

Building Stone

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Natural stone reflects setting of
oceanfront home

Limestone jail complements
downtown Denver architecture

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN IN STONE



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A Pacific feel in stone

For an upscale private residence in Laguna Beach, CA, locally quarried natural stone was selected to reflect the home's oceanfront setting, while also projecting a feeling of luxury

BY MICHAEL REIS



For a spec home in Laguna Beach, CA, designer Brittney Fischbeck of Abodwell Interior Design specified a blend of Lompoc Stone from California to create an upscale feel while also reflecting the home's oceanfront location. The material combination features 60% Lompoc Mountain Ledge Gray Blend thin veneer and 40% Lompoc Mountain Ledge Cream Blend thin veneer. Photos by Clay Bowman, Bowman Group - www.bowmangroup.net

It is not difficult to find an upscale home on the Laguna Beach, CA, oceanfront; nor is it a challenge to find a home with high-end building materials. This was the challenge facing Brittney Fischbeck of Abodwell Interior Design in creating a spec home that would stand out in a very high-profile crowd. Ultimately, the use of natural stone — quarried locally in California — helped the project achieve all of its design and practical goals while also reflecting its beachfront location.

"This is a Mark Singer home," explained Fischbeck. "He is a very well-known architect and he is the AIA Orange County president. A Mark Singer home is a selling point in itself. The builder wanted a slightly different flair to it, but it still had to be sold as a Mark Singer home, so I wanted to create a light and airy beachy feel with a color palette that blends with the ocean and the sand and the mountains."

One of the challenges, according to Fischbeck, was to create a home that would stand out for its quality of design, while also remaining contemporary and sophisticated. "A lot of the beachfront homes, scream 'Look at me,' and I didn't want to do that," she said. "I imagined that the owner of the home would be a collector of art and sculpture,





(Above) The use of Lompoc Stone continues inside the home, where it was used to clad two “see-through” fireplaces. (Opposite) In addition to using Lompoc Stone for the vertical surfaces, Fischbeck specified Moca Cream limestone flooring, and it also serves to reflect the home’s beachfront location. “The limestone has an antique finish,” she said. “It has these undulations that are linear and are reminiscent of the look that sand has when the water recedes.”

so we wanted to have a neutral background. I went with cream and gray. People were nervous that gray would be sad and dreary, but to me, it can work if done in the right way.”

The design includes a blend of Lompoc Stone from Sepulveda Building Materials of Laguna Niguel, CA. The material combination features 60% Lompoc Mountain Ledge Gray Blend thin veneer and 40% Lompoc Mountain Ledge Cream Blend thin veneer, and the material was quarried in Lompoc, CA.

“The material is technically a limestone, but it also has some quartz in it,” explained Stephen Ashton of Sepulveda Building Materials. “We are very pleased with it. Its testing

results for strength, durability and resistance to freeze/thaw cycles were excellent.”

According to Ashton, the project called for 864 square feet of veneer and 105 lineal feet of corners of the Gray Blend and 576 square feet of veneer and 70 lineal feet of corners of the Cream blend. “They range from 2 to 5 inches in height,” he said. “They coursed it out on that particular job, but the specification should range from 2 to 5 inches. They blended it for this project, and it turned out awesome.”

“I had never used it before,” Fischbeck said of the Lompoc Stone. “Like all my other materials, I consider many options before I make my decision in terms of stone. I had thought about using other stone materials,

but they didn’t give me the contemporary feel that I needed. I love that you can see the strata lines in the material. I am a linear person, so that really appeals to me. Also, every so often, you get a big area of quartz, and it just sparkles.”

A THOUGHTFUL STONE SPECIFICATION

In specifying areas of the home that would include stone veneer, Fischbeck sought to employ it in applications that would have the most visual impact. The Lompoc Stone was used on the exterior entry and the beach-facing facade, as well as on both see-through fireplaces in the home. “Although this home is Certified





The use of textured stone also offered an element of warmth to a relatively modern and contemporary design. "When you have a home that has very clean lines and is very wide and open, it can get too sterile looking," Fischbeck explained. "In order to make it interesting and homey, you need to introduce different textures."

LEED Platinum, we did not seek LEED points regarding the stone, as the requirement is that it must cover 90% of exterior. I still chose to use Lompoc Stone because nothing is more green than working within the U.S. Green Building Council standards. The quarry is within 500 miles. The design of a home can be ultra-luxurious and still be environmentally friendly."

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terials are then juxtaposed against high-gloss taupe cabinetry with a slight pearlescence. I love a high-gloss, slick house all the way, but you can't do that with a spec home, it's too risky."

The stone was installed by Modern Marble & Granite of Orange, CA, which was on the job for two months. Company owner Marcos Tapia explained that vertical bonding mortar was used to adhere the stone to the walls, and the project required extensive field cutting. "We had to cut every single stone before the installation," he said. "Three people worked to get the job done. At the end, the stonework looked great."

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the vertical surfaces, the designer specified Moca Cream limestone flooring, and it also serves to reflect the home's beachfront location. "The limestone has an antique finish," she said. "It has these undulations that are linear and are reminiscent of the look that sand has when the water recedes. We ordered the floor in a custom texture from Marmol Export USA."

The material was quarried in Portugal's Serras D'Aires e Candeeiros Natural Park, and the Moca Cream limestone extraction area lies in the district of Alcanede.

Now complete, the project has received positive feedback from the architecture and design sector, and Fischbeck also points to the sense of community that was



The Lompoc Stone is characterized by its strata lines, which run horizontally across the surface, as well as its occasional accents of quartz content.

present on the project. “We’ve had AIA tours through the home, and everyone loves that Lompoc stone. It shows really beautifully,” she said. “I didn’t put an enhancer on it; I just wanted to leave it. As a LEED-certified home, I wanted to avoid using chemicals. It wasn’t just about getting LEED points, but also about doing the right thing for the environment.

“It was also important to stay local as much as possible and to use local stone,” the designer continued. “I try to use local companies and material suppliers when I can. The general contractor, Tresor Construction, is a family-owned business, and Sepulveda is also a family-owned business. It is also a way to support your community.” ■

Private Residence Laguna Beach, CA

Owner: Tresor Investments LLC, Laguna Beach, CA

Designer and Specifier: Brittney Fischbeck, Allied Member, ASID, Abodwell Interior Design, Laguna Beach, CA

Architect: Mark Singer Architects, Inc. AIA, Laguna Beach, CA

Contractor: Laguna Crest Enterprise, Inc. dba
Tresor Construction, Laguna Beach, CA

Stone Installer: Modern Marble and Granite, Orange, CA

Stone Supplier: Sepulveda Building Materials,
Laguna Niguel, CA (Lompoc Stone); Marmol Export USA, Anaheim, CA (Portuguese limestone)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Michael Reis has been working for *Stone World* Magazine for 18 years, and he has reported on stone production and architecture at locations around the world. He has received several international awards for outstanding journalism, and he also founded the award winning design publication *Contemporary Stone & Tile Design* in 1995.