



# Houzz Tours: Malibu Architectural



Becky Harris

Houzz Contributor. Hi There! I currently live in a 1920s cottage in Atlanta that I'll describe as "collected." I got into design via Landscape Architecture, which I studied at the University of Virginia. I've been writing about design online for quite a few years over at Hatch: The Design Public Blog.

Today's tour is a house I would definitely add to one of my "The Dream House" ideabooks. It's the home of an interior designer and Houzz community member whose images I constantly find myself using. Her name is [Tracy Murdock](#), and I am seriously envious of her beautiful Malibu home. While some of the designs I've seen of hers are full of huge graphic moves and bold color, her seaside home in Malibu is calm and serene. The views out the windows are so spectacular that the home does not even need any art on the walls.

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**This is your own home and it underwent a major remodeling process. What condition was it in when you found it?**

I purchased the home in the spring of 2006. The house was a rebuild after the great Malibu fire of 1993 where 268 homes (including the one that stood on my lot) burned to the ground. (The architect kept the original footings of the burned out house intact and they remain in the back yard as a sort of monument to the fire. There is also a palm tree that survived but the upper half of the trunk still bears the burn marks from the fire).

**Who was your architect? Please tell us a bit about the collaboration between the architect and you, the interior designer?**

Renowned architect Frederick Fisher built the Architectural home employing black concrete block, stucco, copper sheathing and mahogany windows and doors.

When I purchased the house it was still relatively new and needed only a few additions to customize it to my living, the master bedroom was located on the lower level, with it's polished concrete floor, concrete block walls and exposed beam ceilings it was not 'luxurious' enough for me. To me it had a dungeon feel to it and the spectacular views are not fully utilized from this room, so when my 18 yr. old son fell in love with it, I said "perfect, this will be your room and I will merge the 2 upstairs bedrooms into another master suite". So that is where most of the renovation took place.

The house has a definite "Contemporary" Asian feel to it because of all the mahogany detail and the 200 feet high giant bamboo outside, being half Japanese I have always wanted a Japanese style bedroom, so when I decided to build a new master suite, that is what I did. In the master bedroom, the bed which sits on tatami mats was built high upon a mahogany platform to capture the Pacific views and the sound of the waves washing upon the shore. A wall of shoji doors slide open to reveal a Zen-like master bathroom of black granite and white stone pebbles, where the oval matte white freestanding bathtub becomes exposed to the bedroom and to the plasma television.

**What is the area surrounding the site like (i.e. water views? How does it compare to places you've lived before?**

The house is built on a double lot on a hillside overlooking the Pacific. I have been very fortunate over the last 20 years to live mostly in homes that have had water views. With each, I was immediately taken with the views and have learned that you can never go wrong when investing in real estate with any view, but particularly with a stunning view of water. This is my first ocean view, I find the ocean very mysterious and the view here is immense with constantly changing skies and water throughout the year. During storms I have seen the most spectacular lightning storms move across the ocean... it can at times be ominous with grey skies, dark clouds and white peaks across the ocean, but more often than not, the view is picture perfect with clear blue skies filled with puffy white clouds against a crisp blue horizon line, and Mediterranean blue waters often with dolphins frolicking or sail boats, kayakers and stand up paddle boarders playing along the shores.

**How did you manage to meld beach house style with staying contemporary? You bring in so many textures and colors through materials. Where did you begin when selecting your design palette?**

I did not want to do the interiors in an ultra contemporary way, yet I wanted to have the clean contemporary look which goes with the house so I used linens and kept the colors somewhat neutral using an earthy color palette including browns and blues from the views outside...

When I asked the Architect about some of his inspiration in building the home, he remarked that he wanted all the various "picture" windows with their spectacular views to "frame" and represent the "art". In keeping with that I did not place art on the walls, I kept the great room with it's soaring ceilings void of any art to avoid taking away from the windows framing the views. Instead I used Art Glass designer Robert Kaindle's spectacular hand blown Glass Sea Shapes, which float above the fireplace and I highlighted 2 of his Giant Anthias, bowls near the windows where they are illuminated by the light.

