

The House, Walked in Plain Words

Santa Lucia Preserve, Carmel Valley. Before anyone draws a line, here is the whole house told the way you'd actually move through it — where you are, what's in front of you, what stands to your left and right, where the windows are and what they face. Read it like a walk. If a wall is in the wrong place, we move it here, on paper, before it's ever drawn.

The house is nameless, and stays that way.

First, the shape of it

The house sits low and tucked into a west-facing shoulder of the hill, in among the live oaks, with the land rising gently behind it to the east and dropping away in front of it to the west toward a long valley and the ridgelines of the Santa Lucias. It is built in three long, low pieces that step down the slope, so from the Preserve road you barely see it — it reads as land and stone under the oaks, the way the Preserve wants its houses to. It saves everything for the inside and for the view.

- Roughly **11,800 square feet** indoors, plus about **4,200 square feet** of covered terraces and courts.
- **Seven bedrooms:** the primary suite, five more suites, and a detached guest casita down the slope.
- The whole thing steps down the hill in **four gentle half-levels**, so you always know where you are by whether you've stepped up into the hill or down toward the view.

The key move: **the house hides the view from you on the way in, on purpose, and then hands you the whole ridgeline all at once when you walk into the great room.** That withholding is the whole drama.

The walk

1. Coming up the drive

You come up a decomposed-granite drive that curves through the oaks. You never see the whole house at once — first a low stone wall, then a plane of warm board-formed concrete, then the big canopy of an old oak, and only at the last turn does the **porte-cochère** show itself: a thin concrete roof reaching out over a stone motor court, about **40 by 30 feet**, all in the shade of the oaks. You leave the car here. From this point on, it's on foot.

2. The arrival court

You step through a gap in a low stone wall into a **walled court, about 55 by 26 feet**, and the ceiling of this court is the canopy of a big preserved live oak. It's cool and quiet and shaded. A long, still, dark **reflecting channel**, about 40 feet long, runs along the concrete wall and leads your eye to the front door: a single tall **pivot door of weathered steel**, 10 feet tall, set off to one side in a wall of board-formed concrete. This is the pause before the house opens.

3. Through the door — the squeeze

You push the pivot open and step into a **low, dark, stone-lined passage** — the ceiling drops to 8 feet, travertine underfoot, concrete close on both sides, about 14 feet deep. It's deliberately tight and a little dark. Hold that feeling, because it's about to release.

4. The gallery opens up

The passage opens into a **tall, light-filled gallery** that runs the spine of the house — about **48 feet long, 16 feet wide**, and the ceiling lifts from 8 feet up to 18, with a long skylight washing warm light down soft plaster walls and a white-oak ceiling. And straight ahead, framed at the far end, you get your **first glimpse of the ridgeline** through the great room's glass.

This gallery is the crossroads of the whole house. From right here:

- **Ahead and to your right** — the great room, the kitchen, dining: the public, view side.
- **Down and to your left** (half a level down) — the primary suite, off into quiet.
- **Behind you and up** (half a level into the hill) — the family bedrooms, the offices, the media room, the gym.

Three worlds, three directions, one spot. You can read the entire house from this one place.

5. The great room — the payoff

You turn toward the view and walk into the **great room: about 48 by 30 feet**, ceiling at 12 feet and lifting to 18 over the fireplace. The **entire west wall is glass**, 12 feet tall — and the whole Santa Lucia ridgeline is just *there*, filling it. In the evening the light rakes low across the stone floor. A single tall **fireplace of board-formed concrete** with a weathered-steel firebox anchors one end, rising the full 18 feet. And the glass wall **slides completely away into the wall** so the room and the terrace outside become one big room open to the ridgeline. This is the moment the house has been withholding since the driveway.

6. Kitchen and dining, still in the view

The great room flows on, still under that 12-foot ceiling and still on the view, into:

- **Dining** — about **24 by 20 feet**, a long white-oak table for 14 set right where the evening light lands, a low dry-laid stone wall softly separating it from the kitchen, and a door out to an outdoor dining terrace.
- **Kitchen** — about **26 by 18 feet**, with one big honed-travertine island (about 14 feet long) and warm white-oak cabinets with unlacquered bronze handles; the appliances are hidden behind the oak so it reads calm, not busy. A band of high windows to the east pulls the morning light in over the counters.
- Tucked behind the kitchen, out of sight: a **scullery / working kitchen** (about 16 by 12 feet) where the real cooking and the mess happen, so the show kitchen always stays clean, with its own service door to the outside.
- Off the gallery nearby: a **wine room** set into the cool of the hillside behind glass, glimpsed like a lit jewel, and a small dark **powder room**.

