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VIEW MASTERED



On a prime Malibu bluff, smart design elements with all the right angles make the most of a small house.

HOME & DESIGN

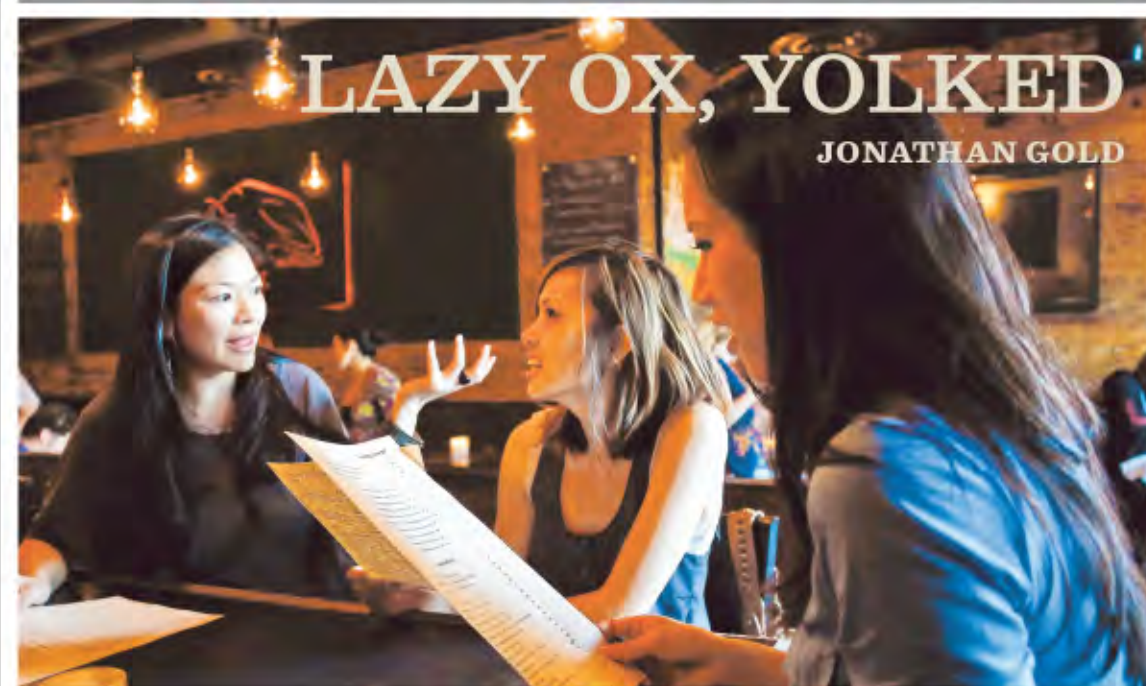
RICARDO DEARATANHA Los Angeles Times

THE BROAD BEACH home, only 1,700 square feet, was designed to frame beautiful views and crop out the less-attractive ones, such as Pacific Coast Highway traffic.



