

— TRUE VIEW —

Beauty outdoors, bright airiness indoors

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From the elegant but comfortable outdoor living space, the owners of this West Vancouver home enjoy a spectacular view that stretches from Mount Baker to Vancouver Island.

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ONLY THE EAGLES THAT SOAR past this elegant West Vancouver home could enjoy a more spectacular view. From their vantage point halfway up the mountainside, the inhabitants are treated to a panorama that sweeps from the luminescent peak of Mount Baker in the east to the plunging cliffs of Lighthouse Park in the west, with city, ocean, islands and endless forest below. “It’s the raw coastline,” says one of the homeowners. “Those views are very rare.”

The view may be impressive, but the aging single-storey rancher that was on the property when the owners bought it was not. They determined to replace it with a building that truly celebrated the surrounding natural beauty. And that’s just what residential designer Craig Chevalier and interior designer Claudia Leccacorvi have produced: a modern and airy home that is both a showcase for entertaining and a liveable family space. ☞



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Rather than the cosy, rustic Craftsman style so typical of coastal architecture, Chevalier incorporated strong clean lines, cool natural materials and tall floor-to-ceiling windows that bring the view into sharp focus. He also chose an angle for the house that would offer the best of that view, and even added a window so that Mount Baker would, as the owner says, be framed “like a picture.”

When Leccacorvi came on board, she knew the home’s 14-foot-high ceilings,

7,000- square-foot floor plan, four bedrooms and endless windows would present both exciting opportunities and unique challenges. “One of the biggest challenges in terms of doing the interiors is making these really big spaces feel comfortable,” she says. “It really is that boldness of how you furnish an area so it feels homey and not like a lobby.”

It’s the contrast of grand, dramatic pieces and subtle details that makes it work, right from the minute you walk through the tall

front door that opens onto a foyer filled with light. Sunlight streams from skylights overhead, while whimsical David Trubridge light fixtures cast geometric patterns on the shimmering white Indiana limestone walls. 

The entranceway is filled with light streaming from the surrounding windows, the skylights above and the David Trubridge light fixtures that create a dappled effect on the Indiana limestone walls.



The living room is coolly elegant with the clean Italian lines of the modular sofa and the classic red Metropolitan chair. Floor-to-ceiling windows bring the outdoors in, an effect echoed in the Martha Sturdy charred cedar sculpture in one corner. Knitted pouffes in front of the limestone fireplace add a whimsical and cosy touch.

The foyer opens onto a living space designed around the magnificent view. In the living area, outdoors meets indoors. Windows soar from floor to ceiling, taking in the surrounding forest, sky and coastline. A clean-lined grey Italian modular sofa creates a gathering space around a limestone fireplace. Grey poufs are dotted around like beach pebbles. Orange-red cushions and a Metropolitan chair add warm shots of colour. “We have some design classics

that honestly are timeless – not trend-setting, but timeless,” Leccacorvi says.

In the dining area, a light fixture by Vancouver’s Bocci Design floats like a cloud of bubbles above the American walnut dining table by Niels Bendtsen, owner of Vancouver’s Inform Interiors. “It’s such a great table because it has some beautiful movement in the wood,” says Leccacorvi. “Everything is kind of natural, organic.”



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(Left) The office, tucked behind a floor-to-ceiling smoked glass door, enjoys unbeatable views and quirky works of art such as Andre Petterson's cascading vintage typewriters.
(Centre) The clean-lined, functional kitchen with its massive island is the heart of the house, and an ideal setup for casual home entertaining.



The huge island in the cool, minimalistic kitchen becomes a natural hub for entertaining. “This kitchen is fantastic just because the island is so gigantic,” Leccacorvi says. “The kitchen’s great and it’s totally functional.”

Adding a distinctive and at times quirky personality to all this cool elegance is the collection of artwork, much of it by local artists: Martha Sturdy’s sculpture of freestanding charred cedar logs in the living room; Anthony

