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### CASUAL DINING AREA

'This is the centre of the house, with the kitchen to one side and everything else radiating outwards,' says Mark. 'The fireplace can be accessed from both sides, helping to zone the space without blocking the flow of light.' Vibrant upholstery is a chic contrast to the natural textures elsewhere.

**Get the look** The dining table is by Eero Saarinen for Knoll, available at Aram Store. The Little Tulip chairs are by Pierre Paulin for Artifort; buy them at Nest. The Hanging Mobile light is by David Weeks, available from Cameron Peters. Andrew Martin sells similar console tables. For black slate flooring, go to Fired Earth.

### FAMILY AREA

Plush velvet adds glamour to a concrete wall which, in turn, acts as a modern-industrial backdrop to the abstract artwork. 'Placing it against the neutral concrete wall really highlights the bold colour,' says Mark.

**Get the look** For similar velvet armchairs, go to Soane. The painting is by Poteet Victory.

## *Home profile*

**THE OWNERS** Mark Meyerhofer, an electrical engineer, his wife, Andrea, a fundraiser, and sons Kurt, 21, and Chris, 18.

**THE PROPERTY** A two-storey new build in California. The ground floor has an open-plan space with a kitchen, two dining areas, a library, family area and living area. There is also a study, master bedroom with en suite, bathroom and utility room. Upstairs are three bedrooms and two bathrooms. >

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# Modern miracle

*It may look like a mid-century masterpiece, but Andrea and Mark's house is brand new. Here's how they turned disaster into spectacular*

WORDS **KATHRYN HARRIS** | PHOTOGRAPHY **LAURA HULL**

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Entering Mark and Andrea's home, in the foothills of the Sierra Madre mountains in California, is like stepping onto the set of *Mad Men*. But this mid-century dream has a secret – it's actually a 21st century creation.

Andrea relates the tale while sipping a Don Draper-friendly bourbon. She and husband Mark bought the timber-framed house that once stood on this plot in 1998. 'We fell in love with its simplicity and, being lovers of the great outdoors, the way the natural materials really stood out in the interior,' she says. They set about extending it, then a year in, disaster struck. 'We discovered a stream running under the house, which had filled with silt,' says Andrea. 'We had no choice but to demolish the property and start from scratch.' A grim prospect, but the couple saw an opportunity. 'I've always liked doing things which are out of the norm,' says Mark. So they decided to build their new dream home as a homage to the original.

And not just in looks, either. Andrea and Mark insisted on the sort of detail that Frank Lloyd Wright would be proud of. 'The "post and beam" construction of the original house demanded a high level of perfection and finish,' says Mark. Together with architect Michael Pinto of Osborn Architects and interior designer Jamie Bush, they came up with a set of rules to determine its design. 'We debated how one surface would meet and interact >

## KITCHEN

'We went for a fairly serious kitchen in stainless steel with black highlights that reflects the architectural elements of the house,' says Mark. 'We love its clean lines, and the island is a real social draw.'

**Get the look** The kitchen and stools are by Bulthaup.

## LIBRARY

The staircase was inspired by Mexican architect Luis Barragán. 'It's a feat of engineering, with three-inch wooden treads cantilevering out of poured concrete,' says Mark. And here is an example of the couple's attention to detail: the openings in the redwood door to Mark's wine cellar are the same dimension as the treads.

**Get the look** Find the Platner armchair and ottoman at Geoffrey Drayton. Buy the Arco lamp by Flos at Aram Store. Madeline Weinrib Atelier sells ikat-print cushions. The Jackie Silk rug from Stepevi is like this.



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## *What they did*

- Rebuilt the house in mid-century style, adding 2,000 sq ft to the footprint.
- Built a swimming pool in the garden.
- Installed lots of hidden technology. Music, lighting and temperature can be controlled separately in each room or from the family's iPhones.

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## Home truths

**What hero or heroine from a film or novel would you love to be?** *Andrea:* Jason Bourne. I love Robert Ludlum's books and I've always wanted to be a spy. *Mark:* Sean Connery as James Bond. It's hard to deny the appeal of danger, fast cars, beautiful women and intrigue. **Andrea, what's on your iPod?** The Beatles, Pink Floyd, Josh Groban – and everything Dave Matthews has ever done. **What makes you laugh?** *Curb Your Enthusiasm* and *Monty Python.* I met Eric Idle recently – we were both having a manicure in Beverly Hills.

**LANDING**

'You can have the glass pendant lights at any length,' says Andrea. 'We spent ages going up and down ladders getting them right.' The flooring, which runs throughout the first floor, is end-grain hickory, traditionally used in factories.

