

TRADITIONAL HOME.

New Home: Eco Design Goes Victorian

Text by Amy Elbert | Photographs by Luca Trovato | Produced by Andrea Caughey



NEARLY EVERYTHING Joe and Kathy Bush need is an easy stroll from their historically inspired home in Santa Barbara, California. Joe walks six minutes to his law office, and the couple can easily go by foot to restaurants, parks, and stores. “Kathy was going to the bank yesterday and started to drive—like we have for 40 years—and then said: Hey, I can walk and get there and back in quicker time because I don’t have to look for a place to park,” Joe relates.

The Bushes were living in a 4,000-square-foot house in the Santa Ynez foothills outside Santa Barbara when friend and contractor Dennis Allen suggest they move downtown. Allen, who specializes in green building projects, had purchased a lot with a sorely neglected house and rundown garages that he was developing into environmentally responsible residences.

The timing was perfect. Joe and Kathy’s children were grown and no longer living at home, and the couple was ready to downsize. Although it took two years to get permit approval from the famously strict Santa Barbara city planners, the Bushes finally moved into the new 2,250-square-foot, two-story residence in 2009. Located in the heart of town, the place was loaded with energy- and water-saving features. It has even been submitted for platinum (the highest) rating certification through the U.S Green Building Council’s LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for homes program.

The home boasts the best in eco-design, but it looks like a charming old Victorian farmhouse, which is just what Kathy hoped. “I wanted the house to look authentic,” says Kathy, who grew up in a Victorian house nearby. The existing 1877 house on the property had been too dilapidated to restore, but the new home was built with a façade that closely resembles the style of the original Victorian. Materials were salvaged and reused when possible, including redwood exterior siding and several interior doors. The contractor also donated salvaged building materials to Habitat for Humanity and diverted as much waste as possible from landfills.

Other green features include energy-conserving insulation and windows, plus a high-efficiency heating and cooling system. There are dual-flush toilets and low-flow showerheads and faucets. Solar panels garner enough power to heat the water supply, and there is a backup tankless water heater.

Lumber is FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) certified as sustainable, and cabinet boxes are made with FSC-certified wood and formaldehyde-free melamine. An old Douglas fir railroad trestle was planed into planks for the tongue-and-groove wood floors and finished on site with a low-VOC (volatile organic compounds) sealer.

Green building was new to Joe and Kathy, who is an interior designer, but they quickly got up to speed. Kathy worked closely with architect Dennis Thompson to create a floor plan that took advantage of natural light and was also period appropriate—with nooks and crannies and odd-sized spaces to give the home character. Many of the walls have beadboard wainscoting made with FSC-certified lumber and painted with low-VOC paints.

Kathy incorporated antiques and vintage furnishing throughout the house, including a chandelier that a client was ready to toss. Kathy rescued it from her client’s garage, had it refurbished, and hung the chandelier in the dining room. The dining table, chairs, and sideboard were also hand-me-downs. The designer opted for linen, organic cotton, and hemp fabrics for draperies, bed linens, and some furnishings. Mattresses for all the beds are made with organic materials and plant-based foams.

One of Joe’s favorite rooms is the library, where his books fill shelves on two walls. Redwood wainscoting on the other walls was fabricated from wood salvaged from the original old house. “We just put a light finish on it,” Kathy says. “I couldn’t believe how gorgeous it was.”

Nearly every morning Kathy and Joe start the day with coffee on the front porch. An upper level porch offers evening views of the sunset. “We really use the outdoor spaces,” Joe says. “The porches are great places to sit and enjoy the sunsets, mountains, and city views.”

DESIGN:

Architect:

Dennis Thompson, AIA, LEED, AP
Thompson Naylor Architects Inc.,
900 Philinda Ave., Santa Barbara, CA 93101
805/966-9807
thompsonnaylor.com.

Interior designer:

Kathy Bush
Kathy Bush Interiors, 805/966-9680.

General contractor:

Dennis Allen and Bryan Henson
Allen Associates
201 N. Milpas, Santa Barbara, CA 93103
805/884-8777
dennisallenassociates.com.

Garden design:

Margie Grace
Grace Design Associates
3010 Paseo Tranquillo, Santa Barbara, CA 93105
805/687-3569
gracedesignassociates.com.

The sunroom on the front of the house has a built-in window seat perfect for relaxing and reading. Floors throughout the house are made from lumber from an old Utah railroad trestle that had been demolished. The Douglas fir was shipped to California, where it was milled and planed into planks for tongue-and-groove floorboards. After installation, the floors were treated with an eco-friendly water-based Bona Mega finish.

Dual-pane wood windows by Lowen are low-E (emissivity) to conserve energy and cut cooling and heating costs. Linen-cotton blend draperies can be closed for more temperature control and add color to the cozy room. Sheer linens curtains provide privacy from the street.



The home was designed to be a model for green residential building in Southern California, showing how a home can be environmentally responsible without sacrificing beauty, warmth and traditional style.

Frazer low-VOC paints in custom colors were used on the walls and vintage fixtures were restored and used throughout the house.