**I love that dining table so much! What is it made of?**

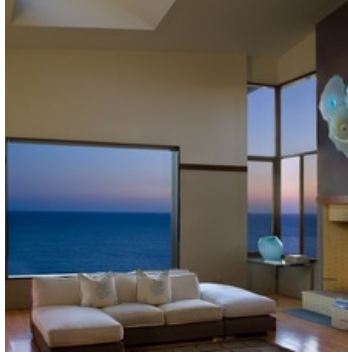
The dining room table was actually built for a charity event where I designed the tabletops for a dinner by Crustacean Restaurant. I wanted a very large square table; this one is laid with glass tile from Creative Environments, which coincidentally matched my kitchen backsplash tiles. It fit perfectly under the huge picture window with a view of the giant bamboo so it has remained there and is the hub of the house where everyone gathers.

**What are some of your favorite sources for finding unique pieces?**

I love the store Downtown on La Cienega, also Shannon Colburn and with the Internet I often get lost just surfing around... you never know where you will end up. It has really revolutionized the interior design business.

**Tracy, please let us know a bit about your career path.**

While married to my second husband; David Murdock, a developer of Hotels, Country Clubs, custom homes and owner of the private Hawaiian island of Lanai, I was exposed to a myriad of design projects and worked on several together with him including two homes of our own that we built. During these experiences I discovered my passion for not only interior design, but for architecture and landscape design as well. The three must work together cohesively as they are all related with each project, sometimes one dictating the other. If I could do it all over, I would definitely become an architect...It all starts there.



With views like this, no paintings or other artwork is needed on the walls. Tracy added art via glass sculptures by Robert Kaindle



"Frederick Fisher built the Architectural home employing black concrete block, stucco, copper sheathing and mahogany windows and doors."



The home was built on the site of a home that had burned down in the fires of 1993.



The table is laid with glass tile from Creative Environments, and overlooks the giant bamboo tree.



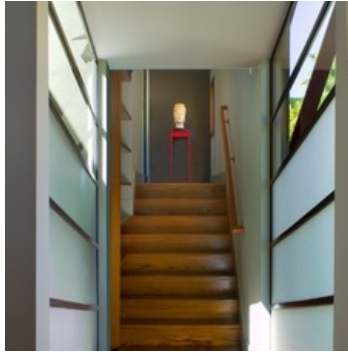
I love the relationship between those structural supports and the slant of these tree trunks.



This room (also seen above) is the tea room. Tracy designed the crackled glass table and the chairs.



A variety of wood textures on the interior contributes to the harmony between the house and its surroundings.



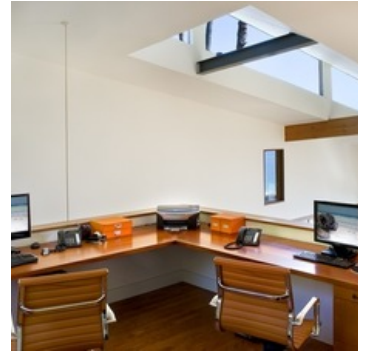
The home has a Contemporary Asian feel to it.



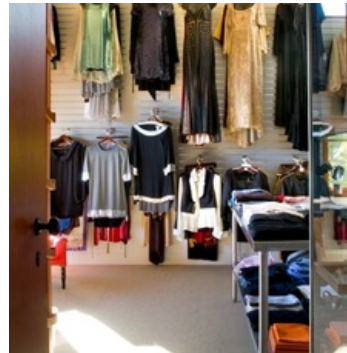
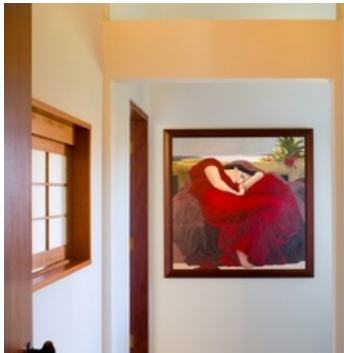
These windows have a shoji-screen inspired form.



"I used linens and kept the colors somewhat neutral using an earthy color palette including browns and blues from the views outside."



The master bedroom is on the second floor, where one enjoys some of the best views. The bed sits on tatami mats was built high upon a mahogany platform to capture the Pacific views and the sound of the waves washing upon the shore. Note the shoji screen on the right side of this image.



If this isn't a closet looking like a boutique, I don't know what is! To me, this is as "Zen" as it gets!

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