



CALIFORNIA COOL

With its modernist-inspired architecture, this home in California's Venice Beach is at once seriously stylish and gloriously laid-back

STORY & STYLING AMANDA TALBOT PHOTOGRAPHY RICHARD POWERS



OUTDOOR DINING Los Angeles architect Ron Radziner and his graphic designer wife Robin, pictured here with their son Asher (left) and daughter Lexi, are living their own American dream. "As a family, we love the outdoors," says Ron - something that's evident in the almost year-round use of their extraordinary outdoor dining room. "Our 'outdoor rooms' are close to the house so they're easier to access and are more appealing," he explains. >



Imagine waking up on a sizzling hot summer's morning, walking barefoot on a cool, polished concrete floor, sliding open vast glass doors in the living room and diving straight into a glimmering swimming pool. For architect Ron Radziner and his family, this is a reality. His expertise has enabled him to put heart and soul into his eye-catching home from the ground up, with spectacular results.

Ron and his wife Robin, a graphic designer, were living in a modest-sized home with their two children, Asher and Lexi, when they spotted a rare double lot for sale just around the corner. With the kids growing older and in need of more space, the couple had been looking for an opportunity to build from scratch and this block, with a house in tear-down condition, fit the bill. "We had always wanted more outdoor space," says Ron, a co-partner of acclaimed LA-based architectural firm Marmol Radziner & Associates.

This house is a little bigger and more impressive than the last, but Ron's design philosophy has remained the same: "A home must be a peaceful sanctuary. I always aim to bring the outdoors inside," he says.

The generous, free-flowing spaces of this home, filled with abundant natural light, are all about sleek, carefully edited pieces of furniture (clutter is cleverly stowed away), all helping to guide the eye toward the garden. Ron has visually extended the boundaries of the house into the lush green garden and outdoor areas with a dramatic succession of aluminium-framed glass windows and sliding doors that successfully blur the line between the indoors and out.

Although the house was only built in 2007, it harks back to the 1950s heyday of modernist California, with pure, natural materials such as American walnut, cork and polished concrete adding texture to the walls and floor. Every piece of furniture in the house was designed by Ron, from the velvet sofa to the walnut cabinets. "I'm obsessed with customising things so they're just right for every situation," he admits.

A neutral palette of whites, tans and browns, softened by textiles in natural materials, has resulted in subtle interiors that don't compete with the home's leafy surrounds. Upstairs, a long corridor leads to the bedrooms, where dark-stained oak floors rule. In the master ensuite, Ron and Robyn can soak in bubbles in their spa-like bath, made from natural travertine, while looking directly out onto the garden.

Ron has made this cosy space a physical expression of his family's life, surrounding them with books, comfy couches and homely accessories – although, as a family, it's the outdoors they really crave. "To be honest, I'd love to live in a tent under the stars with a camp fire burning," says Ron. "But for comfort, I think our home is the next best thing!"

OPEN-PLAN LIVING (left) Polished concrete and oversized sliding doors define the open living space. The modern lines of the architecture are echoed in the design of the chunky dining table and square, solid sofas covered in tactile vintage velvet by Pollack (available from South Pacific Fabrics), all part of owner Ron's creative vision. The sofas are deep and comfortable, and ideal for when the kids want to squeeze in with Mum and Dad! Try Everyday Living's Bugatti range for a similar deep lounge suite; visit www.everydayliving.com.au. >

LIVING ROOM A dramatic feature wall in cement render continues the steely, neutral colour palette in the living spaces, with all furniture designed by Ron's Los Angeles-based Marmol Radziner Furniture. The large glass ball lamps, spectacular in their fragility, are a focal point of the room – re-create the effect with a similar Ava glass lamp, \$199, from our own Oz Design (www.ozdesignfurniture.com.au). A coffee table made from reclaimed timber brings welcome texture and visual softness to the scheme; timber workshops abound in Australia, and many work with beautiful Australian hardwoods – look up 'timber furniture' in your local area on Google. The children love to splash in the swimming pool {opposite}, which runs the length of the living room, making the space appear as if it is floating on water. In Australia, pool safety regulations must be considered at design stage – sliding doors cannot open onto a body of water. Visit www.poolsafety.com.au for more information. >



The swimming pool
- RUNS THE LENGTH OF THE LIVING ROOM, MAKING THE SPACE APPEAR AS IF IT IS FLOATING ON WATER



KITCHEN {opposite & above} Enclosed by windows, the sunken kitchen is the hub of the home and provides views to the backyard, pool, living areas and outdoor patio. The bespoke American walnut cabinetry is simple yet dramatic, hiding a dishwasher and a small fridge behind two doors. Beyond the pool, native grasses and reeds provide a verdant background.