SOURCES:

Bench cushion (“Sunscreen”/Gold, Light Blue, Light Green #2105401): Fabricut, 800/999-8200, fabricut.com.

Sheer drapery (“Stripe Sheer”/Tan #ST602, Woven Collection): Kathryn M. Ireland Textiles & Design, 310/246-1906, kathrynireland.com.

Drapery (“Ajmir”/Vert #1424-48, by Manuel Canovas): Cowtan & Tout, 212/647-6900, cowtan.com.

Drapery hardware: Orion Ornamental Iron, 877/476-6278, ironartbyorion.com.

Chairs; table: owner’s collection.

Chair fabric (“Porter”/Sage #8881, discontinued): Pindler & Pindler, 805/531-9090, pindler.com.

Wall sconces (antique): Santa Barbara Lights, 805/884-0535, santabarbaralights.com.

Paint: custom.

Pillows; vase: owner’s collection.

Flooring (reclaimed from Utah bridge): owner’s collection.





Sofas in the living room are slipcovered with a stain-resistant, easy-care indoor-outdoor fabric that is GreenGuard-certified as low in the emission of VOCs. The fabric is washable, too, so no toxic dry cleaning is required. Pillows in a variety of prints introduce colors and pattern, and an antique secretary adds height to the room. Paint colors for the walls were inspired by hues in rugs and fabrics.

SOURCES:

Flooring and fireplace mantel (recycled woods): Allen Associates, 805/884-8777, dennisallenassociates.com.

Rug (from Istanbul); sofa; russet-colored sofa pillow; coffee table (antique); secretary (antique); sconces (antique): owner's collection.

Sofa fabric ("Sandpiper"/Natural #25823-1): Kravet, 888/457-2838, kravet.com.

Green throw pillows ("Foglia Figured Woven"/Pine #89764-450): Brunswick & Fils, 800/538-1880, brunswick.com.

Pillow trim (#T30368-934): Kravet, 888/457-2838, kravet.com.

Yellow throw pillows ("Bryce"/Sunflower, discontinued): Pindler & Pindler, 805/531-9090, pindler.com.

Pillow trim ("Rustica Cord"/Nugget): Robert Allen, 800/333-3777, robertallendesign.com.

Ceiling light (antique): Santa Barbara Lights, 805/884-0535, santabarbaralights.com.

Art: Waterhouse Gallery, 805/962-8885, waterhousegallery.com.

Paint: custom.

Brick fire surround: Santa Barbara Stone & Masonry Supplies, 805/963-5891.

Candle sconces flanking fireplace: Santa Barbara Lights, 805/884-0535, santabarbaralights.com.

Mirror over mantel: Cabana Home, 877/214-0200, cabanahome.com.



Kathy Bush made use of vintage and antique pieces whenever possible. She rescued a discarded chandelier from a client's garage and restored it for her dining room. Kathy bought the matching mahogany dining set from a friend but toned down its formality by painting the sideboard turquoise and distressing and refinishing the tabletop. "I wanted it to be more user-friendly and casual," she says. Slipcovers on the dining chair seats are easy-care indoor-outdoor fabric, which also keeps the mood relaxed.

SOURCES:

Table and chairs; sideboard (vintage Duncan Phyfe); **rug** (from Istanbul); **chandelier** (found and restored); **accessories:** owner's collection.

Table lamp (antique tea tin): Summerland Antique Collective, 805/565-3189.

Drapery ("Rennie"/Gold, Beige #0514302): Vervain, 800/611-8686, vervain.com.

Drapery trim ("Triompe"/Blue, Red #3104711): Fabricut, 800/999-8200, fabricut.com.

Sheer Roman shades ("Highland"/linen scrim in Cream): Carol's Roman Shades, 800/422-1210, carolsromanshades.com.

Drapery hardware: Orion Ornamental Iron, 877/476-6278, ironartbyorion.com.

Paint: custom.



A 48-inch-wide Dacor range set at an angle under a mantel style hood is the focal point of the kitchen. Kathy worked closely with the architect to add wide window trims, beadboard wainscoting, and other architectural details to give the house a period look. The light fixtures are reproductions.

Fiber cement made with recycled fly ash is used for perimeter countertops that have the appearance of soapstone. The island top is marble. Kitchen cabinets were built with FSC-certified sustainable lumber. The cabinet boxes are formaldehyde-free melamine.

SOURCES:

Perimeter countertop (Slatescape): Rockmart Slate Corporation, 877/752-8331, slatescape.com.

Island countertop: Carrara marble.

Cabinetry; cabinetry finish: custom.

Cabinetry hardware: Restoration Hardware, 800/910-9836, restorationhardware.com.

Flooring: cement tiles.

Shelf corbels: recycled from original house.

Tile; border tile: NS Ceramic, 805/962-1422, nsceramic.com.

Window treatment (“Stripe Sheer”/Blue #ST604, Woven Collection): Kathryn M. Ireland Textiles & Design, 310/246-1906, kathrynireland.com.

Refrigerator (“Profile”): GE Appliances, 800/626-2005, geappliances.com.

