



# Metropolitan

# Home

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# Coastal Resurgence

A TRAILBLAZING POSTWAR MODERN

RANCH IN LOS ANGELES SETS A '50s TASTE IN LIFE.

The 1950s Los Angeles fashion week (the Ed and Etsi Wilsons bought in 1950) was a crash course in postwar suburban living: a baroque interior with a butter-cream palette and a color scheme of modern green and pink. The Wilsons were originally built for actor Gene Kelly and his girlfriend, Etsi Wilson, a top model in *Confessions*. Despite flying through time, the set has the look and feel of a 1950s postwar interior. "I had seen the set and I was blown away," says the architect. "It's a great mix of modern and traditional." The Wilsons' home is a perfect example of the postwar modernist style. The house is a mix of modern and traditional. The Wilsons' home is a perfect example of the postwar modernist style. The house is a mix of modern and traditional.

By the time a thoughtful renovation began in 2000, the house was in a state of disrepair.

Prepared by Linda O'Rourke. Photographs by Anthony Sotomayor. Written by Jeff Gault.





The architect takes a step back from the master plan, instead of following the traditional floor plan, and the building's form is a series of windows of different sizes, which stepped up the spectacular view," says architect Harlan. The apartment floor was based on a series of floor-to-ceiling glass, which he says is the most dramatic effect possible in the addition of a second level to the house. In the living and dining rooms, walls of windows were made at various heights, giving the residents a view of the city from the back garden and beyond. Even the front door is a series of glass, which is a nice contrast of materials to the brick.

The new design meant almost completely within the footprint of the original, taking over an existing basement and creating a living space. The plan opened up the floor plan, improving circulation by shifting doors and expanding windows. The original entrance hall was made into a large living and dining room. The architect moved the living area forward and eliminated the wall between the entrance hall and living room. He also shifted the front door to the side, creating a sitting wall that connects a redesigned bath.

The dining area of the house had been created by expanding a small dining area to the kitchen, adding to the living and dining areas to create a single detailed modern porch that appears to flow overhead.





First to be installed were the fixtures using stainless steel, which brought all the 1980s countertops they wanted into the new kitchen. "We got over that," says Martin. "Because when we brought in our kitchen island we had to get the countertop done in 'one piece' with the stainless steel. The island helped put the rest of the kitchen together. The stainless steel countertop was a real challenge. It took a lot of time to get the island done in stainless steel."

During the four-year project, the kitchen was not used. "We had to build the kitchen in the living room for a while until we had the kitchen done off the kitchen," says Steve Williams.

It is a kitchen with a lot of stainless steel and granite. The new countertop

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The white window in the master bath offers a sweeping view that takes in nature, blue glass tiles and the shower's glasswork. Light from a skylight bathes the 10-foot-high walls of the shower, a roomy shower is the pleasure of open and close. "We had guests tell us they could live in the master bath," they say.

The bathroom's past seemed a puzzle wrapped in a new context around the expansion's bathroom area. Existing wall design evokes a tropical glass-tile design planned by the architect, mostly finished stone on a wall with Japanese lantern-like wallpocket black slings, a slung of bamboo, the "high-side sliding screen in the kitchen pass-through—used to allow the cook to be in the kitchen." It's a "bamboo" of the in just before sunset, when a distant looking at water elsewhere over the water.

"We'd take the time to appreciate these quiet moments," he says.

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