

MODERN MID-CENTURY BEACH HOUSE

Yet another unbelievable transformation by Design/Build expert, Greg Abramowitz, owner of Unique Environments!

This home was originally built in 1990 in the Mid-Century Modern Revival style. Greg stayed true to the Mid-Century Modern Style, but transformed it with his unique, modern flair. The house now has fantastic color hues with incredible textures all over the canvas. It's like a new house.

High above the stairwell, a giant glowing mobile greets each visitor. The dramatic, universally loved, signature piece of the project is the Giant Sphere Lights. The largest being a full meter across (39" diameter).



Tongue and groove Spruce ceilings were installed with the texture side exposed. A very light (almost white) first coat of stain was followed by a custom blended driftwood color stain, and finally dry-brushed with the lightest color drawn from the wood floors. While intensive and time-consuming to install and finish, this technique created the sophisticated finish you see.

A new, very contemporary, 'sputnik' style kinetic dining room chandelier has been installed. In fact, all of the lighting fixtures throughout the house have been replaced with new contemporary fixtures. Even the can lights have been replaced with LEDs.

The roof beams were sandblasted, and a sophisticated finish applied to them as well. The beams were stained grey then stained with a custom blended driftwood color. Finally, to truly enhance the texture, the beams were dry-brushed on



all the ridges and high spots with the lightest color. The exposed interior structural iron brackets have been bronze finished and antiqued. All the existing ceramic tile floors and carpeting upstairs have been removed and replaced with REAL hardwood, wide-plank floors.



Originally, there were two access doors from the house to the garage. Greg sealed the unnecessary door and changed the formerly wasted space into a fabulous new wine cellar. The new cellar holds 414 bottles in rack storage, and an additional 424 bottles in bin storage - creating a maximum capacity of 838 bottles. The bottles are beautifully displayed and dramatically backlit using an antique copper metallic wall finished with gold metallic highlights. The cellar has a sliced pebble stone floor in the same color palette as the adjacent new wood floors. Edgy, contemporary lighting fixtures flank the new glass door for a brighter look when reading wine labels at night. The wine cellar is fully climate controlled, its walls sealed with insulation & a vapor barrier, and sealed with an 8-foot tall, weatherstripped, dual paned, French door.

While installing the vapor barrier for the new wine cellar, Greg removed the drywall between the pantry and the new wine cellar location and discovered a hidden unused space. That empty space was incorporated into the new larger pantry. The finished floor of the original pantry was just 6-1/2 square feet.

The new pantry has a finished floor area of 13-1/4 square feet thereby doubling the size of the pantry! In addition to all the original storage, the new pantry incorporates a floor to ceiling soup rack, a floor to ceiling spice rack, new additional shelving and a space to store mops and brooms. The pantry cabinetry has been finished to match the kitchen cabinets.

The actual layout of the kitchen was fine as is, so Greg kept most of the existing kitchen cabinets. He enlarged the oven cabinet to accommodate a 27-inch microwave oven combination and wrapped the cabinetry around the corner to create a column detail at the corner of the room. He then matched that detail on the other side and re-built the refrigerator cabinet likewise. All new stainless-steel appliances have been installed including a new GE Monogram refrigerator, a new Viking range, new GE oven microwave combo, new quiet Bosch dishwasher, new kitchen sink, new kitchen sink fixture, and a new contemporary overhead glass and stainless-steel stove hood.



