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Green Interiors  
by the Sea

THE PEACEFUL

# Palisades Project

*Sustainable interior  
design inspired by the  
nature of the seaside*

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*By Chere Di Boscio*

**W**ho doesn't dream of a beautiful home outfitted with all natural materials, organic textiles, handmade and eco-friendly furnishings - on the coast, no less? Eco-friendly interior designer Sarah Barnard was asked to perform a design overhaul on a 3,600 sq. ft. family home in Santa Monica. The stipulation? The owners wanted sustainable interior design that reflects a seaside theme throughout the living spaces.

Called the Peaceful Palisades Project, the resulting house boasts materials such as ceramic, wood and wool, as well as outstanding customised features such as a concrete fireplace, designed by Sarah.

Sarah's diverse body of work includes upscale private residences, chic restaurants, luxurious spas and impressive corporate headquarters, and her projects have been featured in local and national publications, and have placed prominently in several noted design competitions. Here, we asked her a little bit about what motivates her ecological interior designs.

### **What are the biggest differences designing a family home and one for singletons or couples?**

While all of our clients care about healthy living, parents with young children are especially concerned about the materials that make up their home environments. Natural, non-toxic materials are of the highest importance when creating spaces for growing children.

### **Where do you source your eco-friendly decor materials from, generally?**

I buy locally whenever possible. Our firm has longstanding relationships with local artists and artisans who hand-make most of our goods, focusing on using natural, reclaimed, and honest materials. Aside from being beautiful and healthy, pieces made this way tend to be more treasured and are more likely to be kept by a family for longer.

### **What are some of your favourite features of the Palisades house?**

The original bones of the house were excellent. The living room has a beautiful exposed beam ceiling and there is an exposed brick fireplace that remains a decorative element in the new kitchen. We wrestled with the idea of preserving or upgrading the original red brick. We collectively decided to keep it (in the kitchen only) as a homage to the architect's original intent.

### **And what are some of your favourite design features?**

Unique handmade objects bring authenticity and personalization to a home. The sculptural wall sconces in the living room and dining room are one-of-a-kind; I designed two different sets specifically for this home. The dining room pair were made of ceramic and were inspired by the property's calming ocean view. The elegantly contoured living room sconce was carved by hand from American Walnut by a trusted woodworker based on sketches and handmade miniatures. The organic forms and natural finishes match perfectly with the coastal ambiance of the space.

Both fireplaces needed to be completely redone. In the living room I designed a long horizontal concrete facade and hearth with gently waving etched lines to mimic the movement of the nearby sea. In the dining room, I chose a Ann Sacks tile glazed in brilliant blue to create an updated linear pattern neatly framed by a custom concrete mantle.

### **What are some of the biggest challenges you face when sourcing eco-friendly interiors items?**

The wait times—miracles don't happen overnight. We often work with small shops and individual artisans who hand-craft our pieces to order. Patience truly is a virtue when building natural, custom homes.

### **What was the family's reaction to your work?**

The homeowner for this project was very happy with the final result and the new connection the space had with its surroundings. She was easy to work with, since she is highly intelligent and conscious about sustainability. Caring deeply about the environment and the health of her family, we didn't have to pitch these concepts about health and wellness to her, she embraced them wholeheartedly.

### **What would be your ultimate dream house?**

My ultimate dream house to design would be a home that is harmonious with the nature around it. I love to work with nature and my ideal projects are ones where the environment—whether that's the desert, ocean, prairie, jungle, or anything else—is physically and spiritual intertwined with the home. The house would have epically grand views and a unique personality. It would also have an owner who cares about sustainability and wellness.

*Photos by Steven Dewall*