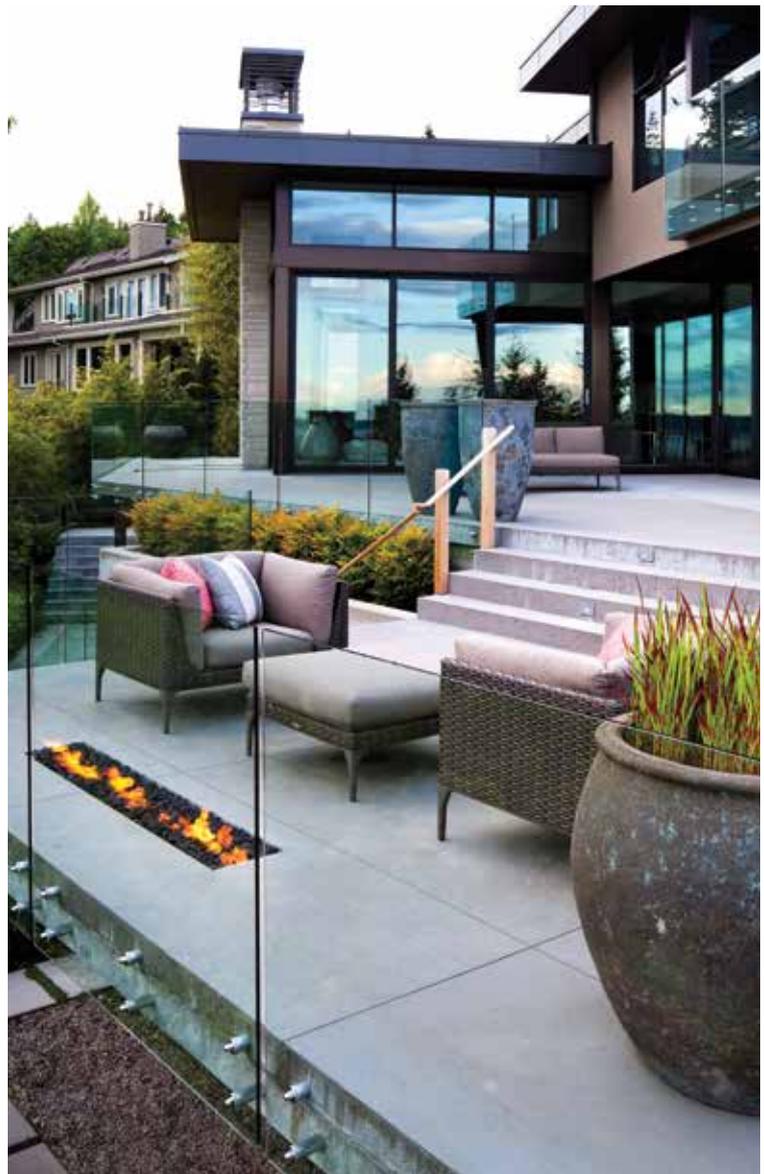
Redpath’s photos of Long Beach in a hallway; Andre Petterson’s image of cascading vintage typewriters in the office; the old sign that adds a cheerful note to the media room downstairs.

Throughout the house, dark and light create lines that flow from room to room as the deep tones of the millwork anchor the brightness coming off the pale floors and white walls. “You wouldn’t believe, we went through 20 shades of white before we found the right one,” says

Leccacorvi. The light drenching the house made things challenging. As the owner points out, “You have light here from early morning to sunset.”

That light fills the four bedrooms upstairs, too, including the master bedroom, which features an elegant ensuite in the softest of greys with a silvery marble floor and feature wall. 

Big weatherworn pots add a rustic touch that softens the modern lines of the home’s exterior.







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Downstairs are the media room, gym and a kids' room tucked away behind a sliding barn door. "This is where the fun all happens," Leccacorvi says. "It's totally designed to be that place where you can lie back and relax." The media room features a pool table, a fireplace, a screen that descends from the ceiling and a cosy sofa perfect for relaxing with a favourite movie. A built-in kitchen and bar allow for casual entertaining.

A transition room with a steam shower and changing space leads to the infinity pool, hot tub and outdoor living room with its giant flat-screen tv. It's a favourite feature for the owners' 10-year-old son. "Oh, he loves it," says the owner. "He can be in the pool watching the hockey game."

The outdoor space is also terrific for entertaining, with comfy sofas, fire pits and surrounding gardens. "And it's all year round," the owner says. "We had our Christmas party out here."

Adds Leccacorvi, "It's such a perfect quality of function, and it's perfect for West Coast weather."

Best of all, it offers the ideal vantage point for taking in all the outdoor beauty. Leccacorvi gazes out at the sailboats drifting under the Lion's Gate Bridge spanning the inlet below that swath of nature. "It's an epic view." ❦

(Opposite) Downstairs, the media room is a cosy place to watch a movie, enjoy a drink or play a game of pool.

