



MINDY NICOLE PHOTOS

Neutral-toned Scandinavian furniture blends with the simplicity of the interior, which has an all-white color palette combined with black trim and walnut accents.

Window to a modernist marvel

Update of a 70-year-old home sticks with floor-to-ceiling glass design to maximize Point Loma view



Italian ceramic tile continues from the interior to the drought-tolerant backyard to create a cohesive indoor-outdoor look.



The master bedroom and bathroom are separated only by a free-standing wall. The entire home only has seven interior doors.

BY MARTINA SCHIMITSCHEK

Built 70 years ago by Lloyd Ruocco, this hillside Point Loma house has a new, updated look without losing the soul of the home the renowned San Diego Modernist architect envisioned. “The outside layout is the same. We tore everything out, but we kept the layout. Inside, everything is new,” said architect Jesper Pedersen of DNA Design Group, who spent three years reinventing the property in keeping with Ruocco’s design while adding sustainable materials.

“The house was exactly like this but built in the ‘40s. The whole house was falling apart,” said the homeowner, who



The homeowner replaced the lawn with an infinity pool, which creates sight lines to the expansive view.

wishes to remain anonymous.

The home will be open for public viewing next weekend as part of the San Diego Architectural Foundation’s OHI San Diego+o (Open House San Diego) event. It will be one of 100 locations in downtown, Bankers Hill, Barrio Logan, Balboa Park and Point Loma participating in the event, which includes a number of sustainable and mixed-use buildings as well as affordable housing developments and behind-the-scenes peeks at landmarks such as the Spreckels Organ Pavilion.

Simplicity is the key to the 4,100-square-foot house that seems to consist mainly of glass under a new metal roof. Floor-to-ceiling glass walls are on the front- and back-facing sides of the house for a see-through view that expands past an infinity pool, across the bay, the cityscape and to the hills of Mexico.

SEE MODERNIST • E6



BRIAN CALDWELL

A male ruby-crowned kinglet showing off his namesake crown.

BACKYARD BIRD-WATCHING

PHOTO OF KINGLET'S RUBY CROWN IS A RARE GEM

Elusive breed doesn't stand still for a very long

BY ERNIE COWAN

A birding friend once told me that trying to photograph a ruby-crowned kinglet was like trying to capture an image of popcorn while it's popping.

I was confirming that warning while madly moving about trying to get any shot, much less a good one, of this highly animated little bird. Not only did I want a usable photo of the kinglet, I was hoping to capture the namesake ruby crown, an

even more difficult task.

This tiny insect eater, weighing in at less than a quarter of an ounce, is a common winter visitor to San Diego, scattered widely from coastal slopes to desert riparian habitats.

On this particular day, I was rooting around in the brush at water's edge at Lake Hodges where I had spotted several of these active birds bouncing around in the winter-bare trees.

SEE KINGLET • E6

NEED A SLEEPER SOFA? REST EASY

11 space-saving — and stylish — models transform any room into a guest room

BY LISA BOONE

As many homeowners move to living smaller in tiny houses, accessory dwelling units and mobile homes, the sleeper sofa has taken on new importance regarding space-saving needs. From modular sofas that come equipped with pop-up storage to sleek click-in-place daybeds, today's designs can be pushed, pulled and opened like a book. And they look good, too.

Here are 11 of the latest designs to hit the market. Prices were checked prior to publication but may fluctuate, depending on individual retailers.

1. The Flipside Sofabed from Gus Modern: The Flipside Sofabed in the new Chelsea Pacific fabric converts the clean-lined sofa into a queen-size bed with one quick flip.

With easy-pull fabric handles and a removable, machine-washable cotton top sheet for overnight guests. \$1,999; gusmodern.com

2. Thataway Sleeper Sofa from Blu Dot: The minimal but curvaceous 82-inch Thataway sofa features an easy-flip cushion that creates a bed with a touch of the hand. Available in Tait Charcoal uphol-



The Flipside Sofabed from Gus Modern: Shown in the new Chelsea Pacific fabric, the clean-lined sofa converts into a queen-size bed with one quick flip.



GUS MODERN

stery (90 percent polyester and 10 percent linen blend). \$1,999; bludot.com

3. Stay Daybed from Jayson Home: The handy trundle on the tufted Stay Daybed can be pulled out from under the daybed to create a twin bed or up to create a queen-size bed. Available in canvas-granite cotton fabric (85 percent

cotton, 15 percent polyester) and black walnut wood finish. \$3,595; jaysonhome

4. Wink Sleeper from Crate & Barrel: The no-nonsense Wink Sleeper can accommodate three positions: sitting upright, lounge position and sleeper — and is ideal for apartments and other small

SEE SLEEPER • E3

KINGLET

FROM E1

I knew the kinglets had taken up winter residence at the lake, because Lake Hodges Photo Tours owner Brian Caldwell had recently posted a great photo of a male in full color display.

I had to get an even better shot.

For several hours, over three days, I stood in muddy water, got poked with stiff tree branches, busted through thick brush and patiently waited in camou-

flage for the kinglet to arrive and show off his namesake bright red patch.

