



Living in a Big Old City

A Southern California home blends rustic and modern elements to create farmhouse charm.

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Is location really everything? When Joseph and Jamie Horton moved with their two kids to the coastal city of Newport Beach, California, the real estate was ideal, but the structure was outdated. At 2,500 square feet, the building took up most of the space on the small lot, so there wasn't room to expand. "We could only do so much on the original footprint of the house," Jamie says. But with the help of designer Mindy Laven, the Hortons were able to update the home and infuse it with the farmhouse style they love.

REMODEL AND RECONSTRUCT

It all started with a flood. "We knew when we moved in that we would want to update the house, but we wanted to live in it first and feel out the space," Jamie says. When a weekend of pouring rain flooded their upstairs porch and leaked downstairs, they knew it was time to start the remodel. "We opened Pandora's box and ended up doing the whole thing," Jamie says.

The most major change the Hortons made was to open up the downstairs floor plan to make the spaces more connected. They removed a wall in the kitchen and another in the hallway

The dining area shares a vaulted ceiling with the kitchen and makes the space feel connected and homey. Rustic touches such as the iron chandelier and wood table add classic farmhouse style.

leading to the living room. “We knew we wanted to get rid of the walls and create an open space,” Jamie says.

She also moved the entire kitchen. The original galley-style kitchen was in the back of the house, but that was too disconnected for Jamie. “At our previous house we had an open kitchen, and I wanted to bring that into this house,” she says. The old kitchen became a butler’s pantry, which provided plenty of extra storage space.





To the side of the kitchen resides a metal pole—a remnant from the original house. “We thought we were going to case it in wood, but we decided to leave it,” designer Mindy Laven says. The piece adds a rustic touch to the space.

A rustic dining area featuring a white oval table with a pedestal base. Two wicker chairs with red and white polka-dot fabric are tucked under the table. On the table sits a silver vase with a bouquet of sunflowers and other flowers, a glass of beer, a red butter dish, and a small plate with a croissant. A window seat with red and white striped cushions is built into the wall under a large window. To the left is a wooden barn door with a black metal sliding mechanism. A white pendant light hangs from the ceiling. The floor is made of light-colored wood.

The vision was a modern rustic farmhouse, *complete with reclaimed wood, beadboard and metal touches.*



"I lost wall space when we moved the kitchen," she says. "So by creating the pantry, it gave me a huge storage space."

DESIGNING WITH A VISION

When it came to the interior design, Jamie relied on the knowledge of designer Mindy Laven to help her execute her vision for the home. "I knew I wanted it to be more modern, but I loved that farmhouse look," Jamie says. "I had a lot of ideas, and Mindy helped me to narrow my vision."

That vision was a modern rustic farmhouse, complete with reclaimed wood, beadboard and metal touches. "A big part of what makes the house special is the authentic reclaimed wood," Mindy says. "There's a lot of 'reclaimed wood' out there but this is real, not pseudo-reclaimed." The wood shows up in the kitchen, living room and even by the front door. "We framed the inside of the door with reclaimed wood and painted the door black," Mindy says. This mixture of modern

OPPOSITE.

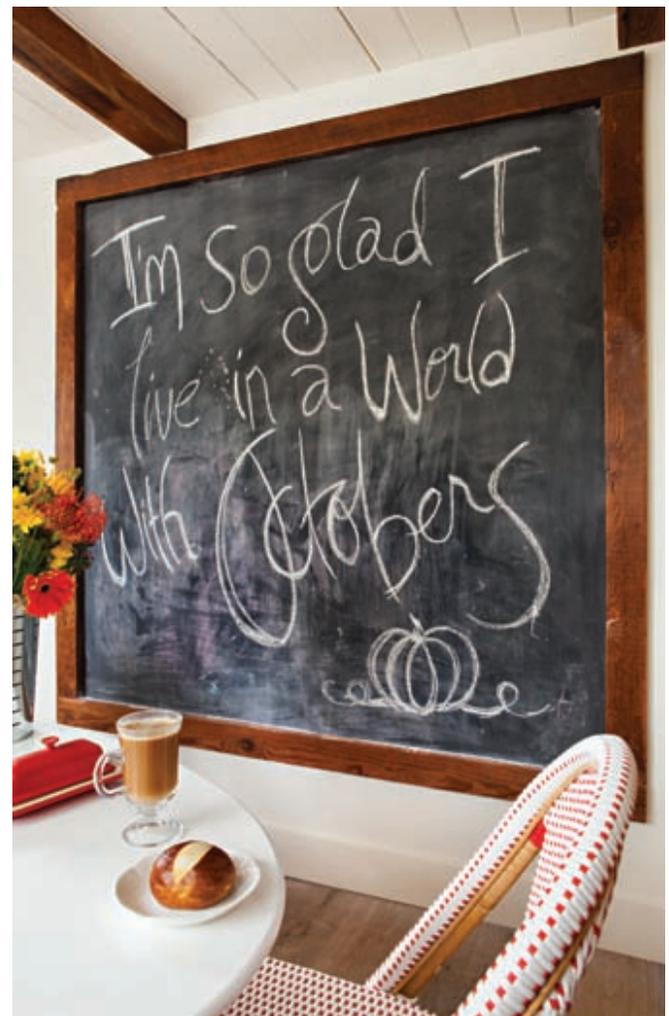
The kitchen nook is a perfect place to relax with a cappuccino and roll in the morning. The scene is set against the background of a rolling barn door that leads to the walk-in butler's pantry.