7. Down into the primary suite — the retreat

Back at the gallery, you step **down a half-level** on a wide oak stair and into a **long, quiet, oak-walled passage** with a low slot of window looking into a private oak garden. This is the point where the noise of the house falls away and the suite becomes its own world.

- **The bedroom**, about **24 by 22 feet**, sits at an angle to grab the deepest corner of the view and the last of the sunset. It has **two glass walls**: one west to the ridgeline, one south to a private oak-shaded terrace. Oak floor, a low oak wall behind the bed, its own weathered-steel fireplace. You wake to soft morning light from the south and fall asleep to the sunset.
- **A private terrace with a small plunge pool** off the bedroom, about **30 by 18 feet**, half in oak shade, its far edge open to the drop, completely walled off from the rest of the grounds.
- **Two dressing rooms**, his and hers, about **14 by 10 feet each**, in full oak joinery with bronze rails.
- **The bath**, about **22 by 16 feet**, in warm cream travertine, with a **freestanding stone tub set in a glass bay that faces a private walled oak garden** (you look at the tree, not a neighbor), a glass wet-room shower, twin floating oak-and-stone vanities, and soft north light so it never gets hot.
- **A private study** off the suite, about **16 by 14 feet**, with a hidden door that lets you slip back to the offices without ever crossing the public rooms.

8. Back up into the family wing

From the gallery, a stair rises a half-level **up into the hill** to the family side — the calmest, most sheltered part of the house, under the heaviest oak shade:

- **Five bedroom suites**, each about **16–18 by 14–16 feet**, each with its own full bath and walk-in, each looking out at oaks or the soft end of the view. Two of them are big, junior-master size, for grown kids or long guests; three are guest-scale. None of them looks into another.
- **A family room / kids' lounge**, about **24 by 18 feet**, opening to its own little oak court, so the everyday family life doesn't compete with the great room.
- **Two offices**, about **14 by 12 feet each**, with their own quiet outside entrance so business visitors never come through the front door — connected discreetly back to the primary study.
- **A media room**, about **22 by 18 feet**, dug into the dark side of the hill where a screening room wants to be, with no windows by design.
- **A gym**, about **24 by 18 feet**, opening to a private oak court and a lap lane, with a sauna and cold plunge in dark stone, oriented to the morning so it gets used at dawn.

9. Cars and the everyday door

Set into the hill on the upper level, where they disappear into the grade and face away from the arrival: a **4-car garage** (about 44 by 24 feet) and a separate **2-car collector's bay**. Right beside them sits the **mudroom**, the door the family actually uses every day, with oak lockers, a stone floor, a dog-wash, straight into the kitchen. The grand pivot door out front is for arriving and for guests; day to day, you come in here.

10. Out to the terrace, the pool, and the view

Finally, you step back out through the open glass wall of the great room onto the **view terrace** — a big warm-stone platform, about **90 by 30 feet**, running the whole length of the house, one step down from the great-room floor. A deep shaded loggia hugs the glass; open sun-warmed stone lies beyond it; and the far edge is a frameless glass-and-stone rail right at the drop, so nothing interrupts the ridgeline.

Set into the terrace edge is a **long, dark lap pool**, about **60 by 16 feet**, its far lip a vanishing edge that pours toward the ridgeline — and it's placed so the water is *in the view* from inside the house. Beside it, dropped down out of the wind, a **sunken hearth lounge** gathered around a weathered-steel fire, about 20 by 16 feet, for the end of the day and the last light.

Down the slope past the pool, reached by a stone path, sits the **guest casita** — a small detached stone-and-oak pavilion, about 600 square feet, with its own bedroom, bath, sitting room, and shaded terrace, for long-staying guests or a caretaker.

The one thing to hold onto

The house is three lives that never bump into each other unless they want to: **the public rooms** run off toward the view and the light; **the primary suite** drops away into total quiet; **the family, guests, and work** step up into the sheltered hill. All three read from that one gallery the moment you walk in — and the view is the reward the house makes you wait for, from the driveway all the way to the moment you turn into the great room.

If any of this sits wrong, a room too small, a wall in the way, a suite you'd rather face the other direction, say so now, and we move it here, before a single line is drawn.