**Get the look** The Pharos pendant lights are from Niche Modern. For a similar lamp go to Fandango. Try James UK for a chair like this. For bus blinds see *Ideas To Steal.*

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**FORMAL DINING AREA**
The wood panelling is another example of the couple's attention to detail. 'We hand-picked each piece of redwood, searching for minimal variegation so that it would form a more neutral backdrop,' says Mark.

**Get the look** Buy Louis Poulsen's PH Artichoke light from Skandium. The chairs are Finn Juhl; source similar from Two Columbia Road. For a table like this, go to BoConcept. For Sixties sconces, try thefrenchhouse.co.uk. The photograph is by Peter Fetterman.

**STUDY**
The bleached driftwood base to the glass desk provides a stylish contrast to the formal wood panelling on the walls and the vintage wall-mounted cabinets.

**Get the look** Devon Driftwood Designs sells driftwood-base tables. For a similar chair, go to Mark Parrish. Hendzel & Hunt can make cabinets like this.

with another, what would appear to float and what would not,' says Andrea. 'I wanted to be at the centre of the house as much as possible, so the kitchen and its adjoining dining area became the hub,' she says. 'Planning the house turned into a brainstorming session that extended over three years,' adds Mark.

In all, from blueprint to completion took a little longer than your average new build, but that's fine, says the upbeat couple. 'Even though we didn't move in until 2008 – 10 years after buying the property – we learned to be patient, and getting every detail right was worth it,' says Mark.

He's not wrong – the finish is beautiful. The materials used – slate, redwood, stone and painted steel – add the organic style so beloved of mid-century architects. Set against these natural textures is an enviable selection of design classics, many updated in bold, new colours, as well as handcrafted elements that relax the whole look of the house. 'It really expresses who we are,' says Andrea.

The couple's love of skiing, fishing and hiking is fully indulged in the surrounding countryside, but they are just as content hanging out in their new/old home. When Mark's not in his study or Andrea in the kitchen, they chill out in the family area. 'This house feels like a piece of art, set in nature,' says Andrea. 'It's like living in a dream.'

*See more work by the couple's architect at osborn320.com, and their interior designer at jamiebush.com. >*



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## MASTER BEDROOM

The custom-made four-poster bed references the steel beams throughout the house. The redwood panelling and the slate floor extend out onto a balcony, blurring the distinction between inside and out. The couple had loved some orange doors in the original house, and wanted to replicate them. 'We tested 14 shades to get it right,' says Andrea.

**Get the look** For a bed like this, see *Ideas To Steal*. The Papa Bear chair and ottoman are by Hans Wegner, available from Modernica. The Tripod No 303 lamp is by David Weeks; buy it from Cameron Peters. For a similar rug, look at the Jive at John Lewis.

## BATHROOM

Travertine tiles make a glamorous break from the wood panelling elsewhere in the house, while a vintage cascading light fitting adds sophistication.

**Get the look** Stonell stocks travertine tiles. Go to Fandango for a light fitting like this.

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**MASTER BATHROOM**

Large-scale marble tiles create a sleek yet organic look in the couple's bathroom, complemented by black slate flooring and mahogany cabinet doors. 'We put our spin on natural materials by mixing them up,' says Mark. 'We love clean, simple design.'

