

ELEMENT



NATURAL SELECTION

The harmony between a beach house and its garden is all in the details

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Los Angeles designer Scott Shrader is known for rich but refined landscapes that mix natural materials in a range of subtle hues. At a property in Coronado, California, he combined a palette of stone, metal, and wood with olive trees and succulents to create garden spaces that flow seamlessly around a contemporary glass-and-stucco house. The house, designed by Island Architects, is a block from the beach and has floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors that make it so transparent that "the line between indoors and out disappears," Shrader says. As a result, the gardens had to relate completely to the interiors, and feel comfortable while standing up to the strong, modern building.

Outdoor areas were limited. The two-story, 7,000-square-foot home, finished in 2013, takes up much of its lot, with little setback

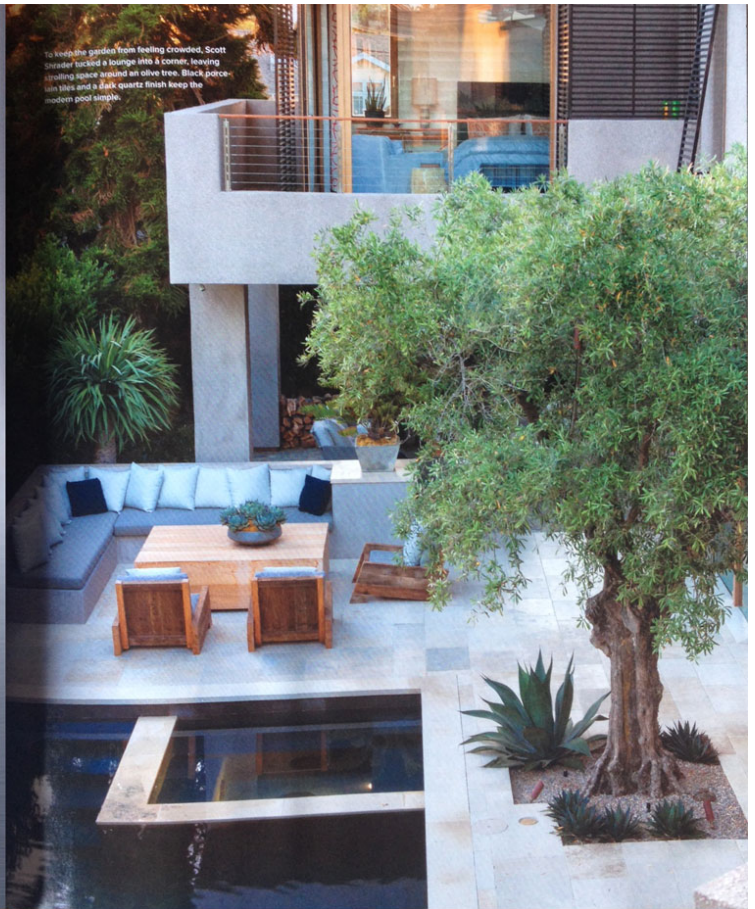
Above left: In the cobbled entry court, *Aloe borberae* (tree aloe) rise from a stone pit nestled among 'Blue Glow' agaves. *Above right:* *Aloe throssii* (tree aloe) slopes in the sitting garden; bamboo globes echo the shapes of the agaves. Bits of seashells mixed into the home's stucco and gravel link the house to its grounds.

from its neighbors or the street. But Shrader made the most of what he had, developing four discrete outdoor rooms that live like airy extensions of the house. The harmony between the two began, he says, with an uncommonly close design collaboration. Before the house was built, he met regularly with Island Architects, the decorators (Gefrey Alan Marks and Ross Cassidy), and the builders (Smith Brothers Construction) to discuss and coordinate concepts, materials, and finishes. All team members weighed in on key decisions.

The owners, a couple with grown children, initially supplied some rudimentary guidelines but left much to the group. Recalls Shrader, "They knew our work and trusted us to create a casual, approachable place where they could hang out with friends and relax."

Shrader, who has designed many seaside gardens, introduced several elements that helped tie the home to its landscape, particularly important for a see-through house that sits at garden level. The home's external stucco finish, for example, was hand blended with bits of

To keep the garden from feeling cramped, Scott Shrader tucked a lounge into a corner, leaving breathing space around an olive tree. Black porcelain tiles and a dark quartz finish keep the modern pool simple.



