



TOUR A BOLD BOHEMIAN BEACH HOME THAT DELIGHTS IN ITS MANY CONTRASTS

The vibe? "A gentleman professor from the English countryside who had tried a hallucinogenic drug and woke up in Big Sur."

BY ELIZABETH FAZZARE PUBLISHED: JUL 4, 2023

A house by the beach conjures visions of whitewashed walls, blue cushions on plush canvas sofas, and jute rugs underfoot. However, when designer Schuyler Samperton's longtime client, art collector Dan Holton, made a full-time move from Los Angeles to Santa Barbara, California, the pair decided his new coastal home should be nothing like its neighbors. "We came up with the concept of creating a house for a gentleman professor from the English countryside who had tried a hallucinogenic drug and woke up in Big Sur, circa 1974," says Samperton, who has designed five prior residences for the 62-year-old Holton.

Though the interior of the one-bedroom, two-bathroom abode may have little in common with the vernacular of its immediate environment, its layered mix of colors, patterns, and textures embodies the spirit of bohemian California cool.



In a jewel-toned library, Samperton integrated collected pieces her client cherishes into the design. A red Chinese trunk formerly owned by Tony Duquette was repurposed as a cocktail table, with a Moroccan lantern turned pendant light, a colorful rug, a burnt bamboo table set with a ceramic lamp, and a French mirror, all vintage. A wall papered in Samperton's Delphine pattern brings it all together.
Victoria Pearson



Samperton kept the dining area light and effervescent, with vintage French chairs, a Nichey Kéroux tablecloth, and iridescent gouache-on-paper insect prints pulled from 19th-century French book plates.
Victoria Pearson



For Samperton, achieving an eclectic yet sophisticated design meant starting from the literal ground up—with Holton's collection of antique rugs. Two found new life in the library and entry, while more were acquired for the living room and bedroom. Pulling inspirational color swatches from these floor coverings, the designer built up additional patterns for the cozy interiors. When it comes to mixing prints, "I'm pretty fearless," she says, citing her time working in the office of L.A. designer Michael S. Smith. "I saw him work his magic, and I learned to be bold with scale."

The primary bedroom is a layered mix of colors and patterns that delight in contrast. A teal-and-white stripe by Farrow & Ball wraps the walls, illuminated by a 1964 Roger Doubie movie poster and a bulb spray of bust of paradise leaves. The blue-on-blue bedding affords added texture.
Victoria Pearson



A bespoke Parker Burkhardt wood console, harboring a lamp by Currey & Co., a custom vessel sculpture by James Noury, and a small artwork piece by Dublin Riley, green guests. Above hangs a vibrant collage from JF Chen by Audrey Penry, and underfoot an antique rug from Dan Holton's collection almost echoes the artwork's colors.
Victoria Pearson



In the light-filled living room of this Santa Barbara home, Samperton covered one wall in a dusty terra-cotta-colored grass cloth by Gregorius Pineo and employed sage-on-white paisley curtains of a fabric by Smith for Jasper to break up the solid swath. A custom Claremont linen-velvet green sofa and a brown leather armchair by Harbinger surround a 1957 Brutalist-style cocktail table by Adrian Pearsall, where one could easily see a casual gathering of the scholarly bohemians. The fantasy is supported by reality in the multipurpose space: Here, Holton's 18th-century Chinese painter's desk is set with a 1930s French armchair. Atop it is one of his most prized possessions, a 1948 lamp by Greta Magnusson Grossman with its original shade.



The most minimalist space in the house is the kitchen, which flows into the living room. Color is again the connector: The cabinetry and custom island are painted in Farrow & Ball's bold Studio Green, the same hue as the custom mantel across the room, and Samperton hung two similarly toned globe glass pendants by Niche.

"Every single object in Holton's home means something to him, and he's very connected to it," she says. "This design captures his quirkiness."

"[Holton] has a real love of provenance," says Samperton, who integrated collected pieces he cherishes into her design. In the library, a red Chinese trunk formerly owned by Tony Duquette was repurposed as a cocktail table, a Moroccan lantern floats overhead as a pendant light, a vintage French mirror is hung on a wall papered in Samperton's Delphine pattern, and a vintage burnt bamboo table is set with a vintage ceramic lamp.

Many objects newly acquired for the house are either bespoke—like the Rose Uniacke red corduroy headboard, the entry's wood console by Parker Burkhardt, and artworks commissioned from James Noury, Olly Fathers, and Sourabh Gupta—or vintage collectibles. The home delights in its contrasts. A Brutalist carved-wood armoire is a centerpiece of the bedroom. To balance it, the rest of the room is light, airy, and traditionally leaning: A teal-and-white stripe by Farrow & Ball wraps the walls, and a vintage Knoll chair was repurposed in a House of Hackney floral velvet. Art and vintage chairs add to the lived-in look.

The kitchen is the most minimalist space in the house, though it's not without a pop of color, which Samperton used to connect the culinary space to the living room. The cabinetry and custom island are painted in Farrow & Ball's bold Studio Green.
Victoria Pearson

