

a new twist on

Gayle and Sandy Reisenbach's collaboration with architect Andy Neumann produced a beach house with contemporary flair and classic comfort.



shingle style



BILL ZEIDIS

what do you do when a prime piece of coastal real estate, located right next door, comes up for sale? If you're Gayle and Sandy Reisenbach, you take a deep breath and consider yourselves lucky. "We liked our cottage, but our neighbor had this extraordinary property that was twice as wide, and had these amazing views," Gayle says. "When I realized she could see the Channel Islands to the south and Santa Barbara to the west, I said, 'let's go for it.'"

The Reisenbachs' main residence is in Los Angeles (before retiring, Sandy was an executive with Warner Bros.), but the couple hoped to create a "refuge from the Hollywood hustle and bustle," Gayle says, where they could spend a weekend alone or welcome family and friends. Gayle knew celebrated local architect Andy Neumann, so she asked him and his partner, Mary Andrulaitis, to help replace an aged, redwood beach house on the lot. "I remember telling them that I wanted a house that could give us the best views, and a house that was comfortable. Sandy wanted to be able to walk into any



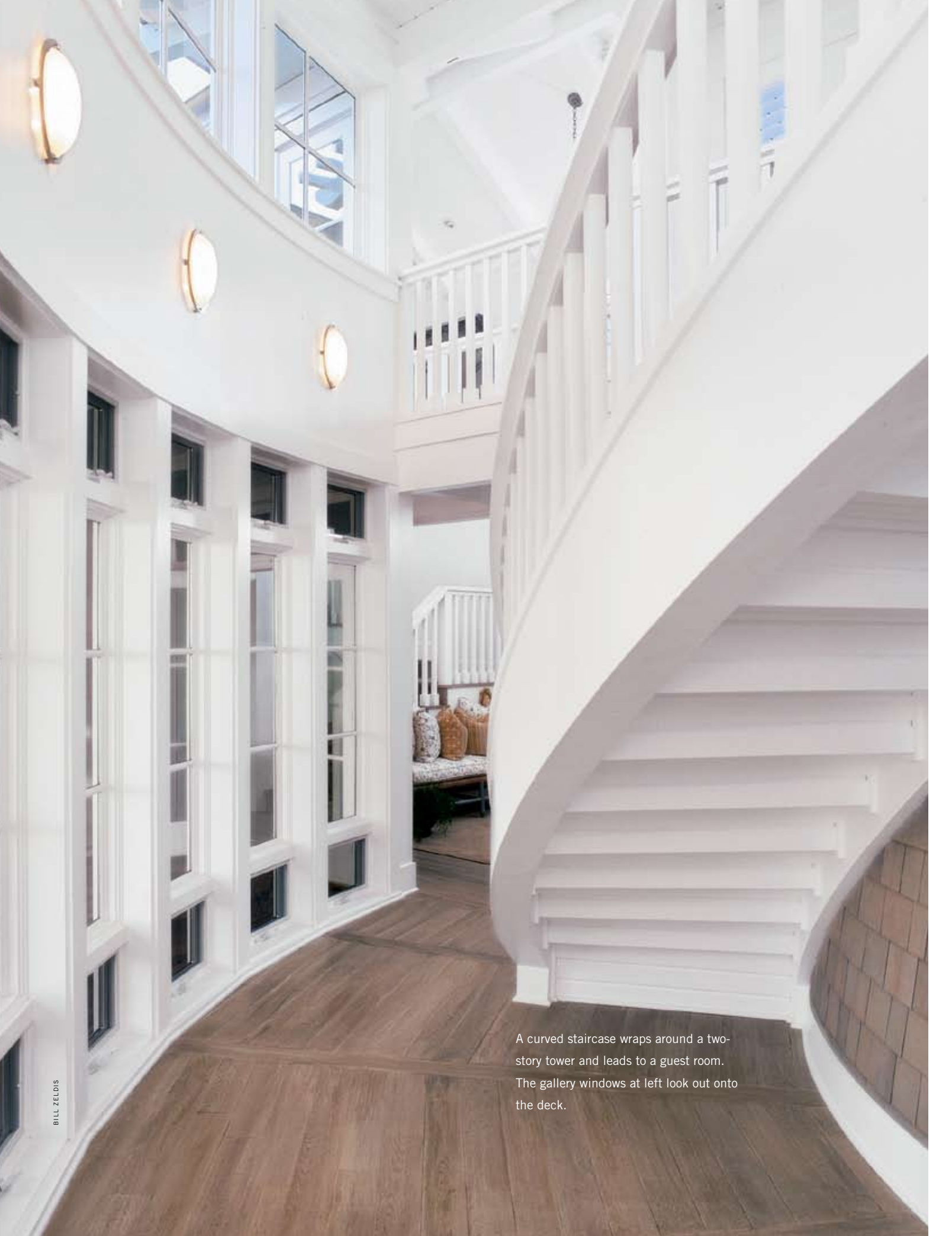
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Text continues on page 151.



