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A photograph of a bright, airy dining room. In the center is a dark wood dining table surrounded by wooden chairs with a crisscross back design. A vase of pink peonies sits on the table. Above the table hangs a black wrought-iron chandelier with six patterned shades. To the right, a large multi-paned window looks out onto greenery, with a white orchid on the sill. A built-in wooden bench with patterned cushions is under the window. To the left, a white door with a star-shaped cutout is open, revealing a garden. The walls are a warm cream color, and the floor is made of light wood.

home SWEET home

# A Farmhouse in the City

Although this family is surrounded by the hustle and bustle of Los Angeles, their tranquil home is an oasis of comfort and style. See how they make two seemingly dissimilar worlds work in perfect harmony.

TEXT BY ROBERT C. MARTIN / PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE WELBOURNE  
STYLING BY YUKIE MCLEAN











Rather than “A Tale of Two Cities,” you could say that the Lewis family has created a retreat-like home that reflects the ambiance of two coasts. After renovating and living in a Cape Cod-inspired dwelling in Santa Monica, California, they were ready to relocate. So, with three young children and a lab puppy in tow, they headed to the sprawling metropolis of Los Angeles. Fortunately, they found a 1950s hillside rancher in the Brentwood area that was buffered by a grove of pine trees and other native vegetation. “After being here for four years, we decided to tear the house down, excavate into the hillside, and build our dream of a ‘California Farmhouse,’” Mrs. Lewis explains.



(Above) The homeowners' love for Farrow and Ball's paints and wallpaper is most evident in their dining room, which sports a striped print above the chair rail and a 'Tiffany blue' inspired ceiling. "Apart from gathering here for family dinners, my kids often resort to this room to do their homework because of the quietness and privacy they find here."

(Left) Connecting the kitchen and dining room, the butler's pantry in this farmhouse contains a most curious feature: a glass panel set into the floor. "This inset allows us to look down into our basement wine cellar," the homeowner explains. "We're constantly surprised how many of our guests still walk around this see-through detail, instead of stepping on it!"





The upstairs den also serves as the kids' study and a place where they can watch TV as well as play video games. It's even a special retreat for mom. "I love coming up the stairs and being greeted by this room's big picture window and map wallpaper," she says. "And one of my favorite spots to read is the red-leather, high-backed tufted chair found here."

Serving as their own project manager and interior decorator, the Lewises oversaw construction for 2½ years, often by being on site every morning after dropping their kids off at school. "It was truly a creative collaboration of husband and wife!" she says. Along with their affection for New England cottages, the couple sought to give their farmhouse a decidedly regional feel as well. "One of our favorite places on earth is the

San Ysidro Ranch—a wonderful hotel and spa located in the foothills of Southern California's wine country. We replicated many of the ranch's features, such as its metal roofs, board and batten siding, and natural landscaping."

Since combining two distinct styles was no small feat, the Lewises knew their home not only had to be congruent but also functional enough to accommodate the needs





### *Style Idea*

Including chairs, a small table, and reading material in your guest bedroom provides visitors a place to retreat in comfort.

of their growing family. “Like most families we live on-the-go, so the flow from room to room was crucial,” Mrs. Lewis points out. The homeowners also instilled each room with its own personality by filling it with furnishings and objects bought during their travels, at designer sales, and online. “Because I’m a huge Ralph Lauren and Restoration Hardware fan, we purchased much of our furniture from these company lines; these

pieces complement our collection of French antiques quite nicely,” she adds. “Overall, I love mixing high-end pieces with low-end finds, because in the end it all seems to work beautifully!”

And from the looks of things, it’s evident that the Lewises have succeeded in establishing a place that merges their coast-to-coast sensibilities.





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