

HOW TO RENOVATE FOR PROFIT: THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

INSIDERS

INSPIRING HOMES WITH HEART

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SECRETS FROM OUR
FLIPPING EXPERTS

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project manager and finance insider

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WAVE

*Quality
street*
6 SMART
WAYS TO
AMPLIFY YOUR
EXTERIORS

MAKING AN ENTRANCE
*Stylish storage and design tips
for dreamy hallways*

CHRISTMAS IN JULY WINTER FEAST AND STYLING IDEAS FOR YOUR TABLE

CHEAT SHEET

Who lives here Yaniv and Nina Tepper with their three children, aged 13 to 21, and two dogs.

Style of home A California Modernist house, built in 1956 and largely untouched before 2009, except for some minor renovations.

Location Laurel Canyon in the Hollywood Hills of Los Angeles, USA.

Timeline The Teppers bought the house in the early 2000s and lived there for years before renovating. Structural works were finished by 2019, and the interiors by 2020.

BRANCHING OUT



Adding more living space to an already special home was a unique challenge for LA's Assembledge+ architects, who went up to capture tree views of the exclusive neighbourhood

POOL AREA (above) Architect David Thompson was tasked with opening the home up to its glorious garden and the canyon beyond. He also specified sustainable materials such as western red cedar for the new first floor. Fiore Landscape Design then made the outdoor areas more drought-tolerant. Sectional furniture, Gloster. Day beds, Janus Et Cie. Side tables, Dedon. **FAMILY ROOM** (above and opposite) New sliding doors have aligned this relaxed space with the pool. Interior designer Vanessa Alexander designed the deep blue sofa and wall-hung bronze shelving. Rug, Mehraban.

WORDS **DEBORAH GRANT** PHOTOGRAPHY **LAURE JOLIET** STYLING **LISA ROWE**

 good news

Solar heating, grey-water irrigation and drought-tolerant landscaping are key features of the renovation.



Laurel Canyon's Wonderland Park Avenue community of 67 homes was developed in the 1950s by a group of friends that included well-known American landscape designer Garrett Eckbo, who master-planned the properties by immersing them in nature. One of the houses was a single-level ranch-style design bought by Yaniv and Nina Tepper in 2004.

In addition to its leafy streets, the couple were drawn to the creative vibe of the area – which has been an enclave for musicians and artists since the 1970s – and lived there quite happily until their third child was born. By then, lack of space had become an issue. Cue Assembledge+ principal architect David Thompson, who'd gone to high school in Los Angeles with both Yaniv and Nina. "We had met other architects, but Assembledge+ seemed at an exciting moment in its trajectory, and David's style was communicative, engaging and exciting," says Yaniv. "We were open to all ideas and really followed his creative lead on the style, where to break the mould, and where to work with the existing."

The couple had already invested in the outdoor spaces of the home, upgrading the pool and retaining walls that sat up against the canyon's challenging grades. This time, their priorities were better access to the backyard (at that time only through a kitchen side door or the main bedroom) and expanded living spaces that took it all in, as well as an additional storey to capture the more wide-ranging tree-top views.

