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SPEC-tacular

JOE LUCAS PUTS A PERSONAL STAMP ON A MANHATTAN BEACH
SPEC HOME IN RECORD-BREAKING TIME



OPPOSITE PAGE: A CAPIZ
GLOBE FROM NICKEY
KEHOE SHOP HANGS ABOVE
A TABLE AND A SET OF
CHAIRS FROM RESTORATION
HARDWARE. **THIS PAGE:**
LUCAS BRIGHTENED UP
THE OFFICE WITH VIBRANT
FARROW & BALL PAINT AND
A WALLCOVERING BY KELLY
WEARSTLER FOR LEE JOFA.



WHEN INTERIOR DESIGNER JOE LUCAS, founder of Lucas Studio, Inc. and Harbinger, and his clients set out to create a dream home in Manhattan Beach, they planned on starting from scratch. While the young family of three was shopping for a plot of buildable land, a five-bedroom spec home hit the market that had the right bones but lacked the personality his clients desired. “The layout was great and had everything they needed except the added layers of a custom home,” says Lucas. “So instead of waiting to find a property, then spend two years building, we decided to purchase the home and do a quick renovation, adding the details that were missing.”

Having worked on many homes in Manhattan Beach, Lucas enjoys taking on new clients in the area as it challenges him to develop fresh ideas while maintaining their sought-after aesthetic. In just four months, Lucas and his team, along with RJ Smith Construction, transformed the 5,500-square-foot space, putting the “Lucas Studio spin” on it. From fabrics to finishes and some fabulous modifications in between, the final product is full of exuberant color that creates intimacy in an expansive space. Lucas added paneling and wainscoting to create depth and detail while bold jewel tones were painted throughout at the client’s request. “You can really change a basic house into something special with color,” he says.

Starting in the kitchen, the color story begins with a vibrant Inchyra Blue by Farrow & Ball, which was applied on the cabinets. “I love a dark kitchen,” says Lucas. “It’s one of my rules to never do a white kitchen.” With two massive islands, two large-scale refrigerators and multiple cabinets, the deep green-blue space is the anchor of the home. “The kitchen was so big it needed depth and weight,” says Lucas. An almost translucent sky blue, hand-glazed, glossy tile by Classic Tile was selected for the backsplash to reflect light below the dark cabinetry.

Separate from the communal areas, the dining room is one of Lucas’ favorite rooms in the house. Nestled in an odd space that opens to the entry hall, a large round table surrounded by modern Windsor chairs adds a layer of coziness. Lucas brought in a vintage Khotan rug from his own Harbinger showroom in jade green with hints of rust, which fit perfectly in the space.

Vivid color continues in the study with a coat of Pitch Blue by Farrow & Ball painted on moldings and built-ins while a Kelly Wearstler wallcovering adorns the walls. Shades of lilac and gray emerge in the master bedroom, creating a serene retreat that is equipped with a mini kitchenette that the designer created by removing an unnecessary window.

The most dramatic transformation took place downstairs where Lucas and team converted a large, lackluster basement into a



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OPPOSITE PAGE: AN EXPANSIVE, CUSTOM BANQUET SITS BELOW A PENDANT FROM WATERWORKS. **THIS PAGE, TOP:** LUCAS INSTALLED CUSTOM STEEL DOORS TO ENCLOSE THE NEW GYM. **LEFT:** THE STYLISH PLAYROOM FEATURES A FAUX-BAMBOO VINTAGE CHAIR FROM HARBINGER. **RIGHT:** A WINE CELLAR WAS CONVERTED INTO A CUSTOM STEAM ROOM.





OPPOSITE PAGE: LUCAS PAINTED THE KITCHEN, WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY WHITE, A PALE BLUE. **THIS PAGE, TOP:** A LAWSON-FENNING BED AND SOFA BRING IN SHADES OF PURPLE IN THE MASTER BEDROOM. **BOTTOM:** PANELING WAS ADDED TO THE WALLS TO ADD TEXTURE.



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recreational space featuring a gym, theater, bar and steam room. Steel doors and new exposed brick walls were installed to create an edgy, California-industrial gym space while tiered flooring was built in another room to construct a luxury private theater. "I have been installing a lot of interior brick to soften rooms," says Lucas. "It's funny to think brick can do this, but it can make a space cozy." Quite possibly the coolest conversion can be found in the steam room, which was previously a wine cellar and now features tiered seating and a fun splash of chevron-print tile.

Finishing a project of this scale in such a short time frame could not be possible without a great team, great clients, a great contractor and a determined designer. "We knew the project would be fast," says Lucas. "But I am very decisive, and we had a wonderful contractor who pushed us and cool clients."

