

BUILDING AN ITALIAN VILLA IN CALIFORNIA

# FROM UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN

When architect Robert Hidey was asked to build a true Tuscan home with all the Italian elegance yet with all the West Coast comforts, he knew he was in for an Italian delight Hollywood style.

By Virginia Gil

French doors divide the entertaining areas and outdoor terrace, providing guests with sprawling views of the California hillside and Pacific Ocean.





SeaPoint's C-shaped structure was instrumental in creating fluidity between the exteriors and interiors.

◀ Seapoint's C-shaped design allows seamless access to a number of the communal spaces as well as the outdoors.



The charm of an Italian villa knows no geography—ornate exteriors, rustic walls and vaulted ceilings are seemingly alluring on any continent. Robert Hidey and his team of world-renowned residential architects discovered this quickly when they were tasked with designing SeaPoint, a 6,150-square-foot Tuscan-style home nestled in the hills of Newport Beach, California. With its stunning views of the Pacific Ocean to one side and rolling hills on the other, the five-bedroom estate exudes both a European sensibility and a cool West-Coast lifestyle. The surrounds were first in informing the architects' vision. "Our clients requested a home that would maximize the breathtaking ocean views, provide ample space for indoor and outdoor entertainment, and accommodate for long-term visitors," explains Hidey. Incorporating the family's needs into the overall design meant working from the outside in, beginning with the sheltered loggias and sundeck. The covered patio, pool, spa and outdoor kitchen already captured the home's spectacular backdrop, so for Hidey and his team, it was a matter of ushering it all inside.

SeaPoint's C-shaped structure was instrumental in creating fluidity between the exteriors and interiors. A natural flow occurs from the courtyard to the home's entertaining spaces by way of two large French



▲ Neutrals and natural light, spilling in from practically every angle, lend themselves to the home's laid-back, California vibe.

◀ The dining room, with its courtyard views, is the crux of the home's communal areas.





▲ No true Italian villa would be complete without its very own wine cellar. This stone-clad version features horizontally spread wine racks to display the owner's prized bottles.


doors. The dining room, which looks out into the courtyard's illuminated fireplace, is at the foot of the semi-circular pavilion. The great room and living room, situated at opposite ends of the open-air space, flank the center dining area to where either side practically spills out into the outdoors. Helping to create this illusion are natural touches peppered throughout the design, including fresh

flowers and an array of lush houseplants in a variety of sizes. The kitchen, another focal point in the home, is considerably more enclosed than the other common areas, but still conducive to hosting large crowds. Though replete with Sub Zero appliances—including warming drawers—all remain within the confines of a shelf, or nestled into the wall, in





order to create more space. Kitchen countertops are vast and multifunctional—as a prep station, dining area or serving space—though additional room can be found in the butler’s pantry off the formal dining area. As is true of larger European villas, from which much of SeaPoint’s unique look draws from, this home is equipped with a fully functioning wine cellar. “The stone-clad wine cellar, traditional in Italian design, features horizontally spread wine racks to display the owner’s prized bottles in this climate-controlled cavern,” Hidey explains. The soothing, neutral-tined formal dining space adjacent to the cellar provides an intimate space for guests to retreat, he says.

Most of the home is designed with guests and variable elements in mind, but the vision behind the master suite kept solely its inhabitants in mind. The massive space includes a bedroom, a sitting room and his-and-hers walk-in closets, providing a quiet respite from the bustling downstairs area—yet the room’s rich browns and subdued beige tones help bring cohesion to what is otherwise a separate space. Downstairs, the junior-master, though smaller, pays equal reverence to privacy with a secluded outdoor retreat, thanks to a terrace that extends from the ensuite bathroom. Whether you’re peering out the second-story balcony or making your way downstairs to the courtyard, the views of the neighboring Pacific Ocean are remarkably stunning from every angle, as if this palatial villa were under the Tuscan sun, overlooking the Tyrrhenian Sea. 

- ▲ Talk about a view. The junior bedroom’s ensuite features a balcony that spans the width of the bathroom.
- ▼ Too tired to join your guests downstairs? The master bedroom’s living area is the perfect place to relax in private.

