

HERITAGE HOUSE

Architect Ken Linsteadt and designer Marie Turner Carson reimagine a venerable Victorian

BY FRANCES HOMAN JUE | PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL DYER

AS SEEN IN
SFC&G

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Evening On The Lawn The new poolhouse is furnished with Janus et Cie teak outdoor sofa, chairs and coffee table. Landscaping is by Janell Denler Hobart at Denler Hobart Gardens. See Resources.

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T ALL BEGAN WITH A HANDWRITTEN NOTE.

A young family was charmed by a large Victorian shingle-style house in their neighborhood and decided to let the homeowners know that if they ever felt like selling, eager buyers awaited. It turned out to be impeccable timing. The owners were, in fact, ready to move on, and very soon, the family was in search of an architect to help them breathe new life into this beautiful—but somewhat dilapidated—home.

That's when pen and paper reentered the story for the second time. Hoping to undertake a renovation that would respect the home's Victorian legacy, while creating an interior suited to life with three children and plenty of guests, the homeowners invited several architects to come up with a preliminary concept. They were quickly swept away by San Francisco architect Ken Linsteadt's hand-drawn sketches, which "came alive on the page," as they put it. Together, Linsteadt and the clients set about transforming the historic 1894 home.

Linsteadt brought the exterior of the house—complete with wraparound porch—back to its full Victorian glory. The original windows and detailing were restored, and the exterior was given a cohesive, contemporary look with a warm, rich gray that extends to the window frames and shingles. At the back of the house, a new extension allows for a big kitchen and family room, the latter with doors that open onto an expansive terrace featuring a lounge area and a cozy fire pit. The result is the perfect setting for the family's hospitable lifestyle, which encompasses everything from children's sleepovers to elegant parties that spill out onto the beautiful terrace and lawn beneath the California oaks (a recent benefit featured Rickie Lee Jones singing outside on a balmy summer evening).

Inside the house, Linsteadt and interior designer Marie Turner Carson of M. Elle Design replaced cramped proportions and dark colors with bright, flexible spaces that still nod gracefully to the home's architectural heritage.

"We wanted to pay homage to the detailing," says Linsteadt, "but make it lighter and fresher." In the new, south-facing kitchen, stainless units have a clean, galley feel, but are balanced by the traditional overtones of a built-in dish cabinet (inspired by Victorian design) and open oak shelving. Oversize subway tile, cut from pure white Thassos marble, adds an understated, modern sensibility. "It's also a great backdrop for reflecting light, making that space luminous," says Carson.

The rooms flow easily from the kitchen—where, the client notes, "90 percent of our guests want to hang out"—out onto the terrace, and through French doors into the great room. Linsteadt and Carson designed the great room, in particular, for flexibility. Back-to-back sofas engage the fireplace on one side and a library-like area with a piano on the other to create smaller, more intimate settings that can easily be adapted into a single unified space for parties. Meanwhile, a built-in banquette in the big bay window, covered in a smoky-blue Holly Hunt cotton-velvet, is an enticing spot for a quiet read. Seating covered in linen, cotton and leather in a palette of soft creams, browns, blues and grays, feels "luxurious yet approachable," says Carson. Calm, natural colors and fabrics help create the relaxed, comfortable feel that was at the top of the clients' wish list.

And the party doesn't stop with the house. A short pathway through fragrant citrus trees leads to the pool and newly built guest cabana. It houses a delightfully secluded guest suite, casual kitchen and dining space, creating a welcoming gathering place by the pool.

The project embraces everything that its owners wanted to accomplish. They look back on the harmonious process with Linsteadt and Carson with fondness, recalling: "It was so much fun. We were all sad when the work ended!" When a homeowner is sad to see longterm visitors depart, that's a sign of a truly hospitable home.



Grand Entrance
The main stairwell is illuminated by a custom pendant and sconces from Urban Electric. See Resources.

Warmth & Hospitality (THIS PHOTO) Custom sofas wear a Rogers & Goffigon linen through Cowtan & Tout. The hunter green leather chair is from Soane; floor lamp is from Paul Ferrante; walnut coffee table is from Dmitry & Co. See *Resources*.

Spare Moment (RIGHT) In the kitchen dining area, slipcovered RH Parsons chairs surround a Rose Uniacke Drapers table. See *Resources*.



*BACK-TO-BACK
SOFAS ENGAGE THE
FIREPLACE ON
ONE SIDE AND A
LIBRARY-LIKE AREA
WITH A PIANO
ON THE OTHER*

Pool Party The front wall of the cabana living room opens up to the pool area. Linen-covered James Perse sofa and armchairs flank a Nickey Kehoe ash coffee table. Natural cane Sea Urchin pendant is through Martin Showroom. Rope area rug is from Contempo Floor Coverings. See Resources.