Beverage center: Sub-Zero Inc., 800/222-7820, subzero.com.

Range (“Epicure,” 48-inch): Dacor, 800/793-0093, dacor.com.

Vent: Vulcan Vent, 916/652-7424, vulcanvents.com.

Kitchen sink: Rohl, 800/777-9762, rohllhome.com.

Faucet: Grohe, 800/444-7643, groheamerica.com.

Drinking water: Aquel, aquelwater.com.

Dishwasher: Miele, 800/843-7231, mieleusa.com.

Pendant lights over island; oven hood: owner’s collection. Sconce over window (custom): Steven Handelman Studios, 805/962-5119, stevenhandelmanstudios.com.

Paint: custom.

Bar stool (“La Tour Counter Stool”/Semois Blue): Pierre Deux, 888/743-7732, pierredeux.com.

A small table—a family antique—and two chairs create a cozy eating area in the kitchen. The sturdy hickory chairs came from a church school in England. Racks on the backs of the chairs were used to hold songbooks. Now the Bushes' grandchildren keep drawing supplies there. Kathy found the Spanish-style chandelier in an antique shop. She added blue-and-white medallion print shades to give the fixture French country styling.

Shelves in the kitchen were made using corbels salvaged from the original house. Kathy prefers open shelves for displaying dishes rather than upper wall cabinets.



SOURCES:

Chairs: The Pine Trader Antiques, 805/688-8700.

Window treatment (“Stripe Sheer”/Blue #ST604, Woven Collection): Kathryn M. Ireland Textiles & Design, 310/246-1906, kathrynireland.com.

Shades (“Chloe”/Blue): Pierre Deux, 888/743-7732, pierredeux.com.

Chandelier; table covers; accessories: owner’s collection.

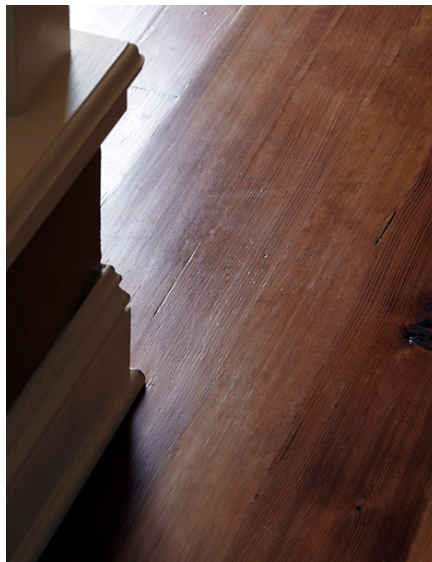
Paint: custom.

Kathy and Joe Bush relax in the library with their cat Pallas (named for the Greek goddess of wisdom). With shelves lined with books, the library is Joe's favorite retreat. Pocket doors allow him to crank up the stereo and listen to his music without bothering Kathy.



Redwood salvaged from the front of the original house was refinished and installed as 38-inch-high wainscoting and baseboards in the library. The walls are a perfect backdrop for Joe's collection of old golf clubs, including a hickory-shafted putter made in Scotland about 1880.

Floors are made from 125-year-old Douglas fir that came from an old railroad trestle.



SOURCES:

Chair: Barcalounger, barcalounger.com.

Library table (antique); **accessories:** owner's collection.

A new canopy bed is softened with an antique crocheted coverlet made by Kathy's great aunt. Other bed linens are organic cotton.



SOURCES:

Bed ("Acorn"): Kolkka Furniture, 650/327-5001, kolkka.com.

Mattress: Land and Sky Organic, 800/755-7667, landandsky.com.

Drapery ("Milford"/Gold #2008156-424): Lee Jofa, 800/453-3563, leejofa.com.

Roman shades ("Capri"/Soft White): Roman Shades, 800/422-1210, carolsromanshades.com.

Tables: Nadeau, furniturewithasoul.com.
Table lamps: owner's collection.

Bed skirt: Anthropologie, 800/309-2500, anthropologie.com.

Bedding: Ralph Lauren Home, 888/475-7674, ralphlaurenhome.com.

Chandelier ("Barcelona"/Black #CH121): Steven Handelman Studios, 805/962-5119, stevenhandelmanstudios.com.

Chair: Sofa U Love, 818/504-9922, sofaulove.com.

Chair fabric; pillow on chair: owner's collection.

Paint: custom.

Carrara marble surrounds the deep soaking tub and tops the vanity in the master bath. An old train suitcase rack serves as a tub-side towel shelf. To bring light into the walk-in shower, an interior window was installed above the tub.



SOURCES:

Tile; decorative tile border: NS Ceramics, 805/962-1422, nsceramic.com.

Vanity countertop: Carrara marble.

Sinks; tub: Kohler, 800/456-4537, kohler.com.

Sink faucets; tub faucet: Rohl, 800/777-9762, rohlhome.com.

Tub lights: Cree, 800/533-2583, cree.com.

Lighting: Steven Handelman Studios, 805/962-5119, stevenhandelmanstudios.com.

Drapery: Osborne & Little, 877/322-7420, osborneandlittle.com.

Paint: custom.