

# luxe.

interiors + design®

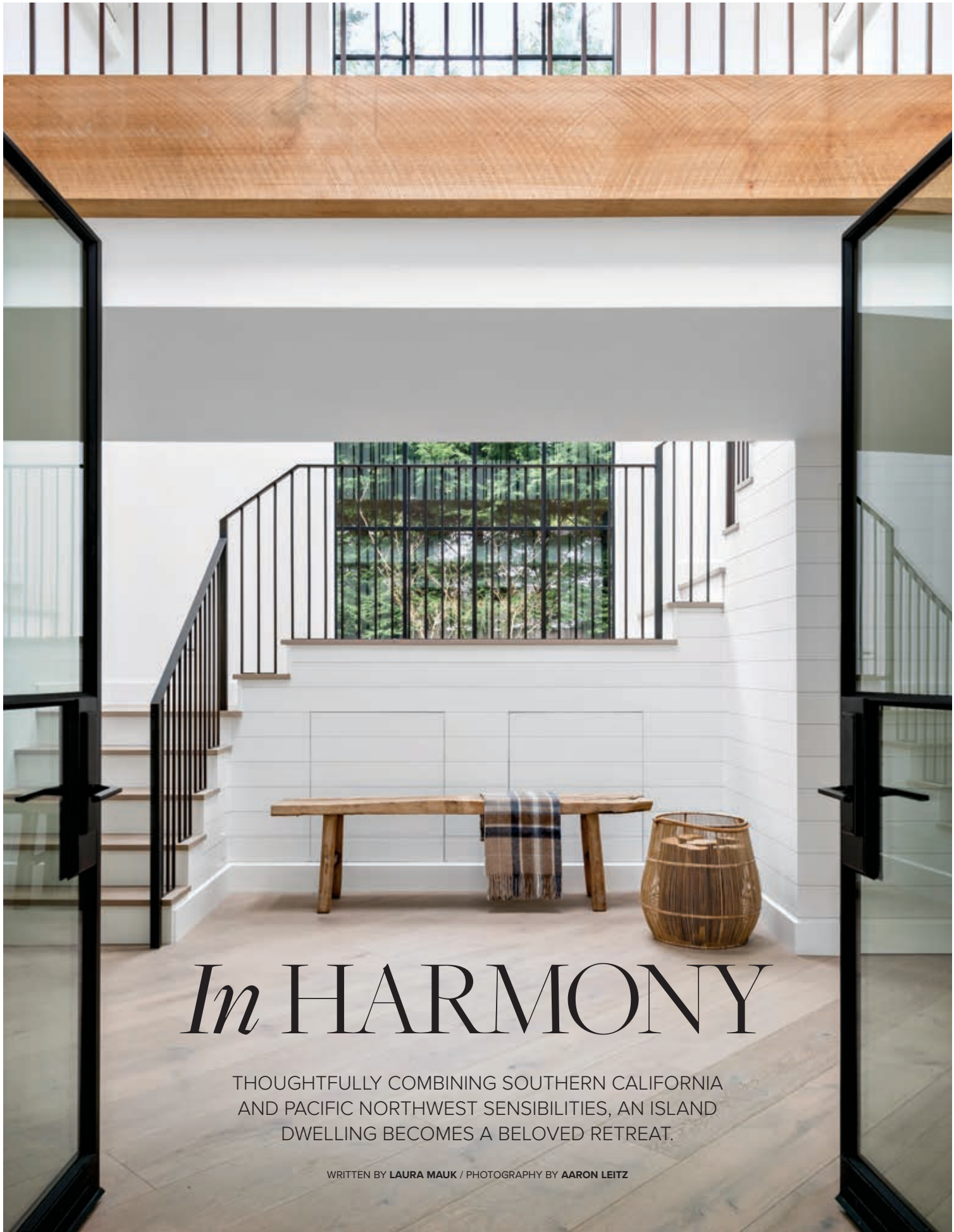
PACIFIC NORTHWEST







ARCHITECTURE / DANA WEBBER, DANA WEBBER ARCHITECT  
INTERIOR DESIGN / MINDY GAYER, MINDY GAYER DESIGN CO.  
HOME BUILDER / SHAREN BORGAS AND TAD FAIRBANK, FAIRBANK CONSTRUCTION COMPANY  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / JEFF BOUMA, FISCHER BOUMA PARTNERSHIP



# *In* HARMONY

THOUGHTFULLY COMBINING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
AND PACIFIC NORTHWEST SENSIBILITIES, AN ISLAND  
DWELLING BECOMES A BELOVED RETREAT.

WRITTEN BY LAURA MAUK / PHOTOGRAPHY BY AARON LEITZ



Revamp a home that's a stylistic hodgepodge and smoothly integrate divergent aesthetics of the Pacific Northwest and Southern California. That was the challenge designer Mindy Gayer and architect Dana Webber faced as they joined forces to craft a family retreat on Bainbridge Island. "Our clients live full-time in Southern California and are drawn to a clean, understated style," Gayer says. "But they wanted this home to look like it belongs on the island; they didn't want anything to distract from the beauty around it."

The clients, a couple with young children, had found and purchased a property perched by the silvery waters of Puget Sound, after falling in love with the locale during a vacation. But the house—originally built in 1930 and expanded in the early 1980s—was all over the map, stylistically speaking. "Rumor has it that a previous owner was a contractor who added onto the house when he had extra materials," says Webber. That could explain why there were clunky chimneys and, toward the center of the house, a dark and aesthetically out-of-place staircase. "The living room chimney blocked the water views," the architect says. "And the stair, which looked like it was salvaged from an old 1970s office building, had nothing to do with the cottage character of the house." She removed the awkward features, rearranged the floor plan, then added bi-fold windows and doors for a better connection to the landscape.



