



In Slim Aarons' 1970 photo *Poolside Gossip*, two perfectly coiffed, caftan-clad friends are captured in languid repose, perched on chaise longues, sharing intimacies. The setting is an iconic desert home in Palm Springs designed by Richard Neutra for Edgar Kaufman. The angular lines of the house contrast with the contours of the mountains in the distance. The scene evokes a late-afternoon mood of understated luxury and easy glamour.

It's this casually chic midcentury style that Diane Einstein sought to create for the Belvedere home of a young, adventurous, Southern California-bred client—who happens to own a print of *Poolside Gossip*, now hanging prominently in the living room.

"Growing up near Los Angeles, she took family vacations and spring breaks in Palm Springs," says Einstein. "She loves that desert indoor-outdoor lifestyle—the clean lines and the sense of space. Everything we did in her house echoes that Southern California aesthetic."

Built in 1964 by a woman who admired contemporary design, the single-story ranch house was a modernist set piece. Outfitted with sliding shoji screens, shag rugs and the trendiest modern furniture of the time, it was featured in *Sunset* in 1968. The interiors were virtually unchanged when the house went on the market almost 35 years later.

When Einstein's client first saw the house, which is located on a cul-de-sac overlooking Belvedere Lagoon, the client had just finished remodeling a home in Sausalito. "But she fell in love with both the setting and the midcentury architecture, and she saw the potential for creating a real showpiece," Einstein says.

The owner hoped to maintain the integrity of the house, but wanted to open up the floor plan and add a second story. The first directive was to lighten the interior, which had a wood ceiling painted a dark color. Einstein stained the boards and beams a paler shade, replaced metal sliding windows with custom wood frames and removed a wall in the main living area. A floating staircase in steel, wood and glass now anchors the main living room and leads to a new second-floor master suite and office.

Designer Diane Einstein created a casual, luxurious vibe in the living area, which features a two-sided fireplace, a streamlined custom lounge chair and vintage modern lighting, including a dramatic Fortuny floor lamp.

Einstein took her visual cues from her client's love of vintage furniture and enthusiasm for color and texture. The living room and family room are separated by a stunning two-sided concrete fireplace covered in shimmering

belvedere

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DESIGNER DIANE EINSTEIN PAYS HOMAGE TO MIDCENTURY GLAMOUR IN A WATERFRONT HOUSE IN BELVEDERE. BY JULIE CARLSON PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID DUNCAN LIVINGSTON



The floating glass, steel and wood staircase ascends to a second-story addition. The iconic white leather Barcelona chaise longue and a pair of avocado green leather armchairs add a sleek note to the lounge area.