To bring the dated kitchen into the modern era, Greg installed lighted display cabinets above all the existing wall cabinets, and installed architectural panels spanning the areas in between these new upper cabinets above the sink and above the entry door. New nautical ceiling fans and an outdoor style, custom finished, fixture above the sink has been installed. Carrera marble hand cut into in a subway tile pattern has been installed on the back splashes. Dark gray honed granite was installed around the perimeter of the kitchen,

and a dramatic piece of hard Quartzsite installed on the island. The quartzite is a natural stone that is 4 times harder than granite. New cabinet doors and drawer fronts have been installed throughout the kitchen with new door and drawer handles and knobs. The island has been modified with architectural side panels added. The corbels under the barstool counter have removed. A wonderful, soft, off-white cabinet finish was used around the perimeter of the kitchen with the



corners of the cabinets dry-brushed with a subtle touch of beige (from the floor color). A taupe glaze was

applied to the recesses and recessed corners. The island has been finished with a grey color pulled from the stone finishes in the room. The island received the same dry-brushed color on the corners as the perimeter cabinets.

The way the house was originally built, in the Living Room, the existing firebox was off center in the existing wall just enough to look like a mistake. To solve this, Greg installed the new tumbled El Dorado® Beach stone symmetrical on the firebox opening. This left an unfinished strip between the stone and the existing window. This space was then sheathed in vertical glass tiles reaching to the ceiling. The blue glass tile is accented from below with a dramatic, lighted, glowing, pedestal base. Greg took a negative design flaw and turned it into one of the favorite assets. The stone wall creates a centering mass for the large Great Room. The visual mass of the fireplace stone is then grounded by a new color-tinted, textured concrete hearth.



In the entry & stairwell, to break away from look of the 1980's, the interior glass block was sandblasted creating a more appealing, more contemporary, Sea-Glass appearance. Serving as a backdrop for the signature lights, large scale textured siding has been installed above the stairwell. The siding boards were carefully and artistically finished to bring out the texture. The colors are derived from the adjacent stonework around the fireplace. The stair rail has been modified to capture the mid-century modern style by incorporating a cast metal detail under the handrail. Deeply textured wood wall caps now don the stairwell. They have been antique finished to resemble the sandblasted beams above.





The new mirror is the signature piece of the powder room. To reward the curious, Greg duplicated the embossed details in the mirror by re-creating the details in the plaster wall. The textured plaster was then antiqued creating an effect similar to petroglyphs (rock carvings). A new powder room vanity with contemporary drawer and door handles has been installed. New lights and wainscot finish the marvelous décor.

Both the Family Room and the Living Room have been pre-wired for TV. The west wall of the Family room has a receptacle and conduit for TV, and the stonewall above the fireplace in the living room has been pre-wired for TV. One of the stones on the Living Room Fireplace is removable and is held in place with Velcro®. It hides a 110v receptacle and a built in HDMI cable that leads to the area under the lighted pedestal base.

Even the garage has been painted in the same color palette as the house. An electric vehicle charging station (220v receptacle) has been added (for charging Tesla's and other vehicles.)

OTHER NEW OR UPGRADED FEATURES INCLUDE:

- Modern Decora® style switches and receptacles;
- New baseboards installed throughout the upstairs;
- New door casings installed throughout the house;
- All sliding glass door rollers replaced with new rollers and the door locks changed (except for the doggie door slider which has a different lock mechanism);
- New Oil Rubbed Bronze door handles and hinges installed throughout the house;
- New soft close toilet seats have been installed on all toilets throughout the house;
- New thermostats installed on both levels of the home.

DOWNSTAIRS

Solid hardwood oak wood stair treads and risers were custom fabricated, textured, and finished to match the newly installed hardwood floors. The lower hallway and Master Bedroom have new wide plank real hardwood floors that match the upstairs. The other three bedrooms have new carpeting.



At the bottom of the stairs, a new Master Bedroom lobby has been created in the old closet location. Contemporary doors now lead into the master bedroom. The doors were installed and finished with Unique Environments signature Driftwood finish. The fireplace wall & surround in the Master Bedroom has been set in the same El Dorado® stone as the Living Room fireplace with a color tinted concrete hearth. An antiqued pedestal, complete with soffit and overhead can light, fill the gap between the sidewall and the stone fireplace making the

fireplace symmetrical on the firebox opening. Wavy blue vertical glass tile completes the space between the pedestal and the soffit complimented by the new blue glass pendant lights hanging above each nightstand. The original house had the Master Bathroom inside the Master Bedroom. A wall was built to not only separate the bedroom from the bathroom but add a walk-in closet with generous storage capacity.