LEFT.

To match the open space of the kitchen, the Hortons installed open shelving that features reclaimed wood. White subway tile gives the walls some texture while also providing an easy surface to clean if spaghetti sauce splatters.

RIGHT.

On a section of the wall next to the breakfast nook, the Hortons installed a blackboard that contributes to the farmhouse feel. They simply painted a section of the wall with blackboard paint, then framed it with reclaimed wood. The space is a perfect place for Jamie's two young girls to draw and doodle.



Just as the home is a mixture of new and old, it's also a blend of affordable and high-end pieces. "That wallpaper by the piano is all the rage with designers right now, so it was expensive," Mindy says. "But the rug is from Ikea. I love the high low there."



designs with rustic accents creates an updated yet homey vibe. "It's a blend of old and new," Mindy says.

DESIGNER GUIDE

One of the challenges of a full-scale remodel is the time it takes to go through the process. "From the time we met the architect to moving into the house was almost two years," Jamie says. "Just even from the architectural plans to starting construction was nine months." This means plenty of time to make plans, then rework and change them. "You have a bunch of ideas, but you don't know if they'll really go together," Jamie says. "You just need someone else's opinion."

Jamie's lifesaver was to bring Mindy into the project early in the process. "We brought Mindy in early, and she had all these simple, great ideas," she says. For example, Jamie's original plan was to place the laundry room downstairs off the living room, where the piano now resides. But Mindy's practical wisdom came up with a different solution. "It was better to put it upstairs, both in terms of every day use and future value of the home," she says.

Jamie's advice for those looking to remodel is to take advantage of the services professionals like Mindy offer. "People shy away from wanting to use a decorator or project manager, but it actually saves money in the long run," she says. "Having Mindy saved me from mistakes and having to redo things later."

See Sources, page 128.



A hanging chair adds a bit of bohemian relaxation to the living room. The room itself has a lowered floor that adds architectural character to the space.

Tip

A hanging chair is both hip and comfortable. You can hang one yourself with a simple but sturdy contractor hook. Just make sure you hang the chair from a structural beam, or you'll risk it falling from its perch.

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ABOVE. In the hall leading from the kitchen to the living room, Jamie displays a vintage French advertising poster from the 1920s. "My dear friend has collected French vintage posters over the years," Jamie says. "For my birthday my husband and parents bought the elephant poster, and then we bought another one for the stairwell. It reminds me of being in Paris."

RIGHT. The pantry sports a rare wallpaper Jamie found at a restaurant in New York City. "We searched and searched and could not find the wallpaper," she says. Mindy finally got in touch with the restaurant's designer and found out that the wallpaper was made from a vintage French cooking catalog. "She licensed a single reprinting of it for us," Mindy says. "No one will ever have this wallpaper again."





Mindy carved the laundry room upstairs from the second upstairs bedroom. The space sits along the hall where it's out of the way but still convenient.

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Tip

Need something to hang on a blank wall? Don't stop at paintings and photography—instead, consider small, light objects that will add your personality to the space.

This room has sun hats, but you could also hang cowboy hats or even plates (see page 32).

In the master bedroom, Mindy and the Hortons installed new beadboard to the walls, but the board and batten on the ceiling is original to the home. "The board and batten wasn't everywhere, so we had to match it throughout the house," Mindy says.



Wide Open Spaces

MINDY'S TIPS TO KEEPING YOUR ROOMS AIRY AND BRIGHT.

- **Paint it white.** Mindy uses white in many of her designs because the color is so open. Light reflects off the surface and bounces around the room, making even a small space with little natural light feel bright.
- **Use architectural features.** A few of the low ceilings in the home had board and batten, and Mindy added more throughout the house to keep things consistent. The feature helps add texture to the surface and creates interest that distracts from the low ceilings.
- **Keep the lighting simple.** "Another trick to make it [the breakfast nook] feel open and airy was that we used flush mount fixtures that don't hang down," Mindy says. This helps distract from the low ceiling—after all, you don't want visitors to worry that they'll hit their heads on a chandelier.

The master bathroom is a vision of white with its slanted ceiling, white tile and classic farmhouse bathtub. The crystal chandelier adds a touch of elegance to the space.