

COAST T

ORANGE
COUNTY

TRICK OR TREAT ■ GO SOLAR ■ LOOK FOR WHALES ■ FARM



From the patio of this Balboa Coves home, a teak table and seating makes for the ultimate outdoor living room with a view.

A photograph of a waterfront property. In the foreground, a dark wooden deck features a lounge chair with a striped backrest and an orange cushion. A dark wooden table is partially visible. In the middle ground, a wooden dock with a black canopy holds a yellow kayak. A large American flag flies from a pole on the dock. The background shows a canal with several boats, including a white motorboat and a blue boat. Residential houses with balconies and palm trees line the canal under a clear blue sky.

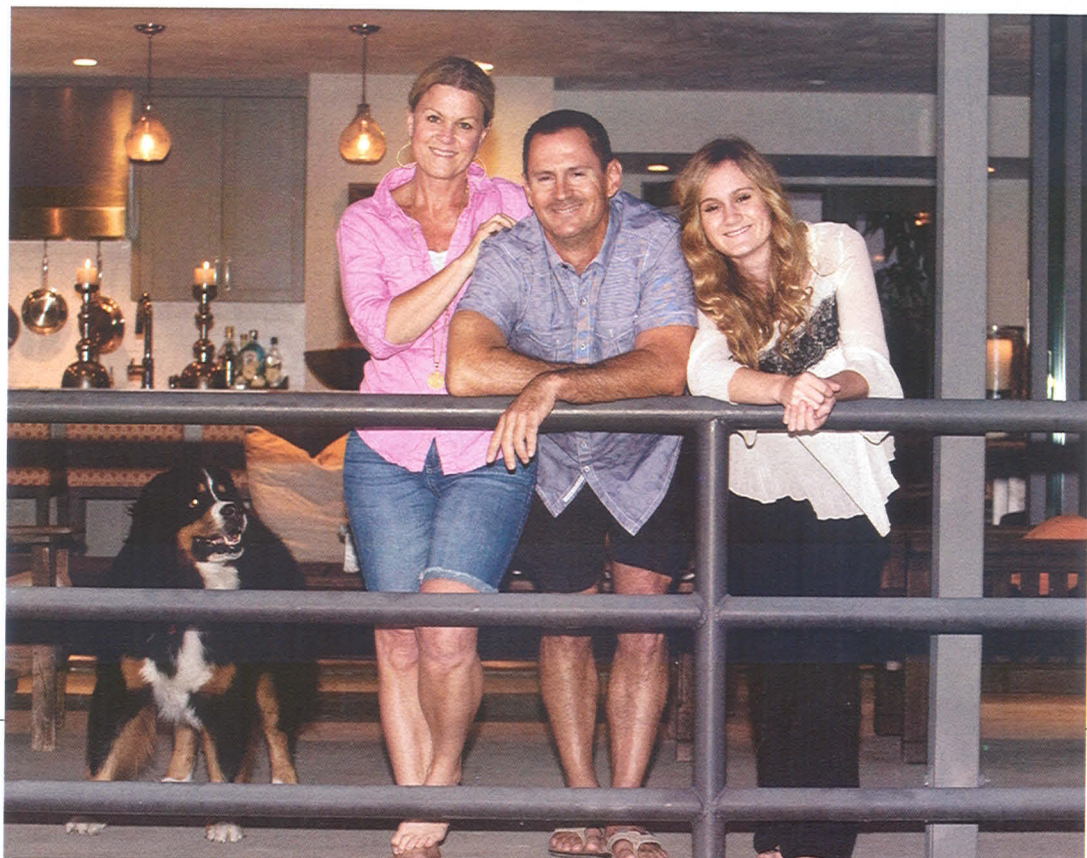
WATER WORLD

BY ALEXANDRIA ABRAMIAN
PHOTOS BY NICK KOON

A SKILLFULLY UPDATED POST AND BEAM IN
BALBOA COVES EARNS ITS PRIME LOCATION



ABOVE A chandelier from Terrain hangs above the custom-made dining table surrounded by chairs from Here Today Gone Tomorrow. RIGHT Jackie, John, and Delanie (18) Melbon posing with their family dog, Greta.

