

BREATHING ROOM

In this reimagined Stinson Beach retreat, time moves with nature's rhythm.

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Architecture: John Kleman, Light Space Architecture Office **Interior Design:** Lindsay Brier, Anyon Interior Design
Home Builder: George T. Flynn, George T. Flynn Construction **Landscape Architecture:** Michael Bernsohn, Michael Bernsohn Landscapes



A flagstone pathway flanked with native greenery and flowering plants leads to a remodeled Stinson Beach vacation home. Architect John Kleman aligned the new glass front door with the back door and clad the home with red cedar planks.



In Stinson Beach, where the hills of West Marin merge into the waters of Bolinas Lagoon, time becomes elastic. Hours seem to stretch, ambling alongside the ebb and flow of sunshine and fog. One close-knit San Francisco family longed for these kinds of days. The parents

“knew they had their children living with them for only a certain number of years,” notes Lindsay Brier, the designer hired to realize the couple’s vision. “They wanted to make the most of their time together.”

The couple found a waterside property nestled in the heart of the area’s tidal estuary, with waves of migrating birds gliding across the sky. But the abode itself—a generic dwelling—felt disengaged from its environs. To remedy that, “we knew we needed to dissolve the boundaries between inside and outside,” explains architect John Kleman, who worked on the project with associate Stephen Seldin. Together with general contractor George T. Flynn, the design team focused on reconnecting the house to the landscape.

Although the building’s original footprint remained the same, they opened the interiors by broadening the doors and windows. Perfectly aligned, the new openings transform how a person enters the home, “turning an opaque experience into a friendly arrival,” Kleman notes. “You’re now able to see all the way through the house to the lagoon beyond.”

Inside, sunlight pours through new skylights, casting luminous pools that move throughout the day. Underscoring this newfound warmth, Brier enveloped the interior with fresh cream walls and naturally finished cedar for the floor, ceiling panels and beams. Choosing a semi-transparent wood stain ensures that “things are not too refined,” the designer says. “There’s an integrity to the variations and knots in the wood.” Many materials imbue a similar tactile imperfection, like the crackled hand-glazed brick tile on the fireplace surrounds.

The same sensibility seeps into the furnishings. “We embraced lighter teaks, some rift white oak and a little bit of rattan and wicker, which plays nicely with the floor and ceilings,” Brier adds. She complemented the warm woods with textiles featuring subtle, yet expressive detailing. There’s the family room sectional “that has an unfinished

flange detail, instead of a super polished welt,” Brier explains, which creates a ripple-edged silhouette. Throw pillows with hand-blocked prints add bold patterns to the sun-bleached hues. Drapery, when it’s used, leans to the light and sheer “so they can float around in the windows,” the designer adds. Together these layers, soft corners and gauzy textures create a relaxed ease.

Rooms were reconfigured to slow down the innate rhythms of daily life. Removing partition walls turned the family room, kitchen and dining area into one seamless space, intuitively drawing the clan together. Instead of a media room, the owners prefer a refuge for reading, together or alone. So, the formal living room became a serene study with built-in bookshelves and a fireplace. In turn, the family’s bedrooms capture the enchantment of holidays away. Brier gave the children’s custom-built bunk room hues of ocean blue, creating a dreamy backdrop for games and conversations (some that may last well into the night). Kleman also situated the parents’ bedroom over the lagoon. Encased with sliding glass doors, the space “feels like you’re on a floating platform,” he notes. “From the bed, you’re able to see the water surrounding you.”

Landscape designer Michael Bernsohn further deepens the interior’s relationship to nature with his approach to the outdoor areas. “I engaged the views of the lagoon and mountain ridge from inside the house by visually connecting the gardens with the native landscape,” he explains. The flagstone pathway leading to the entrance weaves through meandering beds of endemic artemisias and poppies, alongside a flush of non-native blooms “mimicking the colors and textures of seasonal wildflowers,” he notes. These naturalistic plantings continue along the rear stepped terrace. Each descending level becomes like an outdoor room, as integrated planters shelter the distinct gathering areas with lush greenery. The plant selection also “encourages wildlife, especially birds and butterflies, thus providing another level of life and movement,” Bernsohn says.

All together, the home now feels embedded among this seasonal cycle of nature. Here, the family marks time not by the minute, but by the moments shared together among the changing landscape. ■

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Delicate textures and soft edges imbue a calm ease in the family room with a custom sectional slip-covered in Perennials fabric, a Serena & Lily Georgica lounge chair and an RH Balmain teak coffee table. Hand-glazed Fireclay Klamath tiles line the fireplace.



Above: The study provides a serene reading space with many cozy seating areas to enjoy. One is a sofa covered in a charcoal gray Perennials fabric, and another is the teak-and-rattan chair from Anyon Atelier. The plush Belmont rug is by Serena & Lily.

Opposite: Imagined for casual meals, the relaxed dining area features a Teak Warehouse Sherman dining table, a set of Stowed Home Bette chairs and twin Serena & Lily Headlands bell pendants. Above the piano hangs a photograph by Elisabeth Sunday.



Right: The primary bath features an oak vanity with a Caesarstone Clamshell quartz countertop. The shower is lined with Waterworks Cottage Field tiles and the floor is Acero limestone from Da Vinci Marble. The Newbury Metro tub completes the space.

Opposite: Accessories with rich textures ground the guest bedroom, including the handmade wall baskets, shell-encrusted lamp and Anyon Atelier pillows. The Octavia bed is by Serena & Lily and the nightstand is CB2.



The rear terrace is designed to immerse the outdoor living areas in nature. The gathering spaces are surrounded by integrated planted beds, including a cutting garden for the family. The sunbathing deck is outfitted with West Elm lounge chairs.