LEXI'S BEDROOM {top right} Warm walnut finishes are the focus of Lexi's bedroom, with drawings and knick-knacks adding a personal touch. Floor cushions and a low modern rocking chair (seek out Space Furniture's Driade chair for similar - www.spacefurniture.com.au) provide added softness in this 'girls only' zone.

DINING NOOK {right} An ultra simple and cosy built-in booth and table hark back to the sunken diners of the 1970s and add a spirit of fun to casual meals, with a pair of Norman Cherner's 1957 'Cherner' chairs for Herman Miller providing extra seating. "To create a sense of openness, the cabinets were placed low to the ground, leaving the upper portion of the walls free for windows," says Ron. >



Inside story

Who lives here? Ron Radziner, an LA-based architect; his wife Robyn, a graphic designer, and their son Asher, eight, and daughter Lexi, six.

How would you describe your style? Ron: "Organic modernism. My love for nature and classic modernist architecture always merge."

What do you love the most in your home? "The relationship between the home and garden."

I love sitting in the den in the morning and looking out across the pool."

A decorating tip? "Let the subtle colours of nature decide the colour of your home's interior, to create a connection between indoors and out."

Do you have a sneaky budget trick?

"To not spend money where you won't see it. Focus on the areas of the home you will use the most."

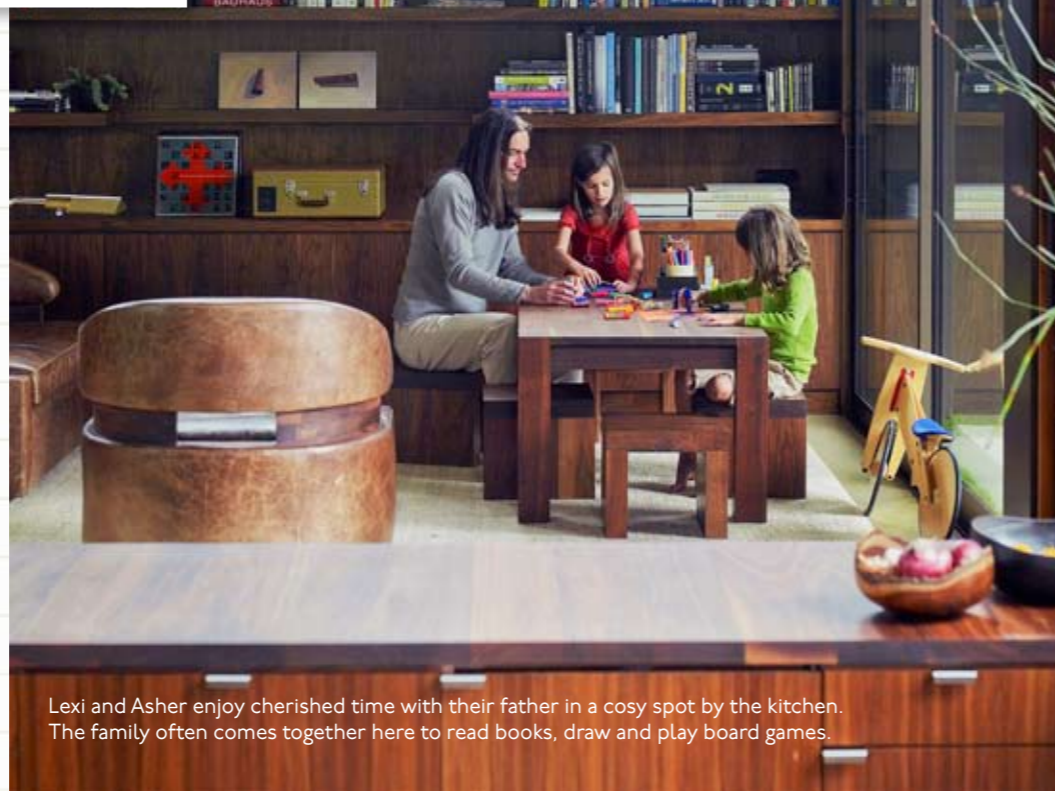
Best discovery? "The reflections of the trees and sky on the glass around the pool – it was nice and unexpected."