The new Master Bathroom includes vanities with Crema Marfil Marble tops. The vanities and cabinetry have truly fantastic 'beachy' custom finish. The cabinets have new handles & knobs made from cut seashells. New wood siding with a custom stained finish has been installed on the wall behind the vanities. The Master Bathroom also has a new overhead shelf, new mirrors, new lights, a new make-up vanity, new robe closet, lighted niches, new linen cabinet, and a new iron towel rack between the



vanities. The bathroom and closet have new frosted glass French doors with Unique Environments signature driftwood finish.

The Laundry Room cabinets have been refinished, new hardware and crown molding installed. The Laundry Room has new countertops, a new sink and fixture.

The Hall Bathroom has new cabinet doors and drawers, new cabinet handles and a new electric heater.

To complete the transformation, the Hall Bathroom has new iron mirrors, wall sconces and wainscot detail and a new terracotta two-tone paint.



The color palette for the Black Bathroom was derived from the stunning new glass mosaic mirror hanging over the mirrored wall. The blue shade lighting fixture, the wall, the cabinet colors, and cabinet knobs all find their source in the mosaic mirror frame.



While the original chrome-nickel plumbing fixtures in the Black Bathroom remain, all the rest of the plumbing fixtures throughout the house have been replaced with new fixtures and all of the existing anodized gold aluminum frames on the showers and closet doors have been refinished in oil rubbed bronze.

EXTERIOR

A completely new color palette was implemented for the entire exterior.

The glass block was sandblasted to break away from the 1980's look and give the block a 'sea glass' effect.

The balconies and decks around both levels of the home have been completely repaired and re-surfaced. Where necessary, the plywood was removed, the joists were sistered; then, the plywood replaced. The decks were completely re-surfaced in a new color with the 7-step deck surfacing process and new deck drains installed. New deck flashing was installed as necessary to make the decks like new.

All the inboard rain gutters were replaced. At the lower fascia boards, the tile roof was removed, the roofing material was stripped, the plywood replaced, the roof re-roofed and the inboard rain gutters re-formed in those locations. The tile roof was then replaced and any broken tiles on the roof replaced. A new vent roof jack was installed for the new kitchen hood. The rain gutter downspout was relocated behind the garage wall.

The front door was refinished and antiqued. New Oil Rubbed Bronze door handles, hinges, weather stripping and thresholds were installed, and a new doorbell added.

The exterior beams were sandblasted then stained and finished with a Driftwood finish, and clear-coated for protection from the elements. The structural iron brackets were bronze finished and antiqued.

New gates were custom designed, fabricated, and installed. And, for continuity, green edge Plexiglas panels the same color as the sandblasted glass block by the front door were integrated.

New large-scale, dramatic, address numbers were installed, and a new LED light installed above them.

New Oil Rubbed Bronze exterior light fixtures were installed throughout the property.

A new contemporary mailbox was installed.

The front landscape was removed and replaced except for the front Japanese black pine tree which was trimmed and bonzai'd. Wisteria was planted at the post to grow up along the eaves and fascia boards, and a new burgundy flax hedge installed along the entry walk.

A small retaining wall was erected at the west end of the property to create a level front lawn area. The Sprinklers were repaired and modified to

incorporate the new lawn level. New pressure treated lawn edging was installed throughout the front yard, and a mix of black and burgundy Mexican beach pebbles were installed in the planters. The lawn was raised, topsoil installed, and then lawn seeded.

A privacy bamboo screen was installed between the two properties on the east side. The wire above allows for growing a vine across the top. Fragrant, hearty, rosemary was planted at the bottom of the screen along with horsetails.

