

INTERIOR DESIGN / HEIDI BONESTEEL,  
MICHELE TROUT AND JILL HALL, BONESTEEL TROUT HALL  
HOME BUILDER / MITCHELL DEAN COLLINS,  
MITCHELL DEAN COLLINS CONSTRUCTION  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE / PETER EBERHARD, SCAPE



# NEW BEGINNINGS

A PACIFIC PALISADES HOME IS REMODELED TO EMBRACE THE LIGHT AND A FAMILY'S NEXT CHAPTER.

WRITTEN BY MARY JO BOWLING / PHOTOGRAPHY BY KARYN MILLET



**Y**ears before she and her partners Michele Trout and Jill Hall completed the dramatic transformation of this Pacific Palisades home, designer Heidi Bonesteel would attend gatherings there. “We are friends with the owners—our kids went to school together,” shares Bonesteel. Little did she expect that the team would eventually have a chance to put their own stamp on the residence. In fact, it looked like the couple would be decamping to Santa Barbara for the foreseeable future. “They had no intention of returning, but they missed the energy of Los Angeles, so they decided to come back to this home, which they had never sold,” Bonesteel says.

But things had changed for the family, and they wanted a dwelling that reflected their new aesthetic and lifestyle. “The homeowners bought the house in the 1990s and raised their family here,” says Trout. “With their children away at school, they wanted to shift from a cozy home for a young family to something more sophisticated and geared toward entertaining.”

To that end, the project became all about the flow and embracing a light atmosphere. “Early on, the clients told us that no one was using the living room when they entertained,” says Trout. “By rethinking the rooms and creating a better flow, we were able to give them a more accessible and usable space—and a living room that’s lived in.” They worked with general contractor Mitchell Dean Collins to open up the compartmentalized areas—the living room, family room, dining room and kitchen—and to put a bar between the family room and dining room. “We removed all of the casements and made the doors higher and wider, too” explains Trout. “Not only does it improve the flow, it also allows the spaces to share the light.”

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The contrast between the original interiors and the remodeled rooms could be characterized as the difference between night and day. “Before, the inside of the house felt dark and heavy,” says Bonesteel. “It was lovely, but it had a lot of hefty wood beams and moldings that had become dated. The owners wanted something fresh and modern, an almost Scandinavian look.”

While pale colors and light woods rule on the inside, another transformation was occurring on the outside of the house, where the designers selected a charcoal gray color for a contemporary note of gravitas. The darker hue replaced a palette of chocolate brown and white and is complemented by a black metal roof and windows. “The amount of ‘oomph’ the paint provides is mind blowing,” notes Bonesteel.

That color inspired gardens by landscape designer Peter Eberhard that are tightly knit to the interior and include an outdoor living room, a fire pit lounge area and bubbling fountains. “The exterior color drove the muted plant palette of subtle greens and grays with touches of blue,” he says of the mix comprising hydrangeas, salvias and Westringias, among others. “The house opens itself to the outside, and the landscape uses a vocabulary similar to the interior.”

Inside, those dark woods and finishes are replaced by white walls, complex textures and light woods. “The beautiful oak floor we selected was the jumping-off point for the interior,” says Bonesteel. “We carried it throughout, and then used the same oak for the exterior doors and gates.”

Perhaps the space that best encapsulates the home’s new dynamic is the dining room. “This was a very formal room,” says Trout. “It had a long table that was surrounded by chairs covered with cowhide. The clients wanted something that would work for a crowd but would also feel comfortable for just the two of them.” The answer was to reinvent the room with a pair of custom-designed tables that span the width of the room and, though they can be pushed together for a lot of guests, they are usually separated to make two cozy dining spots. A tailored banquette along the wall defines the space. In front of the dining area, a quartet of armchairs surrounds a circular ottoman, making a natural spot to relax pre- or post-dinner with a drink from the adjacent bar. “This is a fun couple—and cocktail hour is not to be missed,” says Bonesteel.

Shortly after the designers finished the home, they were invited to a party and got to see their handiwork in action. “About 80 people hung out outside until late, and then we went inside and mingled in the living and dining spaces until early morning,” says Trout. For the team, this was the affirmation that they had successfully ushered the home into the family’s next phase. “There is so much love and family history here,” says Bonesteel. “Now, the owners are ready to make more good memories in the years to come.” ■



In the entry of this Los Angeles home—reimagined by designers Heidi Bonesteel, Michele Trout and Jill Hall—a grass-cloth wallcovering and a striped stair runner by Elizabeth Eakins add a character-rich backdrop for a leather bench and a hanging Paul Ferrante light fixture.

The living room, inspired by the lobby at Aspen's Hotel Jerome, is outfitted with small seating arrangements to accommodate gatherings of all sizes. Here, two Harry Bertoia for Knoll chairs perch by the fireplace while Ligne Roset chairs face the existing sofa. The Gallotti & Radice floor lamp is from Mass Beverly, and the painting is by Caio Fonseca.





**Opposite:** In the breakfast room, Hollywood at Home's How To Marry A Millionaire chairs—upholstered in Christopher Farr Cloth fabric from Thomas Lavin—surround the owners' existing dining table. A geometric fixture by The Urban Electric Co., a rug from Silk Road Rug and the homeowners' bright equestrian artwork round out the space.

**Below:** The same Hollywood at Home chairs appear again in the kitchen—this time as counter stools with dark woven seats and backs. A row of brass-accented pendants by The Urban Electric Co. illuminate the island.





**This page:** The once traditional dining room was revamped with casual entertaining in mind. A pair of custom tables can be used individually or pushed together for a crowd. Seating is provided by a bespoke banquette and custom chairs by Quintus. After dinner, guests can relax with a cocktail on the Hélène Aumont chairs from Una Malan.

**Opposite:** Landscape designer Peter Eberhard used the moody color of the house as the jumping-off point for the garden palette, choosing the plants to complement the shade. The gray-toned lounge chairs by Dedon surrounding the fire pit do the same.

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**Above:** A Christopher Farr Cloth wallcovering brings the large master suite into a cozier scale. Enhancing the feeling is a pair of plush armchairs covered in Holly Hunt fabric. The fireplace surround and built-in shelving sport a custom stain to match the wallpaper.

**Right:** In collaboration with Quintus, the designers created the four-poster bed with a headboard in a Fortuny fabric. The bed linens are in C&C Milano textiles sourced through Thomas Lavin. A sofa in a blush-colored Pierre Frey fabric from Kneeder-Fauchère makes a rosy statement in the blue and white master suite.

