



Inside A California- & Italy-Inspired Home Full Of Mid-Century Modern Decor

Eddie Maestri's Dallas home pays homage to West Coast hotels.

While an old house can often seem like a molehill on paper, reality's version is unfortunately often more akin to a mountain. Time is structural longevity's enemy—the need for upkeep and renovation is difficult, if not impossible, to escape. With each renovation, comes a new design philosophy from a new owner. When Eddie Maestri moved into his Dallas home, it had been renovated in the '90s, but Maestri himself was much more interested in the home's aesthetic predecessor.

Luckily, the architect and designer was able to uncover blueprints and sketches for the '70s version of the space, after connecting with the seller—a widow in her 90s—and her daughter. Structural issues forced him to basically strip the space down to its studs, but armed with the original notes, Maestri was able to adhere to the architectural integrity as much as possible—with a few modern updates, of course.

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When the designer, his husband, and his two children first viewed the space, that sense of *home* was instantaneous. "I was so giddy when we first went through it," says Maestri, "I was like, 'Oh my gosh, look, it's everything we wanted to do.'" The duo desired the perfect balance of clean mid-century design—and the elements that come with it like high ceilings and open spaces—with the tradition of the neighborhood. From there, he could infuse the space with his family's personality and a heavy-handed homage to the '70s.

Within the home, he juxtaposed seemingly unlike elements in a surprisingly harmonious manner. Upon crossing the robin's-egg-hued doorway, you'll find overt references to California mingled with nods to Italy, even subtle allusions to Japan. It's Fornasetti meets the Beverly Hilton, *Mad Men* meets Slim Aarons. Maestri is not afraid of color nor is he bewildered by print. The architect and interior designer then grounds all those loud aspects with the clean lines of mid-century modern silhouettes.

As special attention was paid to the details, you'll find black-and-white detailing from the cabana mimicked on the ceilings of the interiors. The doors look straight out of a '20s nightclub while the palm frond wallpaper alludes to the Beverly Hills Hotel and, as his children pointed out, the stone fireplace appears startlingly similar to one in *The Incredibles*. The decor is elevated but not precious, retro but not gimmicky. Though decorated to the nines, it's a home more so than a house. Continue scrolling to uncover more about Maestri's design process and how he renovated the entire space without sacrificing its aesthetic integrity.



"We had been looking for a house for a while and were very torn between wanting a house that felt more historical and something that was cleaner, more mid-century. The problem was that whenever we would look for something mid-century, the houses were usually smaller—lots of low ceilings. We were really drawn to homes like on Swiss Avenue [in Dallas], for example, that had a little bit more of a grander presence, higher ceilings. I grew up in New Orleans, and I think that's part of the reason I felt drawn to that feeling. When we found this house, it was the perfect blend of the two: It has larger spaces with high ceilings, and it's still a modernist home. It was just perfect. All of our furniture, everything that we had collected worked perfectly in the house; it was really like it was always meant to be our house."

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"When we originally made our offer and everything, we really weren't thinking that we would do it all at one time. The goal was really to phase it and just take our time. Once we got into the house, we realized that it needed to be completely rewired and all new doors and windows. There was termite damage. It had structural issues. It had roof issues. Basically, just everything. We went from thinking, 'Oh, we are going to do a few cosmetic updates' to a complete renovation, mostly down to the studs. I wanted to be really really careful to preserve the house. I didn't want it to feel like a new build; I wanted it to feel 1970. We were really careful to put things kind of back how they would've been. I had the original architect's drawings, thankfully, and I used those a lot for inspiration for details that we would use throughout the house. I wanted it to look a little updated, so what was [the original architect] trying to achieve in 1969/1970 that he couldn't do back then but we can do now? We did things like clean up the lighting pattern on the ceilings, smaller apertures, and larger glass."



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"We had been collecting furniture and art for 16-17 years and had built a custom house about 10 years ago. It was a completely different style, a lot smaller, and we were noticing that furniture we were gravitating toward wasn't really fitting the style of the house anymore. We had purchased a mid-century lake house about five, six years ago and really enjoyed furnishing that house. We sold the lake house, we sold our last house, so in this new house, it just happened to be the case that everything we had worked."



"In the kitchen, that wallpaper I had saved and I had loved for a long time but never had a spot for it. I wanted it to feel like a 1970s kitchen, so a lot of pattern on pattern. I wanted bold color. Yellow is a popular color. It's also one of my favorite colors, so I was like, "This is great. Let's make it very sunny. I went through retro kitchen books and things just to get inspiration and see what would've been done in the '70s and then put today's twist on it."

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"I have always loved arches, and I think a lot of that is from Italian design and kind of that Fornasetti look. We do a lot of transitional historical work, too, and I love putting arches in houses; I think they're beautiful. In this case, we had this new house that was more linear and modernist. I really wanted to incorporate some curves. I was looking through the architect's original drawings for the primary bathroom, which had been renovated when we bought the house, like in the '90s, and it had some of those details in the mirrors and in the cabinetry. So, I took that and kind of just went with it. So, throughout the house, we added some subtle curves to kind of soften it up.

"I wanted [the bathroom] to feel masculine, but the green and the leaves are kind of more fun."

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"In this neighborhood, there's a little lake, and the houses that are all on that lake are larger homes that were all built during the '60s and '70s. They were all built with really interesting, cool features, so I wanted the house to really blend in with those. I love the fact that it was a little bit more of an established neighborhood with some history to it when we went over there. I can never find pictures of our house when it was built, but I found a lot of pictures of houses in the neighborhood and I think that was really helpful for inspiration."

