



TOUR A CALM CALIFORNIA HOME THAT'S MADE FOR STAYCATIONING

Just wait until you see the views.

By LAURA RASKIN DEC 1, 2021



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The small coastal community of Pebble Beach, California, juts out into the Pacific Ocean on the Monterey Peninsula, sandwiched between forest and ocean. In 1892, a consortium of railroad owners developed the scenic [17-Mile Drive](#) between Monterey and [Carmel](#), attracting buyers of large scenic residential plots along the road—an area that was eventually developed by [Samuel F.B. Morse](#), who created a lodge and its famous golf courses.





The house is surrounded by breathtaking views.

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One of the first houses built within Morse's development is a Spanish Colonial, completed in 1925 and designed by Reginald Davis Johnson, a New York-born MIT graduate who would go on to design houses for the wealthy as well as progressive affordable housing throughout California. Nearly a century later, the Pebble Beach home's current owners tapped design firm [Workshop/APD](#) to accentuate the structure's original assets while bringing modernity to its warm, calm palette of caramel-colored stone, adobelike plaster walls, exposed wood beams, and a Vermont slate roof.

Michael Ellison, Workshop/APD's director of interiors, was eager to let the idyllic California property and classic style shine. "As a designer starved for some historical character, I didn't want to take a trip and bring the trip back to this house," he says. "I wanted to have a staycation."

LIVING ROOM



The living room is flooded by soft light. Workshop/APD selected warm finishes and furnishings to accentuate that serene quality.

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A 1990s renovation had brought a heavy, baroque quality to the house (with a lot of puddling velvet drapery), and Ellison's goal was to accentuate its daylight spaces and deliver a cleaner, fresher approach. For the living room—the heartbeat of the house located off the entry foyer and opening onto an interior courtyard—Ellison emphasized the strength of the rustic wood beams in the ceiling. "You see houses that try to mimic this look, but this is the OG," he says. "The approach was to keep it light and fair but not shy away from the strength of the dark wood on the ceiling."

The Workshop/APD team added casework and hard pieces, such as tables, in warm woods and dark metals, like the custom nesting cocktail tables from Orange and the root table from Bobo, with branchlike birch legs and brass accents. The larger upholstered pieces speak to the light, daylit palette of the rest of the room, including two Hermès rattan lounge chairs and two creamy-colored custom Masson sofas from Dmitriy & Co.

DINING ROOM



The designer selected a featherlight dining table and pendants from Holly Hunt. The Olofsson dining chairs are by Modern Living Supplies.

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In the dining room, Ellison took an editor’s approach, making what had been a dark, heavy space lighter and more contemporary, with midcentury modern furnishings that “look like you could pick them up with one finger.” Holly Hunt’s walnut and bronze-accented Peregrine dining table anchors the room. Olofsson dining chairs from Modern Living Supplies match the table’s vocabulary perfectly, with their walnut frames and slender brass wraparound arms. Gauzy sheers [adorn the windows](#)—a move that Ellison repeated throughout the house: “Sheers are not always the way to go. But these are pretty opaque when you don’t have sun beaming in them.”

Blackened metal and glass doors separate the kitchen from the dining room, adding a historical reference within a contemporary insertion.

LIBRARY



In the stone-walled library, the sofa is from Dmitriy & Co, the travertine cocktail table is custom from Balsamo, the sconces are from Urban Electric, and the rug is from Loloi. The photograph is a scene of Big Sur.

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A cinematic den “feels like you’re stepping into the 1930s or ’40s,” says Ellison. Here, he added a touch of whimsy, with the Mito floor lamp for Rakumba by Tom Fereday. Warm, indirect light flows from two domed ash forms. It’s a piece that looks like it could fit right in on a midcentury film set. A sculptural custom Italian travertine cocktail table from Balsamo is a smooth complement to the room’s organic split-faced stacked stone walls. An atmospheric black-and-white photograph of Big Sur hangs above an architectural Noma sofa from Dmitriy & Co.

PRIMARY BEDROOM



The primary bedroom suite opens up onto a terrace. The bed is by Theodore Alexander, and the bench is custom, designed by Workshop/APD.

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“When it comes to bedrooms, I typically go for soft and serene, but not so much that you think you’re in the clouds,” says Ellison. At the Pebble Beach house, he allowed the dark wood floors and an arched ceiling accentuated with wood beams to ground the space. A seductively curved and upholstered Eden bed from Theodore Alexander is flanked by Wyllis nightstands designed by Brazilian architect [Arthur Casas Mattos](#). The minimalist rectangular forms feature unexpected travertine doors and drawers. The bed and nightstands appear to float above the wood floor on a hand-knotted and hand-loomed 100 percent silk broadloom Ethereal carpet from Stark, in a rich sandy tone.

All of these elements combine to create a home that is equal parts dwelling and

sanctuary, qualities that feel more essential than ever. As Ellison reflects, “There’s something about this house that feels so safe.”

TOUR MORE OF THIS SERENE PEBBLE BEACH HOME



7 of 14 **LIVING ROOM** The living area showcases breathtaking views. The root table, with branchlike legs and brass accents, is from Bobo. [Read McKendree](#)

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