The problem was not finding the bird. The challenge was capturing the colorful crown feathers while they are briefly displayed. The animated little bird doesn't sit still for more than a second or two and may or may not flash the crown feathers briefly.

I even gently used an app on my phone that plays bird calls. That helped attract the kinglets, but didn't do much to keep them still.

I did get several good photos, but none were as

good as the one taken by Caldwell. I'll keep trying, but it might have to wait until next winter.

These tiny visitors usually arrive in San Diego in early September and have departed for their summer homes by the end of April or early May. In the summer months, the kinglet migrates to breeding grounds in the spruce-fir forests in the mountains of the western United States and Canada, and as far north as the tree line of the arctic.

Because the ruby feathers are not always on display,

birders often have a difficult time distinguishing between the kinglet and the Hutton's vireo, a bird of similar size and coloration.

Probably the easiest way to tell the difference in the field is by the white wing bars. The kinglet has single white bar above a thick black bar on the wing, while the vireo has two white wing bars with no distinctive black bar.

A similar species, the golden-crowned kinglet is a rare visitor to San Diego.

The tiny, 4-inch, ruby-crowned kinglet is an olive-green songbird on top with

fruit and a variety of insects.

The ruby-crowned kinglet is one of North America's smallest perching songbirds, but with its loud and complex song it brings joyful sounds to its winter habitat here in San Diego.

The tiny size makes it a challenge to spot, but it's well worth the effort, especially if you are lucky enough to see the beautiful ruby crown.

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MODERNIST

FROM E1

The profusion of glass was part of the original concept of the home, as Ruocco sited his houses to maximize the views. The amount of glass used in this home is no longer permitted, Pedersen said, because of California energy-usage restrictions. But since the home's footprint was unaltered, Pedersen was allowed to keep the design. He installed more energy-efficient glass and added sliding doors to further blur the line between interior and exterior.

Materials were kept to a minimum. Italian Maxfine tiles, which are thin, super hard ceramic, are used both inside and out. Pedersen worked closely with landscape architect Richard Risner of Grounded Modern Landscape Architecture to create a cohesive look.

The floor tiles are white,

as is most of the interior of the three-bedroom, 3½-bathroom house. Black window and door frames as well as walnut accents in every room keep the interior from becoming too stark.

"I call the project 50 shades of white," Pedersen said.

White limestone tiles from Eldorado Stone of San Marcos set in a 3D pattern decorate the two fireplace walls — one in the living room by the entrance and the other in the family room and bar area. The uneven pattern adds light and shadow to the otherwise white walls. The living and family spaces are separated by a glass-enclosed courtyard and an office. The office is in its original location and is enclosed by a walnut-clad wall, much like the original wood wall. Pedersen's version includes a pattern of openings to connect the office space with the living area. Each square or horizontal

OH! San Diego

When: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. March 23 and 24

Where: 100 locations city-wide including homes, architecture and design studios, museums, schools, hotels, high-rises and historically designated sites.

Tickets: free, although some sites require reservations

Online: sdarchitecture.org

opening is lined with LED string lights.

Pedersen, a native of Denmark, "has that Scandinavian thinking: clean and open," said the owner, who hired Pedersen for the project shortly after he purchased the property in 2015. "The house was open, and he opened it more."

The kitchen, which was originally walled off from the rest of the home and the view, was completely redesigned. "People lived differently in the '40s. They had servants. Now we cook our own meals," Pedersen said.

The kitchen's flat ceiling was removed to open the space to the rooflines. A few support beams had to stay in place, but Pedersen said, with their angles, they can be seen as a work of art.

A white lacquered wall of cabinets by Aster Cucine of Italy hides the refrigerator, freezer and wine cooler and sets the tone for the minimalist space that is now open to the view. Aster Cucine products are made with recycled wood or 100 percent post-consumer



MINDY NICOLE PHOTOS

The remodel updated the house, including an energy-efficient metal roof, without losing modernist architect Lloyd Ruocco's 1949 glass design.

particleboard and nontoxic finishes. A 18-foot-long island allows cooks to enjoy the view and face guests seated by a floating walnut-wood bar counter.

The simple finished look of the home lies in the "millions of details," Pedersen said. "Everything had to be flush with straight lines." There are no cabinet knobs or molding or hanging lamps. To keep the view center stage, even the televisions are concealed in the floor in the living area and the master bedroom when not in use.

Pedersen also furnished the home. The furnishings reflect his Scandinavian aesthetic with classic Danish designs in muted tones and natural leather.

The private area of the home is in one wing of the L-shaped house. The master suite, at the end of the L, is also wrapped in floor-to-ceiling windows. Only the side facing a neighboring



The closed-off kitchen was integrated into the home, continuing the clean lines and white palette.

house is a solid closet wall.

In keeping with the open concept of the home (there are only seven interior doors), the bedroom and bathroom are separated by a partial wood-clad wall. The bed is set against it on one side and the bathroom sinks are on the other side. A shower and free-standing tub are opposite the sinks

against a wall with textured white tiles that resemble abstract flower petals. Even this space has floor-to-ceiling windows that face the courtyard, with the pool and the cityscape beyond.

"The house is really about the view," Pedersen said.

Schimitschek is a San Diego freelance writer.


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