like gatherings for family and friends, so they wanted a welcoming atmosphere,” explains Boyd. The Fishers are very generous with their home, and use it sometimes for charity gatherings like the evening reception benefiting The Decorative Arts Society and their charities New Directions for Women, Girls of Orange County and Laura’s House.

“I couldn’t have done this house and loved it as much without Randy’s input,” she concludes. “It’s a very traditional house but it has a wonderful contemporary feeling to it.” 