

HAUTE LIVING

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FEATURED ARTICLES, HAUTE RESIDENCES — 1 MONTH AGO

Iconic Post Ranch Inn Unveils Renovated Cliffside Ocean Houses

by OLIVIA DECKER

Romantic and Reimagined Vision of Classic Architectural Homage to Big Sur

COVETED FOR THEIR BREATHTAKING COASTAL VIEWS OF THE Pacific Ocean and unparalleled privacy, these five individual Ocean Houses were designed by legendary Big Sur architectural designer Mickey Muennig as the first earth-sheltered hotel rooms in the United States. They were built directly into the cliffside, each with a curved, beamed roof covered in a soft bed of grasses and native flora. After Muennig retired, Post Ranch Inn dubbed Mike Niemann as successor project designer. His talent and organically focused sensibility have placed him at the forefront of all Post Ranch Inn design projects, including the reimagined Ocean Houses.

Three units known as the “North Ocean Houses,” located near the meditation pool and the farthest ocean-view units to the north, received the most extensive renovations. Capitalizing on unobstructed views to the horizon from their perches on the cliff’s edge, the cottages’ new features include stainless steel, custom, 2-person soaking tubs and a double lounge chair with new stone patio on the oceanview deck and new stone on the front entrance as well. Fully remodeled bathrooms feature a new walk-in shower with full ocean views, dual-vanity sinks, and stone floors with radiant heating. Full-height, wall-to-wall, operable windows were added oceanside to showcase endless blue Pacific views.



The remaining two units, referred to as the “South Ocean Houses,” are located near the Sierra Mar restaurant. Undergoing more of a restoration and revitalization, the historic floor plans of these most iconic of Post Ranch Inn suites were left intact. The refreshed interior bathtub-shower-combination maintains full ocean views, was remodeled to be more accessible, and features a natural pebble wall and flooring. The improved 2-sided fireplace can be enjoyed from both the living area and the soaking tub. Additionally, there are new stone floors with radiant heat, locally sourced sinks and plumbing fixtures, modern detailing in all woodwork, and a complete refinishing and restoration of the storied redwood paneling throughout. Just as in the North Ocean Houses, custom upholstery for the daybed cushions was provided by Ted Boerner of San Francisco.



Custom made stainless steel,2-person soaking tub at Ocean Houses

High atop the cliff of Big Sur, 1200 feet above the Pacific Ocean, sits Post Ranch Inn, a sanctuary for the soul. Idela for romance, relaxation or rejuvenation, this Big Sur resort is the ultimate destination for a luxurious escape. With natural architecture embracing the coast's dramatic beauty, the 39 rooms blend rustic elegance, comfort and privacy with panoramic ocean or mountains.



The dramatic Sierra Mar restaurant deck

The single- and dual-sided woodburning fireplaces maintain the units' signature warmth and romance. New, higher performance systems and solutions featuring recycled and sustainable materials include reclaimed denim insulation; redwood interior paneling from vintage wine barrels; high-performance windows, glazing and shades; and the living roof system with new native, low-water landscaping embracing the Post Ranch Inn sustainability ethos. These new systems allow for improved energy efficiency, passive heating and cooling, and enhanced natural air ventilation.

Rich hardwood room appointments and furnishings, including the breathtaking ocean-view daybeds, cabinetry and coffee tables, were handcrafted onsite using a combination of reclaimed North African Bubinga and reclaimed local lumber materials. Custom-fabricated lamps from craftsman Jim Misner accent them. A whimsical integration of local artwork and craftsmanship reflects the acclaimed talents of Big Sur glass artist Shelby Hawthorne and local woodworker Joaquin Sullivan, skillfully intersecting with hand-selected works from Big Sur artist Greg Hawthorne of the acclaimed Hawthorne Gallery.



Ocean House terrace

"The project has authentically woven past with present, as showcased by two generations of woodworkers and artists," notes Mike Niemann. "Joaquin Sullivan's father, Mark, made furniture for the original rooms, and Shelby Hawthorne's artisan glasswork is featured in the custom sliding doors, while her father's, Greg's, paintings adorn the walls."

More Big Sur magic is apparent in the use of a single tree to outfit all the specialty hardwood pieces, including custom door pulls, coffee tables, and platform beds. Local Big Sur craftspeople and echoes of the property's history come together to produce a most artful series of rooms.



Ocean House room

In keeping with the aesthetic of the property, the modern design of all five Ocean Houses is grounded in a raw, simple, natural palate with elements of concrete, stone, and wood. This renovation was a truly collaborative effort between the design team, local artists, and artisans, all aiming to pay homage to the integrity of the classic architecture, rich history of the property, a commitment to sustainability, and an irresistible invitation for guests to embrace the magic and allure of Post Ranch Inn.

For more information, please visit: www.postranchinn.com.

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