



**shelter**  
■ INTERIOR DESIGN

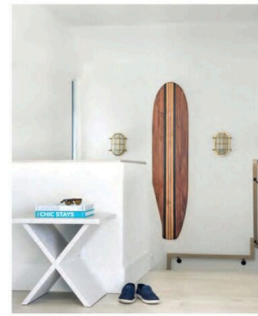


**16** Chris Taylor, a Chicago-based professional, snagged the Laguna Beach bungalow in 2016, romanced by its ocean views and beach access. The cottage's materials and layout were dated, but Chris, an avid real estate investor, saw great potential. The design challenge ahead of him was how to optimize the structure's modest 1,500 square feet. Local architect James Ward Henry II handled the city's rigorous approval processes, but Chris turned to his sister, Chicago-based interior designer Kate Taylor, to tackle the design plans, problem-solve the details, and create a comprehensive style. The new owner envisioned something light and bright, with subtle beach vibes. He also wanted it to be super livable so that his nephews and nieces, including Kate's own daughter, four-year-old Ruby, could comfortably visit and feel right at home. "We'd already done three projects together; this was our fourth," says Kate of the ongoing partnership with her brother. "He's a great client, actually," she adds. "He doesn't complicate things or need a hundred different selections. He has opinions but is open to our suggestions and really trusts us." While the cottage's first floor dates back to the 1940s, its second floor was added during a whole-house update in the 1990s. Without any original features remaining—the '90s redo likely eliminated them—everyone



agreed on a full gut involving new plumbing, doors, windows, and appliances. Modernizing the layout began by opening up the previously enclosed galley kitchen. Details like classic white subway tile and extra-thick Carrara marble countertops keep the redone space feeling tidy and timeless. Kate snuck in extra counter seating—two swivel stools from Arteriors—along a wraparound bank of cabinets extending off the range. For the dining area, Kate partnered a Room & Board table with a built-in banquette, a cottage detail that helps save on space. The low-profile dining chairs from Design Within Reach are clean-lined and contemporary. If the weather is too nice to eat inside, there's a café-style dining set from Serena & Lily tucked neatly against the house on the outdoor patio. "Scale was super important on this project," the designer explains. "It's always important, but particularly with limited square footage. We couldn't fudge even a couple of inches. We had to be exact." Another practical, guest-friendly selection is the living room's sleeper sofa by Room & Board. In the same volume, Kate eked out just enough space for a second seating area: a cozy reading nook with two cushy Lawson Fenning chairs, nestled into the corner nearest the view. In the front entry, an oversized West Elm mirror and table lamps from Lamps Plus

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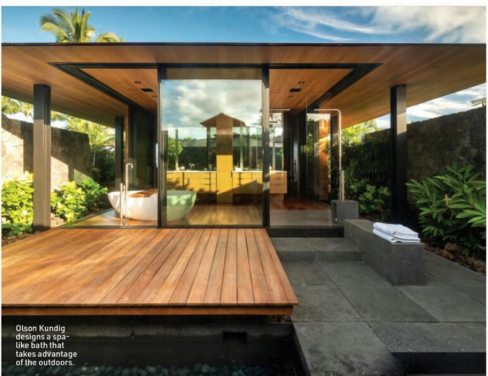
**18** partnered with a splurge-worthy console from 1st Dibs typifies the designer's high-low approach. "This is a second home and we wanted to be price conscious without sacrificing style," Kate explains. Drawing from the landscape's hues, she introduced two accent colors into the bungalow's neutral palette. Mustard—on the C&C Milano throw pillows and custom poufs by Loro Piana Interiors (under the entry console)—lends earthy warmth. A cheery robin's egg blue graces the Dutch doors and also pops in the contemporary artwork, including the kitchen's "Last Resort" by Glenn Ness and the bunk room's Volkswagen bus painting by Jason Kowalski. The redone master suite takes up the entire second floor. A cathedral ceiling and private balcony together make the master bedroom feel more expansive. "The room is mostly gray with hints of blue, but we included a lot of great textures, like the woven jayson Home bench and the subtly patterned Tufenkian wool rug," says Kate. "At night, you can leave the big sliding doors open and fall asleep listening to the ocean," she continues of the bedroom's best feature. Carrara marble tile lines the new master bath. "We covered the whole room in tile," Kate notes, "which was a practical decision because of the shower but also makes the room



to Laguna's surfing culture, including a longboard art piece installed on the stairway and a Studio Four NYC surfboard wallpaper on the bunkroom's ceiling. On cooler nights, Chris is glad for the cottage's two gas fireplaces in the living room and master bedroom. And he often works on his second-floor balcony. But his favorite feature, by far, is the outdoor shower. "It's used all the time. Even Ruby loves it," Kate admits with a laugh. "When you're here, you're just steps from the beach and it's an easy walk to all the restaurants and shops in downtown Laguna," the designer summarizes. "It's the perfect little cottage in the perfect location. It's just a fantastic place to live." \*  
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**lifestyle**  
■ BATHROOM TRENDS



