



A NEWPORT BEACH COUPLE REUNITES WITH THEIR FAVORITE DESIGNER TO CREATE A NEW HOME MADE FOR ENTERTAINING.

ROOM FOR COMPANY

BY LISA LIDDANE
PHOTOS BY LARRY FALKE

When you're having your dream house built from the ground up, there is something extraordinarily comforting about having a designer who knows your family pretty well and whose work you've already lived in. It's even better if she lives in the same neighborhood, because chances are good that she understands, as only a neighbor can, the subtle nuances about where you live. For Glenn and Lauri Welling, that designer was Trish Steele of Churchill Design. Steele, who lives less than a mile away from her clients, had designed the interiors of the Wellings' first home on a quiet cul-de-sac in the Port streets neighborhood of Newport Beach (streets names here start with "Port").

NEW ENGLAND INFLUENCE

Steele, who met the Wellings in 1993, immediately grasped what the Wellings wanted: an eastern seaboard-inspired home that's family-friendly and conducive to entertaining.

In this enclave of Newport Beach, it's easy to find architectural influences from coastal cities on the other side of the continent. And that appealed tremendously to the Wellings, who are transplants from Connecticut.

They not only wanted a home that had a coastal New England feeling—they also longed for a particular feature that's ubiquitous on the east coast, but which is uncommon in Orange County.

Designer Trish Steele carried over the neutral palette and the clean lines of the indoor furniture to the outdoor chairs and tables.

The symmetrical living and dining rooms are among the many spaces for entertaining. The Wellings wanted architectural details borrowed from New England coastal homes but translated into the OC lifestyle.



TOUR IT

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CORONA DEL MAR HOME TOUR ■ The Welling residence was one of the highlights of the Corona del Mar Home Tour last year, arguably the crown jewel of Orange County's fall home tours. View other spectacular coastal residences at this year's tour on Oct. 27. Tickets cost \$60 each and include the tour of eight homes, breakfast, lunch and a cocktail reception. Call or visit the site for reservations or for more information. Buses for small groups are available for \$30 per person. 949.717.7697 ■ cdmhometour.net



Ocean-inspired blues against deep browns give an earth-meets-sky flavor to the master bedroom.

"When they built their first home next door to their current home, they hadn't put a basement in because it was right before basements became popular in the Port streets," says Steele. "Being east coast people, they were accustomed to having a basement."

They also wanted a lot of low-key but stylish casual spaces to host gatherings with friends and give their three young boys room to roam.

"Lauri lets her boys ride their trikes throughout the house," Steele quips.

Formal was out of the question.

"We took a no-fuss approach," Steele says.

The Welling residence was among the crowd favorites at the Corona del Mar home tour last year, arguably the crown jewel of Orange County's fall home tours.

"Glenn and Lauri have a very active set of kids. Their older boy is a skateboarder and very outdoorsy, and the twins, who have turned four, are energetic and need room to play. We had to make the home boy-proof but fun."

Nowhere is that more apparent than in the basement, which is home to a media room, a wine cellar housing 3,500 bottles and a wide open play room big enough for a ride-on toddler train and its tracks.

LIVING SPACES

What's immediately striking about the Welling house is how many spaces there are designed for sitting, dining and entertaining. The back porch alone boasts three sitting areas as well as an adjacent full sports bar (invitations to the Wellings' Superbowl parties are highly coveted and there are plenty of flat screens for viewing the action).

And while most of the house conveys a mellow atmosphere, there are touches of the whimsical or unexpected here and there.

Scrabble, a game that the Wellings love, became a motif in the twins' room. Here, Steele used oversized Scrabble tiles to spell out the boys' names above their headboards.

In the powder room, there's a thick glass

custom counter atop a chest of drawers with a bold black and ivory giant honeycomb pattern to create a statement-making vanity.

"Lauri and I hunted for months to find the right piece, and we finally did, in Los Angeles," Steele says.

STAY AT HOME FAMILY

How to tie together all 7,000 square feet of house?

Steele chose earthy colors against crisp whites throughout the house, from sand on the dining chairs and living room sofas to caramel for the sectional in the family room and chocolate in the media room.

She added flashes of color—blue and orange—on accent pieces such as pillows, ottomans and on the art for the walls.

As a result, the rooms feel quite warm and intimate, so much so that since the house was completed, the Wellings have preferred to stay at home and invite friends to come and visit, Steele says.

There's a telling sign of just how much the Wellings have thought about how they and their kids live and how well Steele has fulfilled the homeowners' wishes: on the second floor, built-in bunk beds in an alcove look ready for play and kids' sleepovers—and for the many fun childhood memories for which the house certainly was designed and made.