

southbay



Ocean As Playground

THE DREAMERS

Written by

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With extraordinary beach views from almost every level of their new home on The Strand, the Kernochan family is constantly enticed to go outside and play. “This house has changed our lives,” exclaims Kathy Kernochan. From paddleboarding to beach volleyball to skateboarding on The Strand, this family spends part of every day enjoying an active outdoor life afforded by living at the beach. “When we married, Jeff always said we’d live on The Strand one day, but I wasn’t sure we could ever afford it,” notes Kathy. However, they poured themselves into their careers and found that years of hard work had paid large dividends. They decided to tear down an original beachfront house and build the home of their dreams.

On a ski holiday in Aspen, Kathy and Jeff drew their ideal house on cocktail napkins. Architect Mark Trotter and technical construction expert and architect Larry Peha worked together to make their cocktail napkin dreams a reality.

Josette Murphy of About Space Studio helped with space planning for the new house while Design Support created custom cabinetry. With all of the expert guidance, the Kernochans remained involved in every step of the project.

“It was really important to us that we all be invested in this house,” says Kathy. With that dictate, she required her children, Connor and Katrina, to create art for their rooms. An active painter, Kathy painted large canvases for both the guest bedroom and the family room. When she couldn’t find specific pieces in the market, such as the pendant lights hanging over the kitchen island, she made them herself.

Some of the most creative features of the house include references to the Kernochans’ active lifestyle. In the below-ground entertainment room, a beautiful surfboard has been converted into a subtle pendant light. Connor created a fantastic collage referencing the professional sports of Southern California, while his Lionel trains run along a ceiling mounted track above the seating area. Skateboards are hung in a sculptural stack on the stair landing—not only a practical storage solution for the abundant skateboards but also a visual tower of art.



“I like texture,” notes Kathy, so throughout the house, beautiful woods, stone and tiles meld together in a muted, neutral color palette that resonates understated richness. Natural fabrics such as linen and cotton grace the furnishings.

The true treasures of this house are the porches that face the ocean. The family room, living room and master bedroom each have a terrace that runs the width of the house. Whether sinking into a chair with a good book or entertaining large groups of friends, the Kernochans live with the doors open, and the porches are the favorite gathering spot.

Tucked out of view is a rooftop respite, where the Kernochans relax nightly in the Jacuzzi while watching the sun set on the ocean. With a grill, putting green and lounge chairs, it’s a private refuge of fun with a sublime view.

Every weekend finds the Kernochan family in and around the ocean. Jeff has become obsessed with the beach volleyball court just steps from his house, while the whole family is active on paddleboards.

“We recently returned from vacation in Mexico, where it rained every afternoon,” says Kathy. “We realized that our beachfront home is better than any destination, so now we’re homebodies on our own magnificent beach.”