

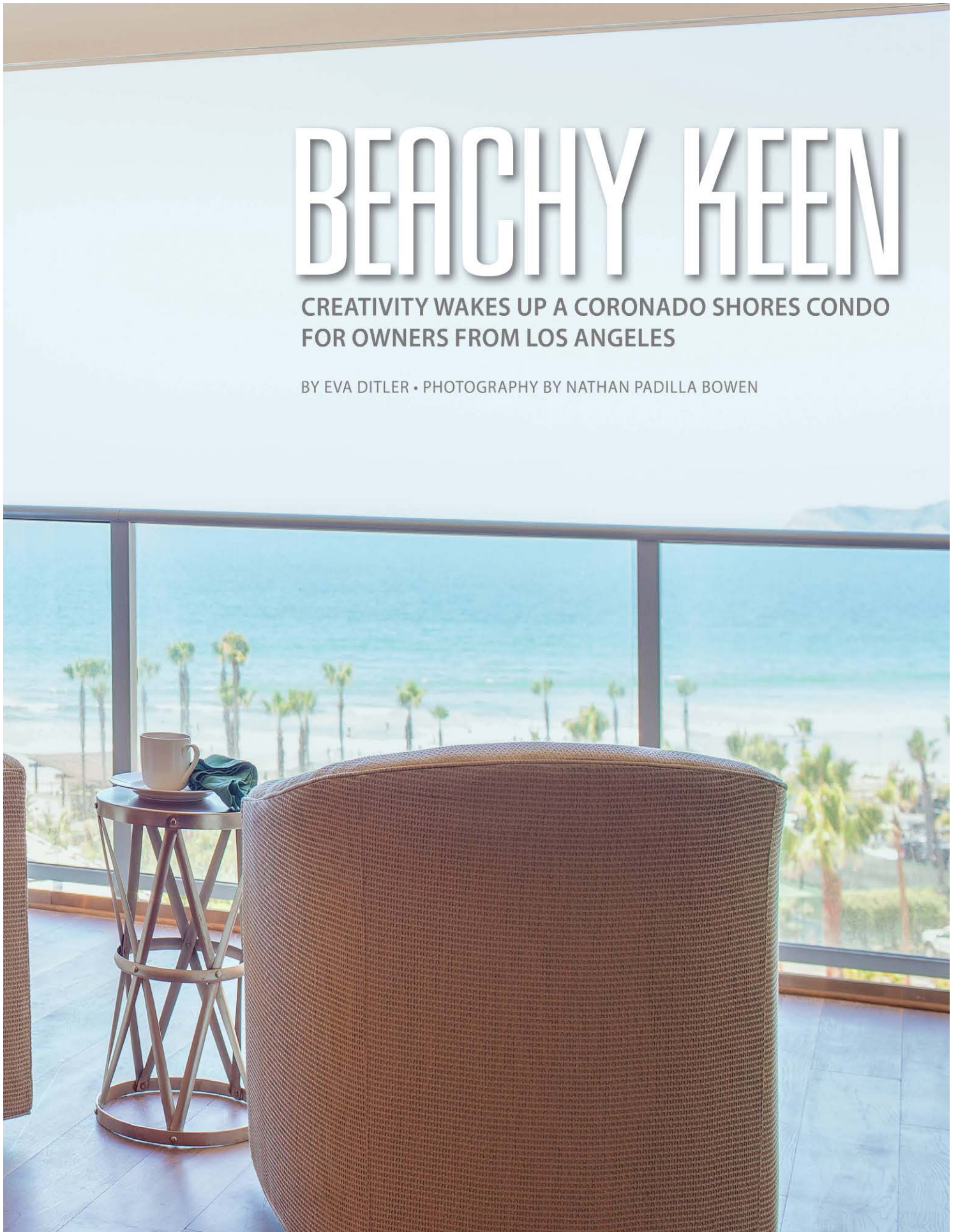


Retractable glass doors transform the interior of a Coronado condo into a balcony with a beach view.

# BEACHY KEEN

CREATIVITY WAKES UP A CORONADO SHORES CONDO  
FOR OWNERS FROM LOS ANGELES

BY EVA DITLER • PHOTOGRAPHY BY NATHAN PADILLA BOWEN







Designer Kristin Kostamo-McNeil reconfigured a galley kitchen into an open, airy space that's no muss, no fuss with durable quartz countertops.

HAVING A PRIVATE getaway is especially idyllic if your home away from home is a remodeled condo on the Coronado beach.

When Rick and Denise Callister of Los Angeles bought an El Mirador Tower unit in 1994, "it had the original 1970s Coronado Shores décor," Rick says.

The style — with its dark wood cabinetry, closed-off kitchen and shag carpet — was dated even then. But Rick and Denise decided that since they were taking mini breaks with children in tow, they wouldn't wake the tired interior design until the kids were older. The wakeup call came 16 years and a couple of grandkids later.

"We asked for interior designer references, and the building manager led us to Kristin [Kostamo-McNeil]," Rick says. "She had done the lobby and won a first-place award for it. We spoke with her and were impressed with the way she wanted to approach the project."

