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# The Blessing Of Food

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With Soul**

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# mountain's majesty

by john sovec

an expression of reverence in glass and concrete





photography by jasper johal - jasper-art.com

Many of us have dreams of finding a career, building a business, or uncovering a loving relationship. Julie Piatt had dreams of a mountain. Not just any mountain, but one situated high in the Santa Monicas. Julie found her dream mountain and after lengthy negotiations she was able to purchase land near that mountain to build her vision of a home.

As an interior designer, this homeowner had many ideas about what she wanted her home to look and feel like. Her inspiration was the visual feel of the many villas she had visited in the Tuscany region of Italy. Julie was not looking for a literal translation but instead envisioned a structure that emulated the open feel and flow of these Italian country estates. "I had the vision and the concepts, but I did not have the knowledge to implement them. I had to set aside my ego to find experts that I could share my ideas with and then allow them the freedom to bring that vision to reality."

The expert she found was Lorcan O' Herlihy, a Santa Monica based architect, whose design mission is to "engage in the operative layers of the urban landscape with respect to spatial, sensory, and experiential information." The homeowner and the architect found a common language with which to translate the dream of a home into a

living, breathing structure that provides a sense of peace and serenity to all who visit.

The design of the house flows through two main structures that are tied together through the linear placement of pathways and decks. The main living area is a multi-functional rectangle that connects a living room, family gathering room, and kitchen into one continuously moving space. There are no interior walls in this common area and most of the exterior walls are glass. For privacy, the walls on the street side are opaque, letting in copious amounts of light, but maintaining a sense of retreat from the energies of the road. The windows facing towards the mountains frame the serene landscape and can open fully to welcome in the afternoon breeze.

The second main structure contains sleeping quarters and office space for the family with the master bedroom placed on the second floor and accessible only from an exterior staircase. This master bedroom holds commanding views of the mountainside providing a sense of being outside while still creating a sleeping chamber that radiates stillness and peace. Once again an open floor plan organizes the space with an inspiring bathtub dominating the room. This bathing area is open to the room and the homeowners feel that it creates a "communal sense of bathing. The kids

will run in and out while I am taking a bath and it makes it feel like a family space."

The two boys, Tyler and Trapper, have a great room of their own to share which is downstairs and contains everything two boys could dream of in a bedroom. The boys share a loft bunk bed built out of metal piping and underneath it is their zoo, currently comprised of two cats and a rabbit with other guest creatures stopping in for an occasional visit.

The newest member of the family, Mathis, has a nursery that is placed in an alcove in the master bedroom. The space, originally designed as a meditation room, was quickly altered to become a nursery that is private, yet still connected to the master bedroom.

In addition to the two main structures, there is a separate design studio for Julie and a private yoga studio. The yoga studio has cork floors that provide a natural surface to practice on and the line between indoors and out is blurred by the use of large windows that can be opened up to invite nature in.

This respect and appreciation for nature is a theme that permeates the property and was an integral part of the building process. Contractors were chosen on the basis of not only their skills



