



EasyReader

The Magazine of South Bay People

Beach

November 18, 2010 • Volume 41, Issue 12

Out on 101

Writer Terry McDermott



Chief Dragon MacHale

Surf City Scribe

Books that Cook

2010 Beach Holiday Book and Gift Guide

Stories of California Dreaming



Lifestyles of Southern California: Personal Sanctuaries.

by KAA Design Group. Published by
The Images Publishing Group.
\$49.95

by Andrea Ruse

Each home designed by architect Grant Kirkpatrick begins with a story.

Perhaps it's the story of a successful, yet overextended, entrepreneur seeking a relaxing beach retreat away from his hectic, professional life.

Or the journey of a London family trading its damp, urban surroundings for a California dream home where outdoor living is possible nearly every day of the year.

Or a detail-oriented, rocket scientist looking to retire early and convert his beach bungalow into a house designed with the same meticulousness he puts into his experiments.

These are some of the stories that appear in *Lifestyles of Southern California: Personal Sanctuaries* by KAA Design Group, first book of a planned three-part series.

Stunning photographs of homes, woven with the personal stories behind their creation, capture the result of a decade's worth of intimate collaboration between KAA and its clients.

"Our goal was to display the lifestyle stories of the people in these homes," Kirkpatrick said. "The book is evidence of how each one is so different and makes it clear how a building forms, based out of those unique, lifestyle stories."

Lifestyles, released internationally this past January, is the first compilation book of KAA projects during its 20 years designing homes from Laguna Beach to Monterey, as well as across the country and overseas.

The book reflects KAA's philosophy that "design has the power to elevate the human spirit."

"California always has and will attract people who want to explore," Kirkpatrick said. "There's something consistent about California where maybe everyone here is a dreamer and doesn't want to live the way somebody else has set up."

For a pair of professional athletes ready to start a family, this means a Strand home that exchanges some of its interior space for a private courtyard, surrounds a pool made of stones reminiscent of alpine mountains and offers spectacular views of the activity on the beach through large, uninterrupted windows.

For an older couple with an empty nest and looking to downsize, this means a simple but elegant, easily maintained home that functions in look and feel like the lifeguard towers both grew up with in the South Bay.

Originally called *Personal Sanctuaries*, the book was renamed by its publisher, The Images Publishing Group, to contain the word "California" so that it would have wider international appeal.

"It's a really strong word in different cultures around the world and an adjective for modern architecture and design," Kirkpatrick said.

Lifestyles is available in all major bookstores and at Pages: a Bookstore in Manhattan Beach, 904 Manhattan Ave.

The second book in the series, *Costal Retreats*, will feature residential architecture on the coast. Kirkpatrick hopes it will be out by next year.

He credits KAA's diverse team of architects and designers from around the globe for the firm's success.

"It would be very meaningful to me and KAA if we can encourage people to think about the story of a building instead of choosing a style," Kirkpatrick said. "We've found, through the last couple of decades, that those who don't burden themselves with a pre-conceived idea of a style can go through the process with a good design team more successfully. The building becomes more meaningful and authentic." **B**



Photos by Erhard Pfeiffer (unless otherwise indicated)



1 A family of five lives in this Manhattan Beach tree section home, which was inspired by European Modernism and Mediterranean influences.

2 The dining room seamlessly steps into the family room "like three-dimensional puzzle pieces in section" in the home of a rocket scientist with an eye for detail. Photo by Farshid Assassi

3 The inverted floor plan of this three-story home is meant to reflect the tranquil lifestyle of Bali for the adventurous family who lives in it.

4 A palapa-covered outdoor living room incorporates both the home owners' love of nature and childhood dream of a tree house.

5 The clean lines of this steel stairway add to the Modernist theme reflected in this Manhattan Beach tree section home.