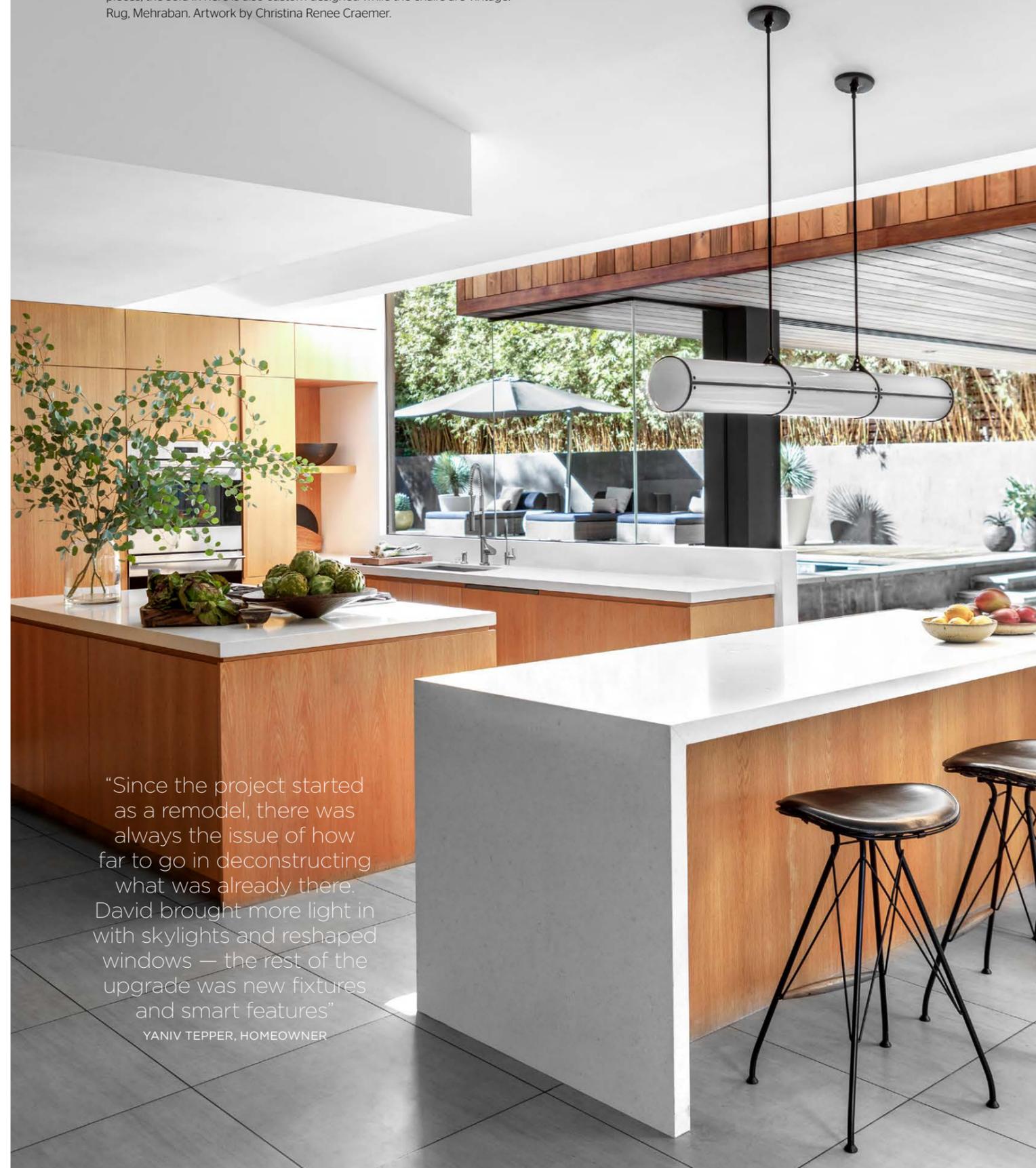
"More square footage and a home that engaged with the lush Laurel Canyon environment were the key aspects of the brief," says David. "Ranch or rambler houses are characterised by L- or U-shaped structures built low to the ground and with some sort of outdoor space, be it a deck, patio or lawn. We preserved that low-slung ranch-style roof line on the left side [from the front] and went up on the right side."

Entry to the expanded home – now 301 square metres – is through a door between the living and dining areas (the family also has access from the garage), and from there the house has been substantially opened up and lightened. Floor-to-ceiling glass sliding doors, reshaped windows and a narrow nine-metre skylight between the existing building and the new upper addition were instrumental in the vast improvement.

"Both floors are now defined by transparency and their interconnection with the exterior," says David. "On the ground floor it's the occupiable outside spaces; on the first floor it's the oak and eucalyptus trees that fill the canyon. The experience is truly that of living amongst the trees."