Rick and Denise wanted something comfortable that had elegance, yet was simple and fit into a beach environment. Kristin showed them plans for a Cape Cod coastal style.

"The Coronado Shores buildings are tricky as far as renovations go," Kristin says. "They have concrete ceilings, sections of wall that are concrete, designated plumbing areas that can't be used and places where you aren't permitted to drill."

Despite those challenges, a can-do spirit brought the condo to life. The interior was gutted to begin fresh.

"The way the unit is angled, they have an amazing view that extends to Point Loma,



but the existing balcony was fairly narrow,” Kristin says. “You couldn’t put furniture out there, and it really wasn’t comfortable. So we pushed the unit onto the balcony, which got rid of that exterior space and provided needed additional interior space. We added fully retractable doors that stack on each side.”

When the doors are open, the calming sound of waves rolling to shore envelop the condo. When shut, the dramatic seaside vista graces the home from the entrance through to the living space and kitchen.

The reconfigured kitchen, once a dark galley, is now light filled. White custom cabinets (some with seeded glass to showcase collectibles), gray quartz countertops and a polished-marble backsplash bestow the cook’s space with a breezy attitude.

“On one end of the kitchen is a bar where we can serve food,” Rick says. “On the other, Kristin added a contrasting cabinet with a driftwood look that is more like furniture.”

A matching driftwood-finish cabinet in the living area that hides wiring is neatly situated near a built-in ledge where kids and adults can plug in computers. The ledge is behind a leather sectional sofa that contains a queen-size pullout

**Left:** Cabinetry lighting and seeded glass accentuate the homeowners’ collectibles.

**Facing page, top:** Kristin had to get creative in the face of concrete ceilings and walls. In the master bedroom, as in the living and dining rooms, she installed a soffit for overhead lighting.

**Facing page, bottom:** A damask-style panel that the homeowners fell in love with at the tile store became the focal point of the master bath.





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bed — much needed in this one-bedroom unit. Extra rollout beds are stored in a new walk-in closet by the entry.

Kristin relocated the dining room to what had been a wet bar area next to the kitchen. In order to add a chandelier over the dining table and recessed cans in the concrete ceiling, a soffit was designed to run the perimeter of the main living space. Another ceiling soffit allowed for more lighting in the master bedroom. Natural light also was brought into the space.

“By moving a closet to the opposite side of the master bedroom, we were able to add a set of angled, double French doors to catch the ocean view in the bedroom,” Kristin says.

The master bath redo eliminated a dangerous step-up. “We got crafty,” Kristin says. “We used a wall-mounted toilet, raised the shower and dropped the floor, which eliminated the step.”

The master bath and a guest bath that was created from a walk-in closet are clad in elegant Calacatta gold marble.

“Kristin had to be creative,” Rick says. “There were not a lot of options because of the concrete walls. She had to do a lot of configuration to make everything fit into the space and look pleasant. In a sense, it’s a family hotel; but because of Kristin, it doesn’t feel like that or look like that. It’s just a great place to get away for a weekend or a holiday.” ❖

**Facing page:** Tall ornaments in a tabletop setting by Adelaide’s floral design shop in La Jolla complement the vertical sails in the dining room painting. Adelaide’s also decorated a Christmas tree (shown at right) with soft-gold ornaments and glittering gold leaves. Creative Director Larry Anhorn fashioned feet for one package from ornaments.



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## TREE TIPS

Larry Anhorn, creative director at Adelaide’s, offers the following advice for making a tree the centerpiece of holiday home décor.

- Make sure you have the appropriate space for your tree before purchasing it. Keep in mind that unless you are using a manufactured “slim tree,” the taller the tree, the wider it will be at the bottom.
- Artificial trees hold their shape throughout the entire season and never dry out. If you prefer a natural tree, remember to provide a water source to keep it fresh.
- If using lights, start there. Use no more than two or three strands of lights plugged into each other. You can zip-tie a power strip in the middle of the trunk. You may need more than one power strip if you are working with an extra tall tree. If possible, plug each power strip into an outlet with its own circuit.
- String the lights from the trunk out onto each branch and back toward the trunk (forming a bit of a V shape).
- Decorate not only tips of the branches, but also the inside of the tree toward the trunk. Hang taller and larger ornaments in the back of the branches for a fuller look.
- Tuck real pine branches into an artificial tree for a “holiday” scent or use a pine-scented spray.
- There is nothing wrong with a tree that is decorated with family ornaments gathered over the years; but for maximum effect, work with colors that complement the interior of your home and choose a theme that will give you a direction when buying ornaments.
- Keep scale in mind. The bigger the tree, the larger some of your ornaments should be. Regardless of how tall your tree is, don’t make all your ornaments one size, shape, color or texture.
- Decorate the base of the tree. If possible, place your tree in a large urn or container to hide the stand. Choose a swath of cloth in a color to match your theme.
- Consider hiring a professional florist. You’ll get a whole new look by following their recommendations for small additions to make your existing ornament collection shine. And you can use the time you save to bake cookies or spend time with family and friends.