

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

Coastal

SAN DIEGO HOMES

SOPHISTICATED AND SIMPLE

ARCHITECTS ADAPT HOME TO FIT FAMILY'S NEEDS

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 2011

ROOMS TO GROW

MARSTON HILLS HOME CHANGES TO ACCOMMODATE FAMILY'S NEEDS

MARTINA SCHIMITSCHEK

SPECIAL TO THE U-T

Laurie and Robert Davis' Marston Hills home is as dynamic as their family.

As the couple and their two daughters grow and change, so does the house.

When Robert took up piano, the Davises added a music room. The freestanding room, with extra insulation to provide a sound barrier, was converted from an outdoor room they called "the California room."

When the daughters, Maddie, 14, and Lucie, 11, reached an age where they didn't want to share a room, the couple split the space in half, giving each child her own smaller room. Each room includes a loft accessed by a spiral staircase.

When the girls needed more space for homework and projects, the Davises converted the guest room into a project room, adding workspace, cabinets and counters.

Adapting their home to fit their changing lifestyle seems natural to the couple. The Davises are both architects, working together at



Living and dining areas of Robert and Laurie Davis' contemporary Marston Hills home blend seamlessly. The stairs provide a focal point. "I like that they aren't hidden," Laurie Davis said. "It makes the transition apparent, which feels nice."

DAVID HEWITT/ANNE GARRISON

SEE **MARSTON HILLS** • 6

COASTAL SAN DIEGO HOMES



PRESERVING THE PAST

Mission Hills Spanish revival home shines as historic gem.

PAGE 10

'80S UPDATE

Natural colors and materials replace pink and floral décor in Olivenhain remodel.

PAGE 15

PLANNING AHEAD

Couple revamps exterior of Del Mar mid-century home for easier access.

PAGE 20

STAFF

EDITORIAL

Martina Schimitschek
Contributing Editor

Gerald McClard
Photo Editor

Sophy Chaffee
Valerie Lemke
Christy Scannell
Martina Schimitschek
Contributing Writers

Rose Wojnar
Contributing Copy Editor
Eduardo Contreras
Photographer

ADVERTISING

Carla Royter
Classified Sales Manager
(619) 293-1478



ON THE COVER

Photo by David Hewitt and Anne Garrison • Hewitt/Garrison Architectural Photography

The San Diego Union-Tribune, P.O. Box 120191, San Diego, CA 92112-0191 © 2011

Marston Hills

CONTINUED FROM 4

the firm Davis Davis Architects. They designed and built the 3,000-square-foot home from the ground up.

The couple found the lot 10 years ago after looking for a house in Mission Hills. There, the houses were either too small or too expensive.

"It was incredible to find a piece of property like that in this neighborhood," Laurie Davis said. She said the land, in the Marston Hills neighborhood of Hillcrest, had never been developed.

The 10,500-square-foot lot had only one small duplex above a five-car garage along the back of the property. The Davises gutted the duplex to make one larger apartment. They lived there while building the house and now rent the apartment out.

They built the narrow, 18-foot-wide, two-story home on the left border of the property, keeping the three mature pecan trees that were growing on the lot. Sophisticated and simple, the home opens toward the other side of the lot, embracing the outdoors with windows, doors and glass.

Building a long, slender house along one side of the property was the only thing that made sense for privacy, Davis said. A 20-foot-tall wall of bamboo shields the property from the neighbors. A small library, which juts out 10 feet from the living room, helps block out the street. And the music room creates a privacy barrier between the home and the apartment.

The site was so well planned out that there is no need for window coverings in the home's public areas.

The living room windows that face the streets are frosted halfway up as are the upstairs windows facing the building next door.

"We were trying to create an oasis in an urban area," she said. "We frosted the windows upstairs so you won't see the (neighbor's) roof. That would destroy the illusion."

Because the top of the music room is also visible from the second floor, it has a green roof. The rooftop plants, which sit in about 3 inches of soil, are watered with an automatic sprinkler.

The interior is open, comfortable and functional. Built-in benches and bookcases, an office with a raised built-in bunk for guests, sliding shoji doors to close off the project room and a tub big enough for soaking are all sensible and stylish.