With gray shingles and painted white woodwork, this home could be mistaken for a traditional Cape Cod house, but it overlooks the Pacific instead of the Atlantic.





A curved staircase wraps around a two-story tower and leads to a guest room. The gallery windows at left look out onto the deck.







room in the house and just lie down and look at the ocean,” Gayle says.

The new house, which Andy and Mary call “a modern interpretation of traditional shingle style,” delivers views and comfort, and still manages to respect a streetscape dotted with older homes. “Gayle asked that the house look like it had been there forever,” Mary says. “And that meant maintaining the rhythm that exists with other houses along the street. Because this lot is almost twice as wide as the others, we broke the house up into two wings so that, from the street, the parts of the house step back just like all the neighboring homes.”

The kitchen, breakfast nook, living room, and an upstairs guest room occupy one wing. Garage space, guest rooms, and the master bedroom fill the other. Both sections join at the entry, adjacent to a remarkable round tower that anchors a dramatic staircase.

“I had always wanted a round room, and Andy had this great idea to incorporate a lighthouse element inside the house,” Gayle remembers. “He asked, ‘Would you be willing to take the same shingles from outside and wrap the tower inside?’ It creates a wonderful feeling of bringing the outside in.”

Gayle requested a color palette “to blend in with the surrounding landscape,” visually tying each room to the

The airy great room, with its exposed rafters, vaulted ceiling, and comfortable decor, is one of the Reisenbachs' favorite spots in their new house.

seawall and beach. She kept window coverings simple to emphasize the scenery. “Every room has a water view—except for the one inside the base of the tower,” Gayle says. “Even when I’m standing in front of the stove, I can look through a wall of glass and see the water in the distance.”

Outside, the couple built a broad, wooden, oceanside deck with two levels and a fireplace. Gayle filled the deck with chaises and built-in benches, plus informal tables and chairs. A pergola provides shade just outside the kitchen doors, and a small deck on the second floor offers guests a bird’s-eye view.

Designer Celia Cleary, a friend of the Reisenbachs, signed on to pull together the home’s interiors. “Gayle and Sandy didn’t want a typical beach cottage,” Celia says. “They wanted a beach house that was comfortable and sophisticated.” She chose bleached oak floors and gray and white walls that evoke a timeless New England style.

Because Gayle has such a good eye, Sandy left much of the planning to her. Of course, she knows her husband well. Gayle set aside the bottom floor of the round tower for the den—home to the couple’s extensive DVD collection.

The most-used room of the house, though, is the great room. “No TVs are allowed in here because they’re not needed,” says Gayle. “We love to sit here each afternoon with a good book and enjoy the real entertainment—our view.” 🌿

More info: page 196



Instead of using shutters in the master bedroom, Gayle chose blinds. “I like the fact that these open up entirely,” she says. “When you walk in on a clear day it’s drop-dead gorgeous.” Painted wooden columns flank the south-facing window.

