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LAGUNA BEACH & NEWPORT BEACH COMMUNITIES

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Vacation Home

Architect Chris Light designs a Dana Point home that's fully fluent in resort living.

By Alexandria Abramian | Photos by Brandon Beechler

The common wisdom to creating oceanfront homes with jaw-dropping coastal views is simple: Keep all eyes on the prize. It's an architectural approach that often leads to spaces where ocean vistas are framed by extreme minimalist spaces—a less-is-more philosophy where nothing competes with sea views.



But famed architect Christian Light of C.J. Light Associates flipped that script when designing this almost 10,000-square-foot residence in Dana Point. Located within the exclusive community of The Strand at Headlands, the three-story home creates no shortage of drama within, while at the same time playing up those stunning ocean views to maximum capacity. Light infuses the property with Balinese design, using rich materials, detailed architectural finishes and lush plantings that make it stand out amid the more minimalist contemporary beach offerings. The overall effect is a tropical take on California coastal

design where indoor/outdoor living and lots of spa amenities make for a home that feels far more resort than residence.

"The way Chris Light built the home to take full advantage of the ocean views is exceptional," says listing agent Ariana Gaffoglio of Stanfield Real Estate. "There are full coastline views out to Catalina as well as city lights that include The Ritz-Carlton, [Laguna Niguel]. At night, that means you're not just looking at pitch-black ocean."

Light gave those five-star views top billing, right from the point of entry, where a dramatic, glass-



enclosed courtyard opens onto the main living areas. There, floor-to-ceiling, pocketing glass doors frame the infinity pool whose blue mirrors the ocean, depending on the weather. The extreme symmetry of the ceilings, windows and pool only works to heighten the drama within, a visual appetizer for what lies beyond. Throughout the home, Light continued to take advantage of the enviable location. Floor-to-ceiling glass walls can be found from the family room and dining area, which bracket the open living room to the upper-level bedrooms and even



bathrooms: In the master suite, a marble vanity is set against floor-to-ceiling windows, while another bathroom features a soaking tub gem set within a glass tile-lined alcove with sweeping beach views. Even from the basement-level



area, the Pacific remains in play: Built below the main level, an expansive bottom floor of the house includes a screening room, full-size gym, spa with massage room, sauna and steam room, as well as a bar and enormous wine wall. But unlike other light-starved basement areas, here the outdoors comes right in to the walk-out lower level, an expansive swath of sea-level grass built for large-scale entertaining. Ocean views come right into most of the basement level rooms.

Throughout the five-bedroom, eight-bathroom home, Light added details that contribute to the drama: In the master bedroom, a woven



ceiling adds visual interest, while the home office features a wall covered in horse hair. In the chef's kitchen, a one-of-a-kind onyx wall lights up. But the architect saved his boldest moves for the spa and infinity pool that creates a visual anchor for the entire property. Here, he shifts into minimalist design, with nothing—



no plants, no detailed finishes or mix of materials—to detract from the impact of a borderless body of water that looks as if it's connecting directly with the ocean. It's a visual sleight of hand underscored by plexiglass safety walls, so that the shift from man-made to a natural body of water is entirely

uninterrupted.

Light heightens the pool's majestic lines by flanking it with large-scale fire pits for extreme symmetry. Come sunset, you can easily imagine you're at a far-flung resort instead of less than a mile from downtown Dana Point.

Gaffoglio says that could-be-anywhere feeling of the entire property is all by design. "When you're in the house," she says, "you automatically feel like you're on vacation."

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ASKING PRICE: \$27,500,000

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