

Step Inside This Playful "California Cool" Abode

As an interior designer, it's the first time Lauren Meichtry showcases full creative freedom.

BY [ALYSSA GAUTIERI](#) PUBLISHED: APR 1, 2024



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Home to a crafty family of four, this Manhattan Beach property is full of coastal-inspired colors and natural textures that define the sought-after "California cool" style. From room to room, interior designer Lauren Meichtry, founder of [Elsie Home](#), hunted for creative ways to reflect the couple and their two young daughters — without straying too far from the expectation of a beach house.

Aside from the fact that the clients loved every lighting, fabric and furniture choice, this project marked Meichtry's first time designing an entire house. The goal was to curate a space that feels casual, yet playful. "I knew the family would be willing to see a mix of color, pattern and texture," says Meichtry, who dreamed up a color palette based on the surroundings. Think muted greens and cool blues, plus warm beige and bright white.

Enter a sunny, open-concept space.

The homeowners hired [Thomas James Homes](#) to build the property. While the hard finishes were already decided and the walls were painted white, Meichtry took the opportunity to introduce character. "I tried to add flair through lighting, artwork and decor," she says.



Stay a while in the living room.

Star patterned ceramic tiles, selected by the homeowners, installed around the fireplace act as a focal point in the airy living space. "The tiles were a great jumping off point for creating playfulness and personality," says Meichtry, who weaves in striped drapery for warmth and natural elements (like a woven lamp) for a subtle coastal feel. "Little modifications, like textures and artwork, can make a room feel customized," especially when your starting point looks builder-grade.



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Entertain in the dining room.

Where mid-century modern meets coastal style, the dining room is defined by a striking chandelier, mismatched seating and a dramatic sideboard from [Lulu and Georgia](#). "When designing for an active family, I want every space to be a room they will actually use," says Meichtry, who prioritizes comfortable and casual [dining chairs](#).



Take a repose on the deck.

Exit the living room through cantina doors onto a covered deck that feels like an extension of the home. The modern [patio set](#) encourages the family (including their two dogs) to spend time outdoors, while the outdoor rug, round coffee tables and oversized rattan pendant maintain the casual style found inside.



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Make the most of bonus spaces.

Instead of a guest bedroom, Meichtry creates a playful space for the young girls to hang out with friends, watch movies and play video games. When guests are in town, the custom-designed sofa transforms into a queen-size bed. Meanwhile, another spare room is turned into a pattern-filled craft room, from the dash wallpaper to the round mirrors from [Jamie Young](#). "To spark creativity, you need to be in a space that makes you feel creative," says Meichtry.



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Take in every detail of the primary bedroom.

Focused on their two young girls, the clients weren't prioritizing the primary bedroom — but Meichtry was determined to create a cozy haven for the couple. Layers of texture add a surge of warmth, from plush [Parachute Home](#) bedding and decorative throws from [Elsie Home](#) to a woven leather bed frame and fluted dresser.

Embrace whimsy in a girl's bedroom.

For a third grader whose girly, silly and loves color, starburst peel-and-stick wallpaper, rainbow decor and a [hanging egg chair](#) are the perfect bedroom accents. Playing on the rainbow theme, Meichtry sticks to arch shapes — notice the arched bed frame, bookshelf and rounded chair. The best part? This spirited space can grow with her — just swap out small accents like throw blankets and wall art.



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End your tour in this tween's boho bedroom.

Last but not least, the tween daughter's bedroom — adorned with a palm fronds wallpaper and decorated with natural textures — has a bohemian flair. Despite the bedroom being small, Meichtry wanted this bold print plastered on all four walls for a real wow factor. "I promised my clients that it wasn't going to make the room feel smaller, and it strangely makes the room feel bigger."

Bring a "California Cool" Style Into Your Home