What makes the perfect Sunday morning? "Sitting at the breakfast banquette with my family and having breakfast together, especially when the sun filters through the trees."

The key to a successful outdoor space?

"Make it feel as important as the interior. Adding a large fireplace to the outdoor dining area means that a chill in the air needn't be a deterrent."

How many laps in the pool can you do? "I can average about 20 now! I try to get a swim in each morning."



Lexi and Asher enjoy cherished time with their father in a cosy spot by the kitchen. The family often comes together here to read books, draw and play board games.

POOL {right} The pool is virtually an indoor feature, with the water gently lapping against the house along two walls and opening up to a paved walkway outlined by neat rows of grass. For a similar look that meets Australian regulations, we suggest surrounding this pool with a glass balustrade and gate on the open sides and enclosed windows instead of doors.

BATHROOM {below} Ron chose natural travertine for the sunken bath and shower, positioning it by a large window to enjoy a fabulous view of the garden, with trees outside providing privacy.



The key TO A SUCCESSFUL OUTDOOR SPACE IS TO MAKE IT FEEL AS IMPORTANT AS THE INDOORS



Robyn creates 3D displays using electrical appliance packaging on the cork tile wall in her office.

save find

Cork tiles are an earthy, textured surface option. Try Quartet Cork Tiles Price: \$28.75/ pack of 4. Find it: [Officeworks, www.officeworks.com.au](http://www.officeworks.com.au).

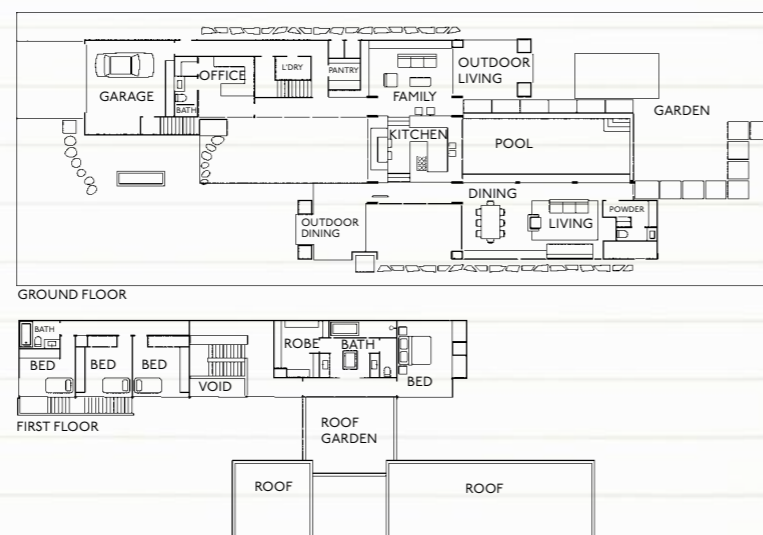


ILLUSTRATION WWW.KENZIEDESIGN.COM.

we love

< the outdoor room

With plenty of outdoor space around the home, Ron included two stunning open-air areas – one for living and one for dining – both with large outdoor fireplaces, making the spaces ideal for year-round entertaining. At night when the fireplace is lit, the area becomes the focus of the house, glowing like a jewel. Multi-talented Ron designed this teak dining table and chairs; Dickson Avenue has a similar Genoa teak table for \$1860 (visit www.dicksonavenue.com.au).

colour & materials

1 Cement render Try Roman Cement in Mineral, from \$44/20kg bag, Porter's Paints.
2 Bath & shower Try Classic Travertine tiles, from \$86/sqm, Sareen Stone.
3 Kitchen cabinets Try moisture-resistant wood veneer 2400mm x 1200mm in American Walnut, from \$270, Laminex. [Stockists, page 174](#)
Due to the printing process, actual colours may vary.
 To view Ron Radziner's architectural work and wooden furniture, go to www.marmol-radziner.com.

