



The verdant landscape design is by MCB Landscape Architecture.

LAGUNA BEACH,  
CALIFORNIA

## Lucky Charm

A painter finds inspiration in the original details and picturesque views that define her stunning 1920s cottage by the sea

Laguna Beach has long been heralded as an enclave for the arts, so it's no surprise that when a beach-loving painter visited for the first time, she immediately felt an affinity for the place. More surprising, perhaps, is how quickly she traded in her desert roots for a new West Coast address. "I knew I needed to be here," says the homeowner, "and then this home fell into my lap. I could have looked for 20 years and not have found a more perfect property." Nestled on a large parcel of land with terraced gardens atop a hill overlooking the sea, the 1920s cottage was a dream come true, albeit one that needed a bit of updating. In the hands of designer Jude Samuel, however, it was quickly transformed from a small, dark house to an airy, modern abode. Here, how to give a character-filled home a fresh look without losing its signature charm.

### **1** PICK YOUR PLAYERS.

It was the house's charming exterior that first captivated the homeowner, so she was careful to only work with those who shared an equal appreciation for its original cottage aesthetic, like Samuel and architect Tim Nicol. "I wanted to maintain the architectural integrity of the home, and Tim and Jude just got it. They were totally in sync." >

The living room walls are painted Ballet White and the ceilings are painted Simply White, both by Benjamin Moore.



**2 WHITEN UP.** A neutral palette of soft whites and ivory in the living room is the ideal backdrop for the homeowner's extensive art collection and the wide water views. "It's a color scheme you never tire of," says the homeowner. "It's classic and elegant. When you walk in, your eyes go straight outside, and it absolutely takes your breath away."

**3 TAKE A STEP.** The open floor plan is key to making the once-cramped cottage feel spacious and bright. A small step between the kitchen and dining room and the living room provides a visual break that delineates the entertaining areas from those designated for relaxation. "It flows very nicely," says Samuel. "There's a space for everything."



The table is from Glabman's Furniture; the chairs are from Lee Industries.



The countertops are from Daltile. The appliances are from Viking.

**4 CHOOSE A HARD-WORKING LAYOUT.** Bad lighting and a lack of work and storage space put the kitchen squarely on the homeowner's list of priorities for remodeling. While the former room's small layout hindered its functionality, the new kitchen's larger, L-shaped design makes cooking for company much easier.

**5 EXTEND YOUR LIVING SPACE.** The terraced gardens on the grounds were lovely, but the homeowner wanted to get more out of her outdoor space, so she had Samuel craft a plan to make the backyard an oasis for entertaining, complete with a kitchen, bar, and dining area. "It's a great spot to hang out," says Samuel. ➤



The dining table and chairs are from Restoration Hardware.



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The table is by Stanley Furniture; the chairs are from Lee Industries.



The dresser and mirror are from Restoration Hardware.

**6 MAINTAIN CONSISTENCY.**

One of Samuel's first orders of business was constructing a proper master suite to give the homeowner a comfortable spot to retreat. She and Nicol fashioned an addition that echoes architectural details throughout the rest of the home—pitched, beamed ceilings and paneled walls—for a seamless look.

**7 GO NATURAL.** Samuel went to the stone yard herself to select the soft, sandy tiles that define the master bath. "I love working with natural materials," she says, "and they were especially important in this space. The different tones in the stone lend an aged appearance, helping them blend in with the existing floors." **For more information, see Sources, page 100.**

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