**38** **ULTRA-LUXE** BATHROOMS MOVE BEYOND SIMPLY A PLACE TO BATHE, TO SPACES FOR HEALING AND WELLNESS. BY NANCY A. RUBLE

Sybaritic and serene, luxury bathrooms are wholeheartedly embracing all the aesthetic and health-enhancing amenities and accoutrements of spas at five-star resorts. "Clients want to capture the emotions of healthy beach life and evoke the memories of vacations by the sea," says Jamie Drake, a principal of the New York City-based design firm Drake/Anderson. "They want natural light and air and unique materials." Barclay Butera, whose eponymous design firm is based in Newport Beach, California, adds that baths are seen as "the perfect sanctuary to wind down after a hectic day" because "quarantine and stay-at-home situations have people craving a new look for their homes after staring at the same walls for months. And the bathroom is one place where you can infuse a little much-needed color, fun and whimsy." Indeed, bathrooms have become so important, says Kate Taylor, whose namesake design studio is based in Chicago,

lots of edge space for candles, a glass of wine and place to set down a good book." Colors set the tone for a tranquil and sedate oasis. "The big trend right now, with New Yorkers and Californians coming to Miami and South Florida because of COVID-19," says Davis, "is the restful palette—they don't want a lot of pattern. Gray is popular right now and can be mixed with anything." His firm recently created a calming color scheme for a 10,000-square-foot penthouse in Miami Beach's chic South Beach neighborhood. "It's on the ocean and has a 10,000-square-foot wraparound rooftop," Davis says. "There are 360-degree views. The owners wanted neutral grays, whites and beiges so the view can be the star. We used some green and blue accents to emphasize those colors in the water." Caleb Anderson, a co-founder of Drake/Anderson, says that his coastal clients tend to favor cool, fresh colors that evoke the sand, surf, sky, and vegetation. For one main bath, Drake/Anderson designed a backlit floating wall of highly figured Coastal Dream onyx and juxtaposed it with a jewel-like blue-green glass mosaic wall that houses the shower fixtures.

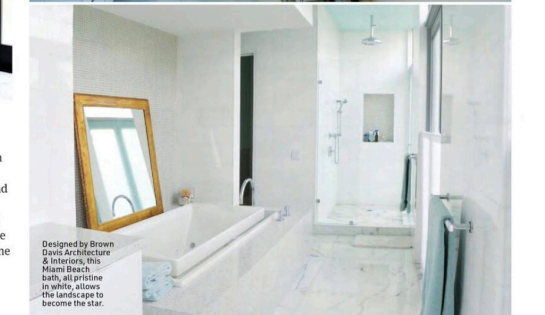


Barclay Butera uses his go-to colors, blue and white, in this California bathroom. Elegantly displayed seashells give it an at-the-beach feel.

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Health and wellness are being evoked with natural materials—wide-plank floors in neutral, light colors and natural stone. "There are some amazing stone slabs, and there are new finishes like flamed and leather," Davis says. "There are new cuts of granite that don't look like granite. Quartzite is beautiful and durable. Book-matched stone is also popular." In a recent Miami Beach remodel, for instance, Brown Davis clad the floors and walls with marble. High-end faucets and fittings, special sinks, specialty lighting, heated towel racks, expansive countertop and shower shelving and accessories such as luxury linens and rugs, are carefully curated to enhance the overall aesthetic. "We use a lot of wallpapers with natural materials like raffia in sophisticated weaves that include metals," Davis says. Butera, who says wallpaper sets the mood, uses it in almost every bathroom he designs. "There are fantastic coastal motifs available, and I also adore using classic stripes and grass cloth." In a powder room with colorful cabinetry, Butera selected a "snappy" matching red nautical-motif paper in and enhanced the theme with a ship's light and a porthole mirror. "They were the perfect accent for that 'anchors aweigh!' vibe," he says.



Taylor favors "fun walkcovering—some more beachy than others." In one chic and jewel-like coastal bath, she chose a textural navy seagrass walkcovering, and in another she papered the walls with an exuberant palm-leaf design. Powder rooms and outdoor showers also are getting the spa treatment. "Formal powder rooms tend to be fun, whimsical and exotic and have a lot of personality," Davis says. Drake/Anderson turned an outdoor shower into a work of art with a custom glass-mosaic mural that depicts the surrounding landscape. All in all, Drake says, "it's less about the amount of time spent in the bathrooms; it's more about the quality of time and experience. The allusion of relaxation creates a more chill mentality." \*  
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