

# Home Design

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# Home tour illustrates how architects, designers live

## East Bay tour reveals professionals' personal styles



Bruce Damonte

Berkeley architect Joanne Koch was drawn to her home's earthy Northern California design and tried to achieve a balance of indoor-outdoor living space for her family.

**Sophia Markoulakis**

August 1, 2014

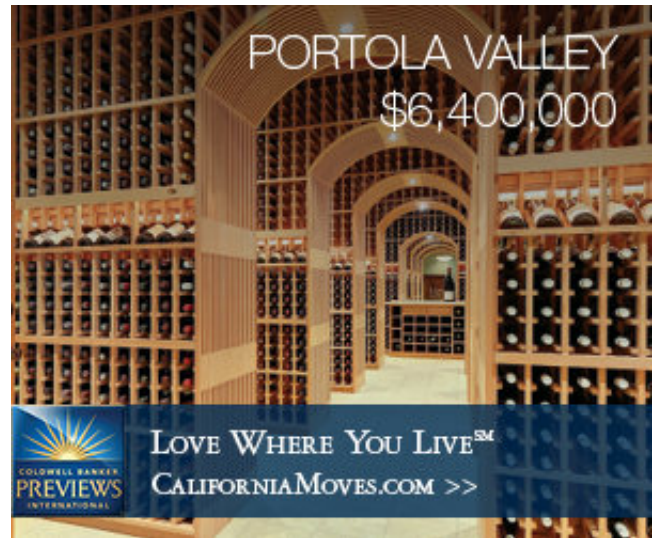
Home tours offer the best opportunity to get up close and personal with an architect's aesthetic, but rarely

do they provide the opportunity to see how they live. Fortuitously, four of the six homes on this year's American Institute of Architects' East Bay Home Tours were designed by architects and designers themselves, offering a rare perspective for attendees.

"It's a unique opportunity for visitors to see how they design for themselves and their families," says architect and co-chair of the event Kurt Lavenson.

The annual tour, which takes place this year on Saturday, showcases how period, LEED platinum, and modern homes can be tailored for today's living.

For Berkeley architect Joanne Koch, it was the indoor/outdoor concept of the Roger Lee-designed home that initially attracted her 15 years ago. Already a fan of California midcentury homes, Koch also knew that the home's footprint would be a good fit for her home office and growing family. "I'm a third-generation Californian, grew up on a ranch and was drawn to the home's earthy Northern California design," Koch says. "We wanted a home that could accommodate our family life and allow for a work/life balance." Though the living space is just 2,000 square feet, there are three buildings on the property that are connected through "paths and pocket gardens" with a large canopy tree that anchors the space.



Koch took a methodical approach to the redesign over the last several years and by doing so says, "Slowly, you can time-release edits and follow the needs of the family." The studio, which once housed her home office, has become her husband's work space, and the downstairs bedroom and study have now become a haven for her teen daughter. And, as much as Koch appreciated the bones of her period home, she wasn't afraid to reinterpret them for her family and lifestyle and didn't see the home as a museum but rather a laboratory for experimentation, life, work and play.

### Experts on home design

"Always think bigger. During construction, smaller homes have a narrow window for updates, and you should seize the opportunity to do the work."

- Joanne Koch, architect ( [www.kocharchitects.com](http://www.kocharchitects.com) )

"When working with an architecture firm, make sure that they are building your house, not theirs. And get the contractor involved early in the process so that you end up with something that everyone will be proud of."





Courtesy This Old House

*Architect Stacy Eisenmann merged modern design and traditional craftsman details in her Berkeley bungalow.*

- John Quiter, AIA

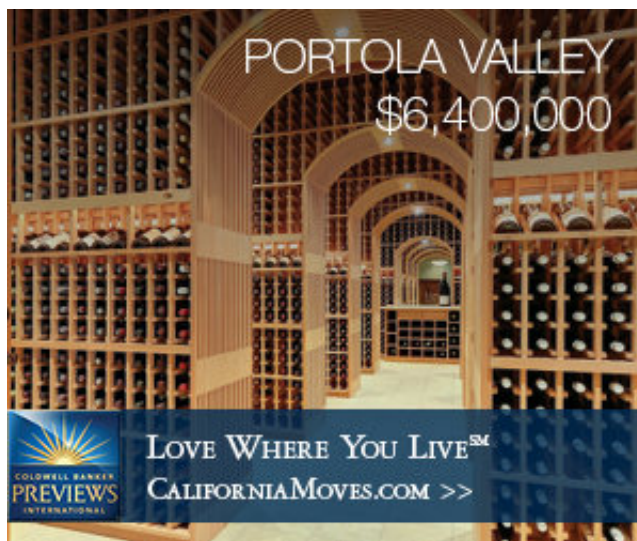
"Fabulous finishings that my children have to tiptoe around aren't sustainable. A good designer knows not just what a homeowner wants, but how they live."

- Shannon Bloemker, sustainability design consultant

### AIA East Bay Home Tours

10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Saturday. \$50 in advance; \$60 on the day of the tour. [www.aiaeb.org](http://www.aiaeb.org). For more information: (510) 464-3600.

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