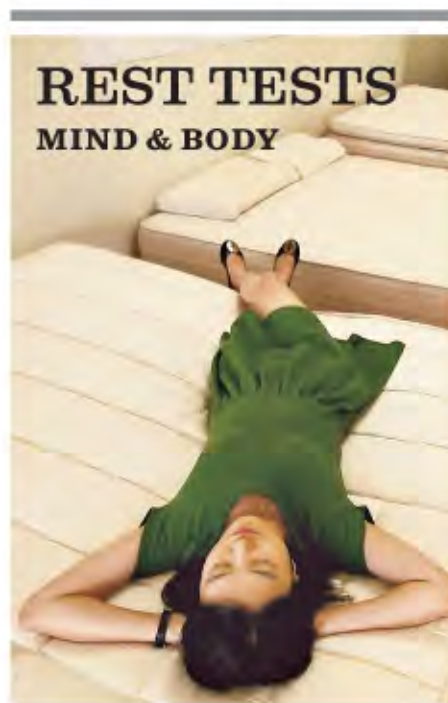
ENGLISH MUFFIN MAGIC

FOOD & DINING



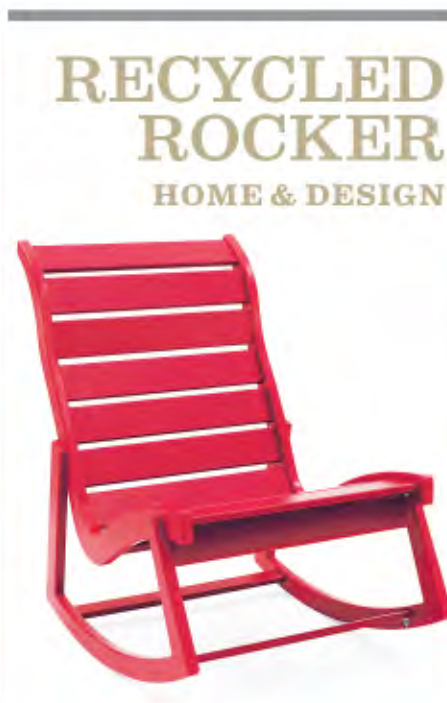
LAZY OX, YOLKED

JONATHAN GOLD



REST TESTS

MIND & BODY



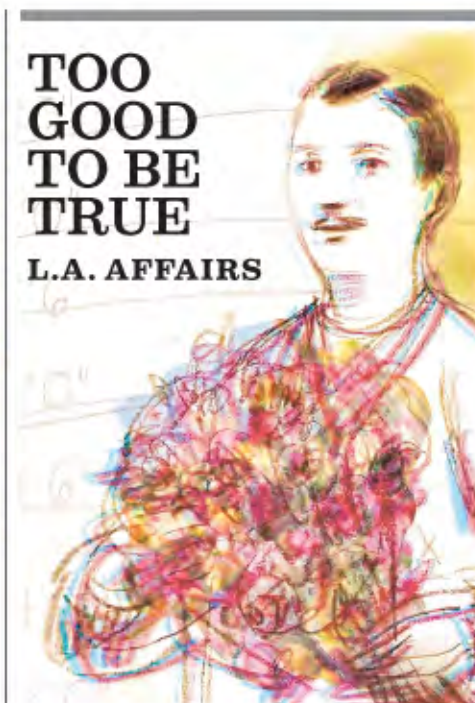
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HOME & DESIGN

A vision in all angles

By CRAIG NAKANO >>> You could admire the ocean view from the house's second-floor deck — coastal bluffs covered with wind-sculpted cypress trees to your right, pretty Point Dume off in the distance to your left, 10 miles of prime Malibu beach in between. ¶ Or you could admire the architecture from the street below, looking up at a first floor that juts out from a cliff and hovers over nothingness. ¶ Or you could contemplate the house from the front, where the weathered redwood siding turns out to be planks recycled from olive and pickle tanks.

You could do all of that, but then you might miss part of what makes this house special. This dream of a retreat — set along exclusive Broad Beach, among the mansions that Steven Spielberg, Robert Redford, Goldie Hawn and Steve Levitan have called home — holds smart design ideas that could translate to houses that are miles and miles away, in geography, budget or style.

After all, on paper this house is merely 1,700 square feet of living

space: open kitchen and living room, powder room, small office and guest bedroom with bath on the first floor, master suite on the second. That's it.

But as conceived by the young Los Angeles architecture firm W+D (www.wdlosangeles.com), this Malibu house plays out as a case study in the efficient use of space. Wedged next to noisy Pacific Coast Highway and set snugly between neighbors, the house also is inspiration for anyone trying to

balance a love of the outdoors with the need for quiet and privacy.

Co-owner Mickey Liddell, a producer whose credits include the TV series "Everwood" and the Liam Neeson action film "The Grey," summed up the various design solutions with one sentence: "There isn't a room that I don't feel like is a great room."

As seen from the beach, the house is meant to be a streamlined white box set atop a rustic base — "a juxtaposition between hard

lines and soft lines," W+D principal Brett Woods said. "Pure geometry coming off this rugged hillside." A beacon of sorts to all who pass by, he said.

The first-floor deck cantilevers over the hillside thanks to new steel beams set over an existing foundation, but when it came time to design the guest bedroom at one end of the house, Woods pulled back instead of pushing out. Rather than crowd a neighbor's deck with more deck of their own, the architect and

his clients shrank the footprint of the guest bedroom to make room for a sheltered terrace.

"You can still have your coffee and look at the ocean but not feel like you're hanging out for everyone below to see," Woods said.

The lesson: Giving up a bit of interior square footage can yield a more pleasant, private, functional space.

Four other ways the W+D house makes the most of a modestly sized space:



Photographs by RICARDO DRARANTANHA Los Angeles Times

LOOK UP

In trying to conceive some sort of trellis or shade structure for the second-floor deck, W+D realized it had an opportunity. "Everyone responds to the ocean for obvious reasons, but we felt opportunity to embrace the sky," Woods said, adding that a new architectural element — a roof with a hole punched through the center like a giant picture frame — draws the eye up and prompts people to appreciate the simple beauty of a blue sky. "That turned out to be one of our favorite moments in the project." The master bathroom has a skylight that achieves a similar effect.



latimes.com /home Photo tour

We have 360-degree interactive panoramas that let you pan, tilt and zoom inside this house. Look for the link on our L.A. at Home blog.

DECK OUT

First and foremost, this house is proof that small can feel big. Interiors are more than 700 square feet smaller than the average new American house, but 1,700 square feet of first- and second-floor decking double the living space for owner Liddell and partner Pete Shilalmon. Architects considered the wood-and-resin composite materials on the market but ultimately chose to satisfy stringent codes by using a fireproof product called DreamDex, real wood infused with a polymer and dried at high temperatures.



CONTROL THE FLOW

Open floor plans may be all the rage, but sometimes homeowners discover the hard way the downsides of all that openness. Architect Woods said one goal of the Malibu house was to contain and manage foot traffic, preserving privacy from room to room. The first-floor deck, for example, is divided by a guardrail, so romping kids or loud adults outside the living room won't spill onto the deck by the office and distract someone trying to work. Likewise, a guardrail subtly partitions the master suite, above, from the vast lounging deck on the second floor. Weekend guests, Liddell said, "can get up early in the morning and be in and out on that deck, and I don't even know it."



CONTROL THE VIEW

When owner Liddell said, "I think that's a million-dollar view," he wasn't talking about the ocean. He was referring to the rich light and rolling fog that creeps over the Malibu foothills on the other side of the house at the end of the day. Woods responded with clerestory windows in the living room and guest bedroom that are just large enough to capture those fog-shrouded mountaintops but small enough to minimize the rumble of PCH — and high enough to keep passing cars out of sight. For anyone sitting in either room, the windows look like bucolic landscape paintings on the wall.