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"I was really lucky, too, that the seller—she's in her 90s—and her daughter sent me a bunch of pictures of the house in 1978. What's now my office, they called it the black-and-white room, so I went back with black and white. When we were doing renovations on the primary bath, we uncovered layer upon layer of his white and green palm frond wallpaper. I was like, 'Oh, I want to nod to that.' So, I did stuff like that throughout the house."



"I wanted everything that we put back to have a nod to that '60s and '70s design, so the new doors, and then we have the black-and-white drapery on the front porch, and then the black-and-white awning on the back. Because the whole house is so transparent—there's so much glass—I wanted [the theme] to read all the way through, so we added the black and white on the ceiling and it was really to pick up on that cabana stripe and to feel kind of indoor/outdoor. That was inspired by hotels in California, like the Beverly Hilton or the Beverly Hills."

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"The fireplace is original. We preserved it through the renovation. I have sketches from the architect when he was designing. When we walked through the front door for the first time, the house was completely empty, and my kids were with me and they said it looked like *The Incredibles* and I was like 'Oh my god, it does!' So, we had to keep that."



"I have twin boys; they're about to be nine years old. They had shared a room at the previous house, and I wanted the new rooms to really speak to them. My son Ethan, he is obsessed with dinosaurs, just obsessed. He's also obsessed with Japan. We took them to Japan a couple of years ago, and he got really into the *Godzilla* movies. We definitely had to do that in his room. The bed is very low to the ground and very Japanese and, of course, the painting behind the bed has the arches, so it's just little touches like that, which I did throughout to balance everything out."

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"I knew that I wanted our primary bathroom to feel a little bit more tropical, Californian. The color scheme, the granite, and the cabinets were inspired by one of our trips to Laguna Beach. The hotel we stayed in was called Hotel Joaquin—we just loved it. We travel a lot, so we were able to really incorporate almost everything we really wanted."

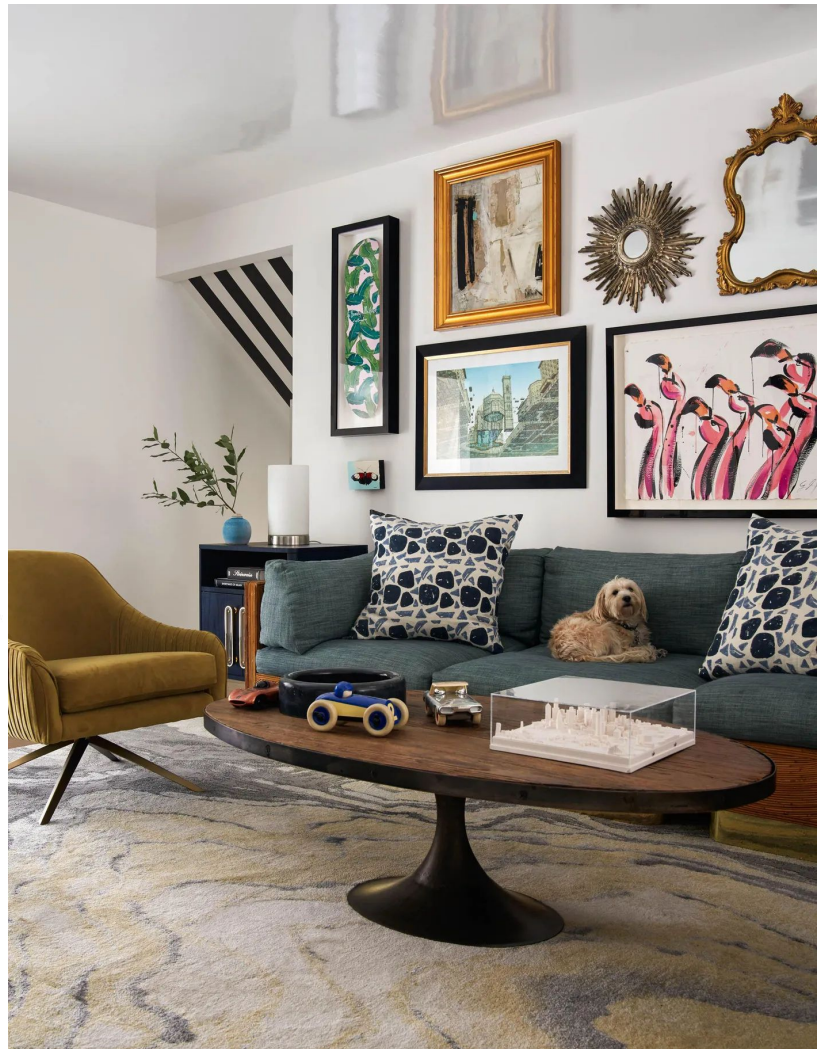


"We had to redo the whole pool and resurface and everything. The whole backyard used to be paved, just all concrete. I wanted it to be more kid-friendly, to feel a lot more California, so we did the turf. The breeze block we added, and that was something that I saw in a photo from 1978. It was there prior, so we put it back. All the white rocks and all the topiaries, that was based on that mid-century [look] and one of our trips to Palm Springs, some ideas that we saw there."

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"We collect art and I also own an art gallery, so there were a lot of pieces that I had wanted to incorporate. Whenever we travel, we'll usually bring home something for the house, whether it's something that's on the sideboard in there or a little piece of art, something like that."



"That [desk] is a Studio Craft vintage drafting table from the late '60s, I think. We got that at an auction out of L.A."



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"It was a lot of fun. I think it was really great to work on a house that the original architect had put so much attention into, as well. I really kept thinking that I wanted to do something where if he walked through it today, he would be really proud—that I didn't ruin it. I also talked to his widow and looked at some of the work that he had done in the area. It already had so many cool details that we just had to build upon really."