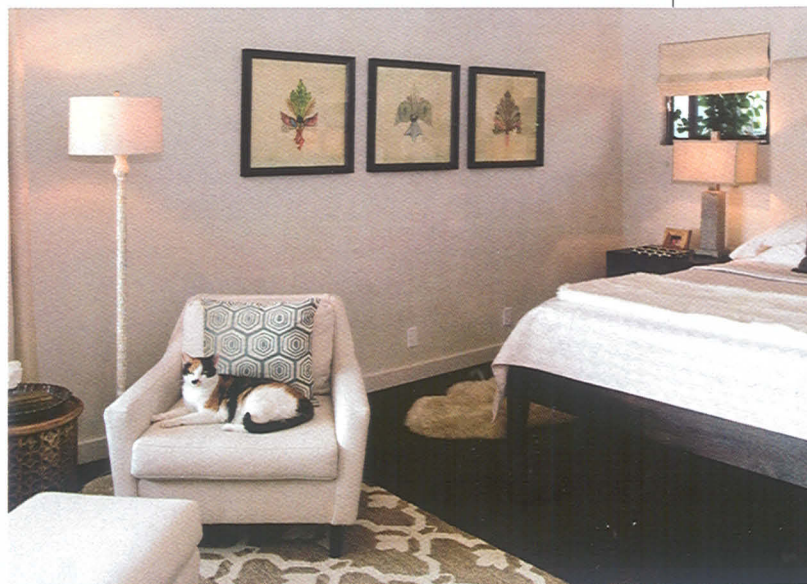


f there ever was a case for location, Jackie and John Melbon stumbled across it when they purchased a prime slice of waterfront land in the just-off-Pacific Coast Highway area of Balboa Coves. With a dock for two boats and floor-to-ceiling windows that frame jaw-dropping bay views on two sides, the site inspired the couple to overlook other details – like the 2,200-square-foot house that sat on the site.

According to Jackie, the 1950s post-and-beam was a mashup of peach walls, white carpeting, way-past-their-prime finishings, and an eroding stucco exterior – not exactly the nautical getaway that the couple had been dreaming of. No matter. “We’re on the tip of the land here, with some of the most water-front square footage in the area. This spot is different from anything else in Balboa Coves,” says Jackie.

So the couple set about updating the home. In the process, however, they decided to work their way from the outside in, opting to tackle the home’s exterior and landscaping before they made their way inside. Enter Chris Fenmore of Garden Studio Design, who had worked on the Melbons’ previous home.

“I’m usually the last person people call when they’re working on a home,” says Fenmore. “But here, it was about the outdoors. The



ABOVE In the master bedroom, the bed was made by Pearce Upholstery in Costa Mesa. The family cat, Boo, rests comfortably in an armchair from West Elm. **BELOW** In the living room, a large sectional faces both the television, which hangs above a mirrored console from Here Today Gone Tomorrow, and the fireplace with its starburst mirror from Magnolia Mews.





ABOVE Floor-to-ceiling glass walls in the living room make for the ultimate Newport Harbor perch. **BELOW** Architect Eric Olsen used reclaimed wood to create banquette seating in the dining room.



whole reason they bought the house was because they wanted this outdoor water lifestyle." To grant those outdoor-living wishes, Fenmore put the renovation into overdrive,

creating both functional and aesthetic changes to ensure lots of days and nights outside. "First we knew we wanted to create an outdoor room with comfortable seating that would also accommodate informal dining," says Fenmore. "Then we wanted a fire feature that would be visible from three vantage points: From the living room so that you could see this amazing glow at night, but also from the moment you walk into the home, from the front door. I wanted that to come through to really provide the house with that 'wow' moment. Finally, with all of the boat traffic, I wanted the firepit to be seen from the outside, to make the house look cozy from the water."

Fenmore also installed a Jacuzzi in the outdoor area, and when it came to plantings, she avoided the expected stark look found in many midcentury homes. "Jackie is a warm person, so we wanted to bring in texture and warmth through a mixture of deep green hues that come in a wide range."

With the outdoors completed, the

Melbons turned to the inside, tapping Corona del Mar-based architect Eric Olsen to open up, unify and update the interiors. "I wanted the house to look the way it was supposed to look," says Jackie. "Eric remodeled the layout, redid the kitchen and created this amazing open concept room with a huge island. He revamped the whole style to make it look like an updated midcentury modern home, not an outdated one."

Olsen skillfully added rustic touches to the interiors by using reclaimed wood in areas like the dining room banquette and the kitchen island. Olsen also replaced sliders and windows to unify the overall look of the two-story, four-bedroom home.

For the final touch, Jackie enlisted Kathi Ramming and Lorna Clutney of Leopards and Lillies to create an eclectic elegant look that never strays anywhere close to formality. "At first I thought this house was so hideous," says Jackie. "Now we can't imagine living anywhere else." ●



ABOVE A Jacuzzi at the far end of the property offers a chance for a semi-secluded hot tub experience. BELOW A view of the home lit up at night from the harbor.