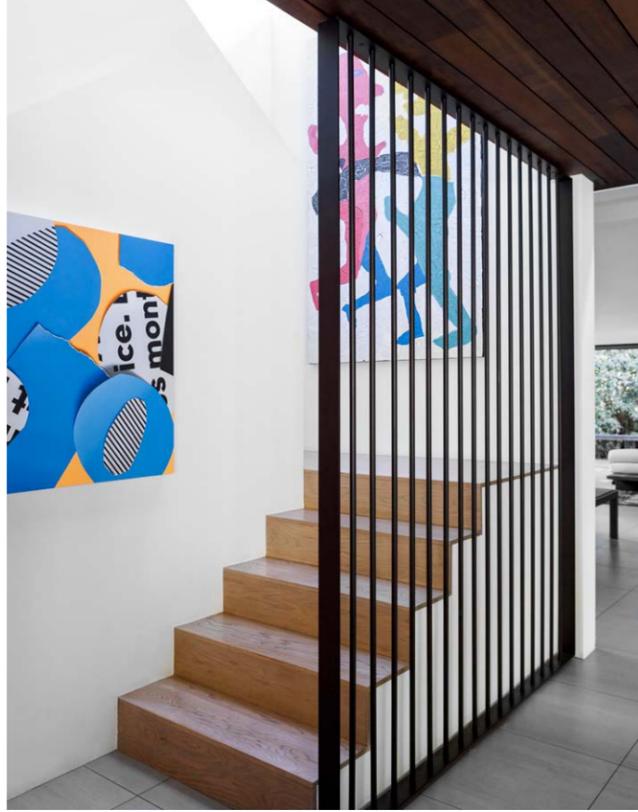
Nature played a major role inside as well because the owners were keen to renovate as sustainably as possible. Nina is a child psychologist and Yaniv a partner at The Angeleno Group, a private equity firm that invests in clean energy companies. They wanted their home to function in a more environmentally friendly way, and chose materials that were similarly considered. As such, David specified renewable western red cedar cladding

KITCHEN "This is the heart of the residence, physically connecting the social and private areas and providing views horizontally to the landscape and vertically through the skylight," says David. "Night-time illumination over the island bench is provided by a pendant light from Roll & Hill," adds Vanessa. "It didn't feel too distracting but still makes its presence felt." Bar stools, Overgaard & Dyrman. **LIVING ROOM** (opposite) Like the family area's key pieces, the sofa in here is also custom designed while the chairs are vintage. Rug, Mehraban. Artwork by Christina Renee Craemer.



"Since the project started as a remodel, there was always the issue of how far to go in deconstructing what was already there. David brought more light in with skylights and reshaped windows – the rest of the upgrade was new fixtures and smart features"

YANIV TEPPER, HOMEOWNER



for various walls and ceilings inside and out, which also reinforced the treehouse notion. His selections were complemented by the interior expertise of Alexander Design and Susan Mitnick Design Studio (which did a bathroom).

"We directed the colours and finishes," says Vanessa Alexander, "and then, of course, the furnishings and decorative lighting. Our brief was low-key elegance focusing on comfort, with subtle mid-century references." Her main challenge was uniting the open-plan living spaces. "All of the main-floor rooms had to play well with each other and yet feel distinct. We kept the profiles fairly low and, in the kitchen, used a materials palette that is warm and strong, with a light stone connecting the island benches and counter spaces, and no visible hardware on the cabinetry."

"This design was a major departure for us," says Yaniv. "Before Wonderland Park, we lived in an urban Spanish bungalow with arches and stucco and dark nooks. This house is all post and beam, organic woods and glass, open expanses and light. It feels twice as large now and has the flexibility to accommodate our long-term family growth (maybe grandkids one day?) or just the two of us as empty-nesters sipping coffee listening to the canyon surrounds."

"That said, LA is a playground of fabulous neighbourhoods and design opportunities, so who knows what's next for us?" ¹⁰ *Assembled+ is at assembled.com and @assembled. Alexander Design is at alexanderdb.com and @alexanderdesignbuild. Susan Mitnick Design Studio is at susanmitnick.com*

STAIRCASE (top) Artworks by Ramsey Dau (at left) and Ed Moses add interest to the trip up to the new main bedroom, which has all the amenities.

READING NOOK (right) "I really love the built-in couch in the main bedroom's generous sitting area. It's super cosy and has a very self-contained hotel-suite vibe," says Vanessa. Round table. Blend Interiors. Rug, Mehraban. Clate Grunden pendant light, Tim Clarke.



