

MODERN LUXURY

Interiors

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& UNIQUE INTERIORS ACROSS THE GOLDEN STATE

Glass doors to the balcony offer designer John Wooden sweeping views of Los Angeles. The custom sofa is upholstered with fabric from Nicky Rising and topped with Bruntschwig & Fils and Fortuny pillows. Above it hangs Paul Robinson's photograph "Last Night." The wicker chair was a Long Beach flea market find and the lamp is from Hedge in Palm Springs. The Italian jug is from City-Review.

bright LIGHTS, big CITY

Orange County-based designer John Wooden makes an iconic Sunset Strip condo his perfect pied-à-terre.

*By Maile Pingel
Interiors Photography by Karyn Millet
Portrait by Tim Melideo*

“I’ve always collected things, and this became a fun place to put it all,” says interior designer John Wooden of his Los Angeles home. The designer, whose eponymous firm is located in Laguna Beach, bought a condominium at Shoreham Towers several years ago so that he could have an L.A. base for client meetings, as well as a comfortable place to stay while in town overseeing custom furniture projects. And while the building itself was a lure (it’s a midcentury icon perched above the Sunset Strip that has been home to everyone from Humphrey Bogart to David Lee Roth), it was the views that really captured Wooden, who often works out of the space with firm members Zack Davenport and Stacey Day. “I was sold,” he recalls of walking into the south-facing, eighth-floor





Clockwise from left: The dining area features a custom table, Nickey Kehoe chairs, a Lucite centerpiece by Ritts Co. and a Bourgeois Bohème chandelier; the Nick Georgiou mixed-media work is from Etherton Gallery in Tucson, Ariz.; Wooden inherited the foo dog from his maternal grandfather, James Garcia, whose design shop in Hawaii influenced Wooden as a child; the wood sculpture is by an unknown artist.



unit for the first time. "You can see from downtown to Century City, and looking over the flats of Beverly Hills looks like Central Park."

The condo, which previously belonged to interior designer Jeffrey Hitchcock, only needed a few tweaks for Wooden to feel right at home, chiefly replacing the black marble floor with slate and redoing the kitchen and bathrooms. Wooden wanted the home to be true to the building's 1960s character but he also didn't want to live on a *Mad Men* set. "It's an homage to the era but eclectic," he says, noting a mix of pieces like the turquoise sofa he designed for a Pasadena showcase house, a Curtis Jere wall sculpture and a de Gournay wallpaper screen that hides the television. There are showroom finds too, like the Nickey Kehoe dining chairs and the living room's Lawson Fenning ottoman, but it's vintage finds and a photograph by his friend Paul Robinson that create personality.

"Age brings a softness to interiors," he continues, recounting that he wanted to be an architect before discovering interior design as an art student in Paris. Wooden, who is working on projects in Laguna Beach, Lake Tahoe and Sun Valley, may be the grandson and namesake of the venerated UCLA basketball coach ("I gained a lot of wisdom from him," he says), but he also has design in his DNA. His maternal grandfather ran Tropical Lamp & Shade, a lighting company whose clients included the Royal Hawaiian in Hawaii. "I got to go to the shop as a kid," he recalls, wondering aloud if that's perhaps why his firm is known for its lighting designs.

It can be a difficult task, a designer designing for himself, and Wooden admits that editing for clients is easier





Clockwise from top: The midcentury feel continues in the bedroom, where the designer topped a nightstand from Hedge with another flea market find, a Swedish glass lamp attributed to Carl Fagerlund; Wooden melded Marian Jamieson sconces and Dornbracht fittings in the bathroom. The wall covering is Phillip Jeffries and the marble is from Concept Studio in Costa Mesa; a vintage garden statue of Adonis, the Greek god of beauty.



than editing for himself. "It's going to look like a JF Chen showroom!" Wooden recalls thinking at one point. "There's a risk of visual gluttony, so I try to buy and sell—to enjoy pieces and then pass them on," he explains. "But homes need a sense of history. If they're sterile, that defeats the purpose of hiring someone for their artistic vision. There are infinite possibilities, so it's important to put your own spin on things." Wise words—and ones that would likely make both grandfathers proud. ■

From left: The kitchen counter offers additional space to work or dine with vintage bar stools re-covered in Edelman leather. Open shelving displays Wooden's collection of Dorothy Thorpe barware; designer John Wooden.



DESIGN DETAILS

RESIDENCE
Second home

LOCATION
Los Angeles

INTERIOR DESIGN
John Wooden
johnwoodeninteriors.com

VENDORS

BERBERE WORLD IMPORTS
Living room parchment end table
berbereworldimports.com

BOURGEOIS BOHÈME
Dining room chandelier
bobointeriors.com

CHRISTOPHER ANTHONY
Dining room Curtis Jere wall sculpture
christopheranthonyltd.com

ERIC BRAND
Walnut and leather bed with hidden storage
ericbrand.com

HEDGE
Vintage chrome and driftwood living room lamps, bedroom nightstands
hedgepalmsprings.com

JF CHEN
Living room brass chest of drawers
jfchen.com

PHILLIP JEFFRIES
Bathroom wall covering
phillipjeffries.com

WOVEN ACCENTS
Living room rug
woven.is