



## OPEN ENDED

WRITTEN BY **CAREN KURLANDER**  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **ERHARD PFEIFFER**

"WE KNEW WE WANTED AN EXTREMELY CONTEMPORARY HOUSE," SAYS THE WIFE OF A YOUNG COUPLE RESIDING IN ORANGE COUNTY. "We wanted open space and an indoor/outdoor feel." But searching for an architect who understood the clean lines and easy lifestyle they sought proved difficult. Then she met Fleetwood Joiner of Fleetwood B. Joiner and Avalon Architectural, Inc., in Newport Beach. "I saw a few of Fleetwood's homes, and he was very generous with space," she says. "He keeps things simple and timeless, and that's what we were looking for."

With the help of Joiner, the couple found a hillside property in Corona del Mar with expansive vistas overlooking Newport Harbor, Balboa Island and the ocean. Between the generous site and the couple's requests, Joiner had all the inspiration he needed. "The architectural concept was to create a home that felt as if it were an open-air pavilion," explains Joiner, "with one unbroken interior space that appeared to be without walls." As the plan began to take shape, the couple turned to Los Angeles-based designer James Magni, founder of Magni Design, Inc., and his associate partner, Colin Dusenbury, to create interiors that would complement the monolithic structure and enhance its open shell. "Working in Southern California, an indoor/outdoor connection is ingrained in us," says Dusenbury. "And, with this house, we really had the opportunity to embrace that."

<b>ARCHITECTURE</b> Fleetwood Joiner, Fleetwood B. Joiner and Avalon Architectural, Inc.		
<b>INTERIOR DESIGN</b> James Magni, Magni Design, Inc.		
<b>HOME BUILDER</b> Jeff Madison, JL Madison Co.		
<b>BEDROOMS</b> 4	<b>BATHROOMS</b> 6	<b>SQUARE FEET</b> 5,811



**GRAND OPENING**

Architect Fleetwood Joiner and designers James Magni and Colin Dusenbury created a contemporary house that celebrates its sweeping views of the Southern California coastline. A pivoting front door provides a glimpse of the vistas inside.

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The two-level structure, built by Jeff Madison of JL Madison Co. in Irvine, sinks into the bluff and opens up to frame its spectacular water views. "The architecture is very sleek, so the margin for error was extremely minimal," says Madison. "Everything had to be absolutely perfect." And it is. From the pivoting entry door, the main level progresses from an open-air courtyard to the public areas to a balcony. Walls of glass pocket doors define the transitions without visually interrupting the views and, when open,



**TOP CHEF**

White automotive paint gives the integrated kitchen a glossy shine. Barstools from Twentieth pull up to a dual-height island. A limestone top provides a dining surface, while CaesarStone covers the lower working side.



**OPEN CONCEPT**

Low-slung classic furnishings used throughout the open living area, dining area and courtyard keep the design cohesive. The sofa and stools are from Magni Home Collection; the two chairs are from Minotti.



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allow the spaces to blur from outside to inside and back again. "The walls of glass are meant to slide away and become invisible," says Joiner. "Only the roof defines enclosure." A private master bedroom is tucked away to one side, while the living and dining areas, kitchen and courtyard interact in the airy central space. Downstairs, another wall of glass pocket doors separates two guest rooms and a large entertainment area from an ample terrace.

Magni and Dusenbury emphasized the crisp lines of the structure with white travertine floors, which flow from the inside out, and a Vero plaster for the exterior. With a clean palette established, the designers began their

#### SQUARE ROOT

Inspired by the flat-roofed architecture of Greece, Joiner gave the street façade a simple, linear appearance. Vero polished plaster highlights the monolithic form. Costa Mesa-based Fong Hart Schneider Partners landscaped the property with sculptural plantings.

#### TAKE IT OUTSIDE

White travertine floors flow smoothly from the house to the exterior spaces, including the lower terrace. A step-down living area plays with the volume of the architecture and creates a viewing platform for the harbor.



**NIGHT LIGHTS**  
Magni and Dusenbury outfitted the lower terrace with the same classic lines and organic touches as in the interior spaces. A Kettal sectional sofa, Chista low table and Dedon dining table encourage lingering after sunset.



**HAUTE TUB**  
An imposing limestone tub, hand-carved by Advent Design International, grounds the master bath. To situate its nearly 3,000-pound heft, general contractor Jeff Madison had it craned into the courtyard and positioned into place with a machine mover.



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meticulous selection of indoor and outdoor furniture. "It's so important to keep a connection when you have open living spaces," says Dusenbury. "All of the furniture had to relate." Working in a palette of rich chocolate brown and creamy beige, they chose low-slung pieces with classic lines throughout. A silk-and-hemp rug from Mansour Modern defines the living area, where a Magni Home Collection sofa is paired with two leather-covered chairs from Minotti. A hair-on-hide rug near the stairwell adds texture, as does a Hudson Furniture live-edge wood dining table. "Bringing in things that are organic in nature breaks down the severity of the architecture," says Magni. "The house becomes more approachable and warm." Outside, the designers placed a sculptural

**STYLE SELECTION**

This modern, upholstered chair from Artefacto is perfect as an eclectic accent piece in trendy bedrooms. *Liana*, price available upon request; [artefacto.com](http://artefacto.com)





**CLEARLY VISIBLE**  
 Frameless glass railings visually disappear while guarding the stairwell to the lower level. Two 2008 oil-on-llfochrome photographs by Marc Lueders hang side by side. The Museum bench is by Magni Home Collection.



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Dedon chair and sofa in the courtyard and grouped a curved sectional sofa from Kettal with a low teak-root table by Chista on the terrace.

"This couple didn't want the typical Orange-County-by-the-beach-living," says Magni. "They wanted something much more glamorous and sophisticated." And that's what they got. But, by capturing the views and dissolving the boundaries between inside and out, the house also gives them a uniquely Southern California experience. "People in Orange County are extremely creative," says Joiner. "They want to be able to shape their own environments, and contemporary architecture allows them to do that." **L**

**HOME COURT**  
 The interior courtyard, hard-scaped with a long reflecting pool and a custom fire pit and furnished with a Dedon sofa, offers a sheltered respite from ocean breezes on cool evenings.