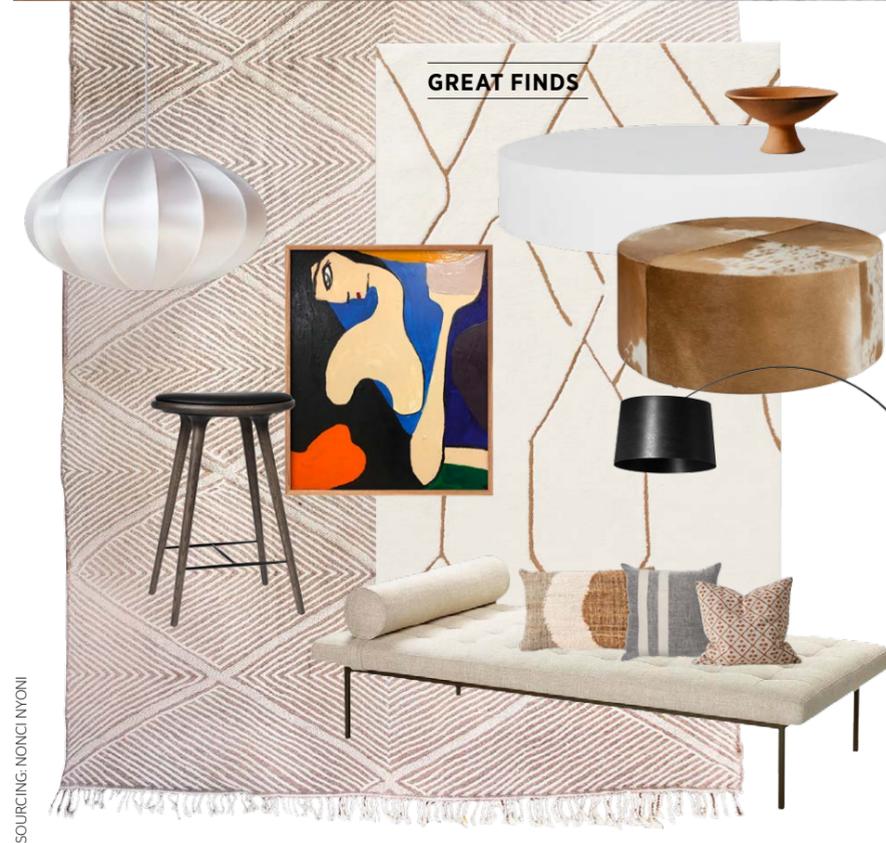
ENSUITE Across this section of the house, "ribbon windows reveal an almost abstract composition of bright and dark leaves, adjacent tree trunks, heavy boughs, swaying branches and glimpses of distant hillside and sky," says David. **MAIN BEDROOM** (opposite top) Vanessa describes this suite of rooms as seeming to "float in the air". Bed, custom. Vintage lounge by Poul Kjaerholm, through JF Chen. **BATHROOM** (opposite bottom) Susan Mitnick Design Studio came up with the palette of finishes for this wet area.



lessons learnt

"OUR DESIGN SOLVED A COMMON PROBLEM"
DAVID THOMPSON, ARCHITECT

"It can be difficult to expand an existing building without compromising its original character. In this case, the solution entailed the introduction of a long skylight to mediate between the lower building and new upper addition."



GREAT FINDS

ADDITIONAL PRODUCT SOURCING: NONCI NYONI

CLOCKWISE (from top left) Marazion **kilim rug** (4.8m x 3.15m), \$7500, Tigmi Trading. Nyla tribal **shag rug** in Cream and Gold (1.8m x 1.2m), \$250, Miss Amara. Monaco round concrete **coffee table** in White, from \$1795, Coco Republic. Nigel fruit **bowl** in Terracotta, \$129, McMullin & Co. Cowhide **ottoman** in Caramel and White, \$2140, April & Oak. Foscarini 'Twiggy' **floor lamp**, \$2610, Space Furniture. Spencer **day bed**, from \$2732, Contents International Design. Byblos **cushion** in Spice, \$89.95, Weave Home. Cabin Harbour **cushion cover** in Navy, \$85, Canvas+Sasson. Shoal **cushion** in Bronze/Multi, \$109, RJ Living. Mater high **stool**, from \$2310, Cult Design. Pumpkin **pendant** in Off-White, \$1100, Tigmi Trading. *Paint The World Mustard artwork* by Kate Rogers, \$250, Bluethumb.

