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APRIL 2013

AT HOME



Open Sesame

A window covering made from reclaimed wood highlights the rustic-modern, farmhouse feel of Eric and Adriana Olsen's Cotona del Mar home. For more, flip to page 100.





Architect Eric Olsen and wife Adriana's daughters paint in the kids' nook of their Corona del Mar home. The play zone is part of the home's 1,000-square-foot great room, which includes the kitchen, as well as living and dining areas. The mini Verner Pantoo chairs and table are from Room Service.



A CORONA DEL MAR TRACT HOME COMES BACK FOR ITS SECOND ACT AS A MODERN FAMILY FARMHOUSE THAT STABLES COZY AND CONTEMPORARY, SIDE BY SIDE

family farm

BY ALEXANDRIA ABRAMIAN PHOTOS BY KARYN MILLET

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ABOVE In the master bedroom, salvaged wood doors flank the bed and slide to access the closet.

BELOW Two West Elm beds were used in the girls' room. The animal photography is by Sharon Montrose.



By classic Corona del Mar standards, Eric and Adriana Olsen's home is modest in size. At 2,700 square feet, it's just over the national average of 2,438 square feet, but way under the area's five-figure mega spreads.

But Eric, a Newport Beach native and UC Berkeley-trained architect, wasn't going for massive when he tackled the home's major remodel in two phases, the second of which he completed last year. Yes, he tacked on more than 1,000 square feet in the process of converting the 1970s Irvine Terrace ranch/tract home into a totally unique modern farmhouse. More importantly, however, it was the way he allotted that space and organized the flow that has turned what most would consider an average-size home into a huge statement of both functional design and unexpected style.

"This was on the home tour last year and everyone said ours was relatable," says Eric. "I think it's unique for an area where so many homes are gargantuan."

Taking the house down "beyond the studs," according to Eric, allowed the architect to rethink its warren of tiny rooms. What replaced it was an open-plan, light-filled home where rooms spill into one another, and where outdoor areas are positioned to be in near-constant use. The great room — a combination of kitchen, living, dining, and play area for their daughters, ages three and five, comes in at just over 1,000 square feet, more than a third of the home's total indoor space.

Which is just the way the Olsens wanted it. "My wife does a lot of cooking," says Eric. "This way we can all be in this same space, doing our own thing, but still feel together."

If Eric was looking for a certain familial coziness, however, he didn't want the clutter that goes with it. Instead, he went for a less-is-more look, inside and out. "I worked Garden Studio Design, who ensured that the landscape was beautiful and harmonious with the sensibility of the house," he says. For the interiors, he warmed up the home's clean and contemporary lines with a series of rustic, organic-looking materials that give warmth and character while still keeping it streamlined. In



ABOVE A chandelier from Big Daddy Antiques hangs above the custom walnut dining room and benches. BELOW White Carrera marble is used for the master bath's tub. Paintings by Halverson Frazier.



the great room, an entire wall of custom-colored concrete bricks makes for a highly textured look. Eric also sourced wood from The Vintage Wood Floor Company in Costa Mesa, using the salvaged barn doors and vintage oak throughout the home's bathrooms, bedrooms and common areas. And yes, he was judicious in its use.

"I'm aware of the salvaged wood craze that's going on," says Eric. "I tried to avoid that by using it sparingly and in the right places. And I also juxtaposed the wood with modern elements, like clean white walls."

Just as important to the Olsens as creating a trend-free home to raise their two children (and a third on the way), is to make a home that will feel good today – and tomorrow. "Overall we wanted a house that would feel new and modern, one that could be used by the kids without worry," says Eric, "and one that would ultimately feel timeless."



The path to the front door includes a fountain made from a limestone vessel from RJ Imports. ABOVE A pair of lounge chairs from Room & Board set into a gravel square are perfect for star gazing.





CLOCKWISE FROM
UPPER LEFT A painting
by Halverson Frazier
hangs in the guest
room; a view of
the great room;
landscaping by
Garden Studio Design
and Dig Landscape
Construction.

