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Elegance Unbuttoned

BARCLAY BUTERA NUDGES FORMAL
INTERIORS TO RELAX AND UNWIND
IN A NEWPORT BEACH HOME





Exterior Built in 2000, the Newport Beach home with interiors designed by Barclay Butera, above, is clad in limestone that contrasts black trim and a tile roof. **Previous pages** The foyer introduces texture on a dark geometric floor.

Window treatments made of fabrics so sheer they move with a whisper. Furniture overstuffed and slipcovered to accommodate a long weekend's worth of elevated feet. Displays of shells and pieces of driftwood that recall walks on the beach. That's one way to decorate a home near the water. But Barclay Butera looked through his design lens differently for this project in Newport Beach.

While his clients, whose primary residence is two hours inland, were lured to the Southern California town because of its proximity to the water, their penchant for formality pushed aside the conventional casual aesthetic of beach environments. They wanted a classic abode that boasts a scheme as polished as a piece of sea glass.

"This isn't a beach house with an expansive backyard of sand and panoramic views of the ocean," says Butera, who is well-versed in the Newport Beach lifestyle. It's where he was

raised and now operates his design firm. "My clients love living near the water, but they weren't after a look that reads coastal."

Instead, Butera achieved a feeling of formality, albeit slightly unbuttoned (this is a relaxation-focused second home, after all) by calling on a hallmark of classic design: symmetry.

The designer, known for his love affair with blue and white, also drew on his favorite scheme. Here, though, blue arrives with the subtlety of ocean mist rather than the splash of an imposing wave. There's classic blue and white in the foyer—a center table displays a collection of vases, tea canisters, and ginger jars. But then the hue takes a hiatus, content to play a minor role until making a striking return in the home's private spaces.

The living room is a breath of airy elegance with a plan, Butera says, that is not heavily designed. In front of the fireplace, matching French-style sofas upholstered in nailhead-

Loggia With its basket-weave back, an iron bench offers a shaded place to sit. The paneled front door is a teaser to paneling added inside the home to create architectural interest.





Living room Traditional style with formal flair reigns here. Ornamentation layered over the fireplace surround gives it grand presence. Butera's use of balance and symmetry takes just one detour with the juxtaposition of antiques—a marble-topped Louis XV console table in front of one window and a secretary beside the other.



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—designer Barclay Butera

Kitchen Gingham seats on cerused wood chairs at the breakfast table occupy a midrange in the contrast of the clean white cabinetry and island against the dark wood floor. **Dining room** Comfort and formality meet as upholstered chair seats are paired with soft cushions tied to the frames with silk tassels.

trimmed linen, provide instant balance on each side of an iron-and-glass cocktail table. A pair of sconces formed as flower stems flank a mirror that reflects a shimmery crystal chandelier. Luxe sheers hang from ceiling height rather than directly above the window casings, then are tied back at a low level to create drama.

"Taking the fabric to this height makes the room feel like a fabulous hotel suite without the commercial effect," Butera says.

The dining room trumpets similar attention to pleasing geometry with a double-pedestal table and Chippendale chairs centered on the window. A chandelier descends over the table to match the glamour of the crystal on the table.

The kitchen serves as the gateway for more casual entertaining with its ample center island, welcoming breakfast area, and easy access to the back patio. Finished primarily in white, the space doesn't compete with the lush greenery outside.

An ever-so-slight blue shade paints the master bedroom walls and millwork. Celadon-color silk window treatments quietly



Master bedroom Pale shades of blue and green wrap the entire room, a nod, perhaps, to the nearby water. Light blue paint covers the walls and millwork while celadon-color silk was used to fabricate the Roman shades and straight panels that hang over the windows.



FORMALITY CAN STILL SUPPORT A LIVABLE LIFESTYLE.”

—designer Barclay Butera

interrupt. The cool-tone backdrop cocoons an assembly of decorative French-inspired pieces: a bed with floral-and-scroll embellishments, a painted white writing desk, a settee in a heavy linen weave, and a crystal chandelier. The master bath repeats both the color and the glamour with the addition of marble, a gilded mirror, and another crystal chandelier.

Guest bedrooms wear different shades of blue. Steel blue grass cloth is augmented with blue toile pillows in a French-style room. In a room with twin beds, a pale wash on the walls matches ceramic lamps on the side tables.

Luxurious indulgences make this house the perfect place to exhale. Rooms relax in elegance, and comfort is achieved within the envelope of classicism.

“I love that my clients appreciate formality regardless of their location,” Butera says. “So many have shied away from it, especially in California, but formality can still support a livable lifestyle.”

Interior designer: Barclay Butera
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Master bath White-and-gray marble surrounds the bathtub and repeats on the vanity. Instead of continuing the finish of the nickel faucets and cabinet hardware, Butera hung a gilded mirror that augments the regal prominence of the crystal chandelier. **Guest rooms** Butera didn't skimp on design attention in the guest quarters. One is a lesson in texture with steel blue grass cloth on the walls above white wainscoting. Another sandwiches identical bedside tables between twin beds to offer a bit of breathing room.