**Get the look** Surface Tiles sells marble like this. All brassware is by Dornbracht. >

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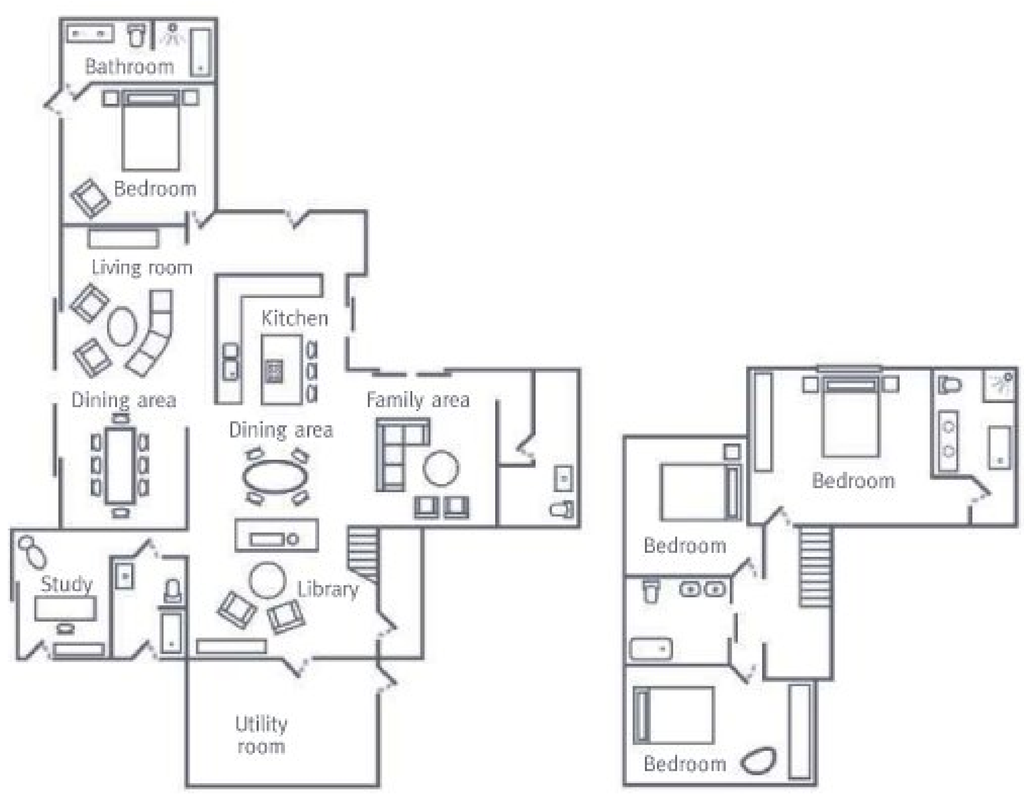
## THE BLUEPRINT

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### ONLINE EXTRA

**For hundreds more inspiring homes packed with ideas to steal, visit livingetc.com/houses.**

### CHRIS'S BEDROOM

Chris's bedroom is simple and modern, allowing him to inject his personality with fun pieces like the Bubble chair. The Beatles prints by Richard Avedon add a shot of colour, and honour the Sixties vibe of the house.

**Get the Look** Buy Eero Aarnio's Bubble chair for Adelta from Nest. Easyart sells Beatles prints.

### *Livingetc *loves*

- **Andrea and Mark's attention to detail (and positive attitude)**. Instead of despairing when told they had to demolish the original house, the couple saw it as an opportunity, and invested meticulous care in every stage of the build – rewarded by the stunning finish.
- **The warm backdrop of organic materials**. Slate, redwood and stone are enlivened by bold colour – a modern update on mid-century style.
- **All those design classics**. Twentieth century furniture greats are celebrated in all their glory.

For stockist details, see page 144



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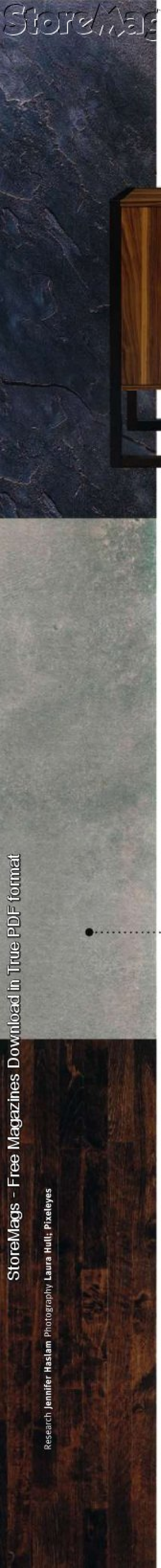

## DEFINING MOMENTS

**Mark and Andrea have used bold black lines to create definition between the myriad textures and finishes in their Californian home.** For a similar effect, choose dark furniture with a graphic shape, such as the Hana four-poster bed from Habitat (see below). You could also paint architraves in black eggshell.

FROM TOP Glass **ceiling lights**, £380 each, Curiousa & Curiousa. House **sideboard**, £495, Leonhard Pfeifer at Heal's. **Armchair**, £59, Robin Day at John Lewis. London Places **artwork**, £15, Next Home.

## KEY SURFACES OF THE HOUSE

(From top) Silver Blue **slate** with chipped edge, £49.89 per sq m, Fired Earth. Concrete laminate **floor tiles**, £35.74 per sq m, Top Class Carpentry. Dark Cocoa **solid-beech flooring**, £53 per sq m, Soul Collection at Junckers.

FROM FAR LEFT Hana four-poster **bed**, £900, Habitat. China Blue velvet **cushion**, £16, cushionsonline.co.uk.

# IDEAS TO STEAL
*from Andrea and Mark's house*

Weave some mid-century magic with clean-lined furniture and natural materials

Research **Jennifer Haslam** Photography **Laura Hull; Pixeleyes**

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