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San Francisco Cottages and Gardens

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The Architecture of
Happiness

SAN FRANCISCO COTTAGES & GARDENS | FEBRUARY/MARCH 2016

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WRITTEN BY
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**KEITH SCOTT MORTON
AND ERIC RICHARDS**

ALDEN MILLER INTERIORS

GUEST ROOM

Flexibility was at the forefront of Alden Miller's room design, since its occupants vary in group size and family members. The queen bed includes a trundle, and an armchair tucked into a corner transforms into a twin bed. "Because many people are sharing one room," she explains, "we sought to define small spaces within the larger space." For example, a curtain delineates the twin sleeping quarters, while a rug establishes a play area. Miller worked closely with designer and craftsman Victor Campero on three bespoke pieces: a storage wall, a closet system and a desk. And, of course, details were carefully considered. "By adding pin-up boards, display shelves and customizable cubby bins," says Miller, "arriving residents can make the room their room."

AS SEEN IN
SFC&G
San Francisco Cottages and Gardens



ASK ANY OF THE FOUR DOZEN INTERIOR DESIGNERS

who participated in the 52,000-square-foot expansion of Ronald McDonald House at Stanford (RMHS) to impart their impression of the project and, chances are, the phrase “giving back” will populate their response. Indeed, the collaboration between RMHS, San Francisco Design Center and *SFC&G* was about more than selecting furnishings and finishes. It relied on a sense of community and compassion that manifested itself in the time and talents contributed by the designers, as well as the services and products donated to their spaces. The end result? A house that now feels like a home away from home for an additional 67 families every night.

FOR FURTHER DETAILS, SEE RESOURCES.

KRISTI WILL HOME + DESIGN DINING ROOM

“We started with the concept that mealtime brings people together, providing a wonderful sense of community and normalcy,” says Kristi Will, adding that she envisions the dining room will be used for many activities, like town hall meetings, music performances and weekly bingo games.

Among the furnishings are indoor/outdoor chairs from Janus et Cie, Verner Panton children’s chairs, tables and benches by Newell Design Studio—the latter upholstered in Clarence House textiles—and a 19-foot A. Rudin banquette covered in an aubergine vinyl by Nobilis. Will accessorized with lighting by Anna Kondolf and John Pomp Studios. Art includes a striking paper sculpture by Jeff Nishinaka and works by Natural Curiosities. Not one to overlook details, Will even incorporated a stroller parking area.



FLORENCE WU INTERIOR DESIGN

GUEST ROOM

With a palette of soft grays, yellows and golden tones—along with furniture and accessories from Robert Allen, Romo, De Sousa Hughes, Benjamin Moore, Polyflor and La-Z-Boy—Florence Wu assembled a soothing retreat. “It’s a space where families can de-stress, heal and rest,” she says. “During the design process, I personally witnessed kids who have gone through a lifetime of health struggles. Yet their courage, strength and infectious attitude toward life is mind-blowing and unimaginable. To me, they are the unsung heroes...It is truly an inspiration to experience such strength.”

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MELINDA MANDELL INTERIOR DESIGN

GUEST ROOM

“The mission of RMHS hits a very personal note for me,” says Melinda Mandell. “As a child, I was hospitalized at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, with a life-changing diagnosis. The experience turned our lives upside down—mine and my family’s—and would have been so much more difficult if we hadn’t lived close to the hospital. Having a safe place to retreat and recoup is essential.” In the two bedrooms that she designed, she opted for soothing blues and bright greens, and referenced water, animals and nature. The furniture and fabrics include family-friendly selections from Robert Allen, colorful pillows in Lee Jofa textiles and bedding from Serena & Lily.



JULIANNE QUELLE DESIGN

GUEST ROOM

“The woods represent a natural sense of calm, refreshment and respite, and are juxtaposed with the wild woodland creatures,” says Julianne Quelle Design’s Jana Maggini of the source of her inspiration. Her bedroom consists of restful grays and taupes, but the designer’s priorities extended beyond aesthetics: “The products need to last—and last and last. Every detail had to be extremely functional.” She collaborated with vendors such as Quintus, Flor, Global Views, Bernhardt, Cowtan & Tout, Romo, Bungalow 5, Daleno, Robert Allen, Arteriors, Restoration Hardware, Serena & Lily and Cyan Design. Maggini also relied on the services of Marc Vallat (painting), R Upholstery and Dianne Kirchner (sewing).

GEOFFREY DE SOUSA INTERIOR DESIGN

GUEST ROOM

Once he heard the stories of RMHS families, Geoffrey De Sousa was immediately on board—not just to design guest rooms but to co-chair the massive design endeavor with Beth Martin. According to De Sousa, the project made him “realize even more how unbelievably fortunate my family has been and how fulfilling it is to be involved in something that will hopefully help thousands of families in the future. I also saw the incredible generosity of our local design community—from interior designers, contractors, fabricators and suppliers. It was overwhelming to see how many people without question jumped in to say, ‘What can we do to help?’”



APARTMENT 46

GUEST ROOM

After her daughter had emergency heart surgery at Stanford's Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, Melisa Bleasdale was “eternally grateful for the wonderful staff and the comfort they offered during such a difficult time,” she recalls. “By doing this room, I hope to provide families with a sense of warmth and calm.” Bleasdale adds that she has been humbled by the support for the project, including from companies who donated to her effort: Coyuchi (luxury linens), Loloi (area rug), Land of Nod (children's goods and storage), Crossville (porcelain tiles) and Kohler (bathroom fixtures and accessories). Timorous Beasties stunning wallpaper graces the office nook.



SAGRERABRAZIL

GUEST ROOM

For SagreraBrazil, the RMHS project represented an opportunity to “give back to a larger community,” says George Brazil, who is clearly moved by the fact that he and Cecilia Sagrera-Hill created “sacred spaces for families in crisis.” To complete a trio of suites, the firm was the recipient of generous donations from a number of vendors: Walters provided the Mira Flora fabrics; Aesthete Painting & Wall Covering handled the painting and installed wallpaper; David Rosenberg of Closet Factory contributed and installed the closets; and San Francisco PaintSource provided the Benjamin Moore paint.

MELINDA MANDELL INTERIOR DESIGN

SITTING ROOM

“Outside, through a large expanse of glass, is a gorgeous view of California oak trees, while inside, the walls are covered in a custom teal watercolor mural, making you feel like you are in a painting,” Melinda Mandell enthuses of the Black Crow Studios work. “Rust pillows add a colorful counterpoint to the blue walls, picking up the hues in the large, moody floral photographs” by artist Kari Herer. Mandell further appointed the sitting room with pierced sheer drapery and a Serena & Lily raffia.



JULIANNE QUELLE DESIGN

SITTING ROOM

“When I think of strength and comfort, humor and resiliency, the image that comes to mind is of a man's tailored suit,” says Jana Maggini, explaining the moniker for her sitting room (“Tailored to Suit You”). “I have visions of a little girl running up to her dad to get a hug and to feel wrapped up in his strong arms. And I can see the father with a grin on his face and wink in his eye.” The retreat that she summoned into existence—with the help of companies such as Lee Industries, Phillip Jeffries, McGuire and Made Goods—includes comfortable seating, a whimsical rug and baskets to store toys and books.