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The built-in banquette's concrete base is the color of the house but is smooth-finished, with a limestone cap that's wide enough to hold drinks. Shrader also designed the wood-block table in teak to match the home's trim. *Prunus caroliniana* 'Compacta' (compact Carolina cherry laurel) hedge forms a screen behind the built-in banquette. The rapid growth pattern of the *Draecena draco* (dragon tree) adds drama.



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oyster and other shells to give it the look of "having risen from the beach." Outdoors, Del Rio gravel paths, which connect several of the spaces, were hand-seeded, like the stucco, with beach shells. Shrader laid polished Dalle de France limestone around the salt-water pool, a choice refined enough for use as inside flooring too. Unlike many other options, says Shrader, this stone "can take constant, splashing water, especially salt water, which is more corrosive."

In contrast to the clean, modern surface of the limestone, textured antique cobbles pave the home's arrival court and create connecting "carpets" in other garden rooms. They mark a gathering spot around a stone table outside the living room, and further on, a lounge centered on an outdoor fireplace. "Changing surfaces underfoot signal that you're leaving one outdoor room for another," says Shrader, "just as they do indoors, when you go from a wood floor to a rug."

Similarly, switching up furnishings also shifts the mood as you move among gardens. Between the house and pool, he designed a custom-concrete banquette, complete with integrated side table, for informal drinks and dining. For extra seats, he added sleek yet rustic reclaimed-wood chairs by Brazilian designer Carlos Motta. Beside the pool with its polished decking, he paired Motta's simple wood loungers with vintage, white-glazed garden stools, a contrast of shapes and surfaces that makes each element shine. Nearby, in the small gathering spot outside the living room, he surrounded the stone table (a weighty, eighteenth-century piece) with Walter Lamb's airy 1950s tubular bronze chairs with cord seats. "Combining vintage, modern, and antique finds in natural materials warms up a contemporary garden," notes Shrader.

He also believes that using neutral colors keeps it quiet and serene, especially in landscapes that are organized around green. Among his first planting tasks was to hedge the front of the house from the road with a dense, enclosing waxleaf privet screen. From there, in the garden overall, different foliage, not blooms, were his focus. His short plant list includes silvery olive trees; sculptural, aqueous-toned agaves; and boxwoods sheared into globes. "This is a timeless combination that's been used for centuries," he explains. "It looks like it could have been done hundreds of years ago or yesterday." The colors and textures are fully at home in California's Mediterranean climate, particularly along the coast. Here, with the glass doors open, reflected sunlight shimmers in through the olive trees and their rustling leaves join the sound of waves on the beach. ☉

ROUGH, SMOOTH, OLD, NEW



- ROUGH TROUGH**
Simple concrete's stark garden interest: in a front-courtyard vignette, Shrader edged a seventeenth-century stone water trough, once used for livestock, with elegant, sheared boxwoods and 'Blue Glow' agaves. Filling the entry with the welcome sound of water, the trough features a bronze spout from La Maison Francaise Antiques, Inc that's a replica of an old French fountain spout.
- POLISHED DECK**
Beside the swimming pool, polished Dalle de France limestone from Exquisite Surfaces meets tumbled Del Rio gravel. Round, glazed vintage garden stools act as small tables or extra seats among the crisp rectangular, recycled-wood loungers by Carlos Motta.
- COBBLED COURT**
In the sitting garden, much like an indoor room, the carpet of cobbles defines the gathering zone where the owners and their friends enjoy cocktails before dinner. The controlled, neutral palette allows several materials—old and new stoneware, mid-century tubular bronze chairs with cord seats—to join in harmony. The Walter Lamb chairs are from Modern One; the limestone table is from Charme d'Antan; and the oak sculpture is from Roark Modern.
- HARMONIC ENTRY**
The entry court, as viewed from inside, shows the dimension of time a garden can offer a modern house with a mix of antique paving materials and stone containers, and plants that evoke historic landscapes: olive trees, clipped hedges, topiary shrubs.