In the living room of a Bainbridge Island abode reimagined by designer Mindy Gayer and architect Dana Webber, Gayer arranged a custom Cisco Home sofa, a jute rug, and leather and wood chairs from House of Morrison in Newport Beach, California. A Pindler stripe enlivens Lee Industries lounge chairs.



A chandelier by The Urban Electric Co. hovers above an RH oak table in the dining room. Sleekness comes from the Apparatus scone and leather and steel-frame Four Hands side chairs, while the Cisco Home custom armchair, covered with Jennifer Shorto fabric, provides soft texture. The artwork is by McKenzie Dove.



Webber also overhauled the exterior, redesigning the entrance and replacing the roof. “The entrance now is a tall gabled tower with expansive steel-clad windows and doors that beckon you to come inside and be with family,” says the architect, who also used it to join the main portion of the house to the garage structure, which she redid to include an office and a bunk room and living area for the kids. She clad the tower with soft white board-and-batten siding and the rest of the house in a combination of black cedar siding and stone veneer. “The dark siding and the standing-seam metal roof recede into the woods so the house doesn’t dominate the shoreline,” she says. “There are so many cool materials on the house,” notes Sharen Borgias, who, with Tad Fairbank, served as the project’s general contractors. For the garage doors, “Our supplier found old growth cedar that had been milled decades ago,” she explains. “The stored lumber had character, aging and distinctive circular saw marks.”

Webber and Gayer collaborated, selecting the exterior colors in an effort to blend the architecture with the furnishings palette. “We wanted contrast for both the interior and the exterior,” says Gayer. “The darker, moody tones blend into the trees, but the bright white tower, which is unexpected in the Pacific Northwest, feels true to a lot of homes in Southern California.” The designer chose to juxtapose vibrant lightness with dark accents indoors. She covered the floors with white-washed oak and painted most of the walls brilliant white; light fixtures and some of the walls and built-in shelving are in charcoal and black tones, such as in the mud room and the office. “Contrast lends interest in a way that’s understated,” Gayer says.

For the kitchen, the designer created an ethereal feeling by combining blue-painted cabinetry with marble countertops and oak flooring. “The paint tones play off the grayish Moroccan tile of the backsplash,” Gayer says, “The color here was influenced by and relates directly to the water views.”

“The La Cornue range helped set the tone for the kitchen’s other design elements,” says Gayer. It establishes the mix of metals in the Ashley Norton hardware and Allied Maker ceiling fixtures. Benjamin Moore’s Rocky Coast is on the cabinets and Puritan Gray on the island. The flooring is by Ribadão Lumber & Flooring; the counters are Calacatta marble from Pental Surfaces. The sink is Rohl; the faucet is Moen.





To accommodate large family gatherings, Webber conceived an outdoor counter and dining area that connect to the kitchen. White Moroccan zellige backsplash tile by Mosaic House in the kitchen stands out against the darker-hued wood. The weathered teak table is from RH; the wall-mounted lights are from Design Within Reach.

The designer added warmth throughout by placing furnishings upholstered in textural taupe, caramel and oatmeal shades. On a large jute rug in the living room, she arranged a custom sofa covered in a sandy linen and a pair of midcentury-style wood-frame armchairs with toffee-colored leather cushions. The master suite features an entire wall of stained oak paneling laid in a chevron pattern. “I used thin boards that have a more modernist appearance,” Gayer says.

The rear of the home is almost completely open to the water, with no substantial boundary between it and the structure. Landscape architect Jeff Bouma designed a two-level stone terrace complete with a living and dining space and fashioned an adjacent fire pit area beneath massive conifer trees. “The conifers frame views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains to the west,” Bouma says. Webber, for her part, conceived an outdoor kitchen. A centerpiece of family gatherings, and an early factor in Webber’s design vision, it points to the homeowners’ intention for their island retreat. “They have a big family and their viewpoint is the more the merrier,” says Gayer. Webber adds: “The owners said to me, ‘Everything seems to be in exactly the right place. There wouldn’t have been a better way to do any of it.’”



\_\_\_\_\_

**Opposite:** “The warm wood tones were designed to give the master bath a lake house feel—juxtaposed with contrasting finishes throughout,” says Gayer, noting the Calacatta marble flooring from Walker Zanger and the hue of the custom vanity and the quartzite countertops. The Roman shade fabric is by Peter Dunham Textiles.

**Below:** “In lieu of using a patterned wallpaper to add visual interest, we designed a statement wall in the master bedroom using stained oak planks in a chevron pattern,” says Gayer. She positioned a bed in front of and placed a Made Goods table and sconce by Allied Maker next to it. The dresser is by CFC.



“OUR CLIENTS WANTED THIS HOME TO BELONG; THEY DIDN’T WANT ANYTHING TO DISTRACT FROM THE BEAUTY AROUND IT.”

—MINDY GAYER



Since the home was located on the fragile shoreline of Puget Sound, “The team opted to treat the site gently and retained the house,” explains Webber. “Portions of the structure were removed—improving the shoreline setback. Additions were in the center—leaving neighboring views unaffected.” On the white-painted tower are Rejuvenation lights; the lantern is by Troy Lighting. The windows are by Sierra Pacific.