"I really like to keep things simple and uncluttered," Davis said. To that end, the family room



A freestanding music room, above, was added to the home in 2009. The room has extra insulation as well as curtains for soundproofing. A combination of cedar and stucco, below left, adds interest to the 75-by-18-foot exterior. The wood ceiling above the dining table, below right, adds a cozy feel to the space. DAVID HEWITT/ANNE GARRISON PHOTOS



SEE MARSTON HILLS • 8



**Cutter & Chaco
Clotfelter**
Realtors, Broker, MBA
North County's Leading
Buyers Agents
No One Knows It Better
858-342-3050
www.clotfelterhomes.com

Del Mar Dreaming \$2,650,000



One-of-a-kind oceanview collectable aimed at the sun and located just a kiss away from the sea. Renewable & sustainable finishes throughout the remarkable interior. Wake up to commanding ocean views & pounding surf ... there is no better way to start your day!

Rancho Santa Fe Understated Elegance \$2,650,000

If there is one home & property that reflect the covenant lifestyle-this is it! A+ westside flat & usable lot with commanding 180° views. Charming historic single-level ranch home fully remodeled with exquisite outdoor living room & kitchen. Don't miss the family orchard, one of the oldest Brazilian pepper trees in San Diego County & room for you & your families dreams.



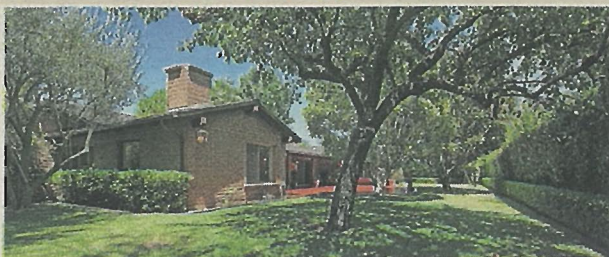
Carmel Valley in the Ranch \$1,295,000



Stunning southwest-facing two-story home with absolute privacy and fantastic views. This cul-de-sac hilltop residence is PERFECT for you or your kids weekend adventures with a nearby sparkling community pool, gated entrance and nature trails right outside your door. 4 beds, 3 baths, 3,200sf. Master bedroom down. Huge low-maintenance yard.

Rancho Santa Fe Retreat \$1,195,000

Come experience the sunshine & verdant luxury of space & privacy in the Ranch. This single-level adobe home epitomizes "good bones." Located steps from the village with raised beam ceilings & rustic adobe walls. Golf membership available. Zoned for two lots. Hurry!



Built-in shelving in the kitchen, above, and throughout the home keeps things organized. The television in the family area is tucked inside a storage wall. Below, shoji screens close off the project room. ROBERT DAVIS

Marston Hills

CONTINUED FROM 6

and dining room each have a storage wall to keep everything from the television to wine glasses out of sight while adding the warmth of Douglas-fir panels. A lowered Douglas-fir ceiling in the dining area helps define the space while making it an intimate place to gather. "It's sort of like a lid over our heads," she quipped.

Light maple-wood floors contrast with the richness of the Douglas fir. The blemishes of the second-grade maple, which is usually used for bowling alleys and gyms, add character to the wood, Davis said. Brazilian cherry wood on the stairs make them pop against the light floor.

"The Brazilian cherry is really hard and doesn't scratch," Davis said. "But I chose it for the red color. The different woods complement each other, as long as you don't overdo it."

The stairs, which run along the wall of windows facing the garden, are one of Davis' favorite features. "I like that they aren't hidden," she said. "It makes the transition apparent, which feels nice."

Beyond the stairs, an informal dining area with a seating nook sits across from the kitchen. "I love having a table in the kitchen. I like to cook and want people to hang out while I'm cooking," Davis said.

The exterior is a combination of stucco and cedar. The entire west side is stucco for insulation and to reflect the warm afternoon sun.



DAVID HEWITT/ANNE GARRISON

The east side combines the materials with the openness of glass, distributing "lightness and weight," Davis said. "I wanted balance in the building."

"You try to use materials decisively in areas where you think they are going to pay off," she said.

The Davis home, which was completed in 2002, was a collaboration between the married architects.

"We've worked together for 20 years. We have different talents, so we don't stand in each other's shadows," Davis said.

Martina Schimitschek can be reached at utcoastal@gmail.com.



WILLIS ALLEN
REAL ESTATE

**LUXURY
PORTFOLIO**
INTERNATIONAL

DRE #s 01247852/01304520