A photograph of a modern home at night. The house features large, light-colored stone or concrete panels. A large, built-in fireplace with a dark metal frame is mounted on a dark wall, with a fire burning inside. To the left, a swimming pool is visible, illuminated by blue lights. In the foreground, a glass coffee table holds several colorful plastic cups. A dark leather sofa is partially visible on the right.

Gallery GRAND

A CUSTOM-HOME BUILDER AND HIS
WIFE CREATE SPACES TO SHOWCASE
THEIR ART COLLECTION

BY BONNIE NICHOLLS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERTO ZEBALLOS

The front of the 4,000-square-foot home “steps back” on the property, beginning at the garage with a custom door that matches the look of the frosted-glass, pivot front door.





Above: The great room includes the entryway, living room, kitchen and dining area. Wire-brushed oak flooring continues throughout the home. The painting of a man in a suit was a door that homeowner Kerry Rutherford cut in two.

Opening spread: The hallway's gallery wall is viewable from the courtyard, which includes a pool, spa and fireplace. Pocket doors open the master bedroom to the exterior space.

Kerry and Lynn Rutherford love to collect art, but their three-story home on a Cardiff hillside lacked space to display big paintings. So they built a 4,000-square-foot home in Encinitas that adds new meaning to the word “roomy.”

A massive, pivot front door of frosted glass gives a visitor the idea that something unusual lies beyond — and it does.

At 50 by 33 square feet, the aptly named “great room” could pass for a gallery at an art museum. Numerous works of art, many in large scale, highlight 12-foot-high, white walls.

Serving as a combined foyer, living room, kitchen and dining area, the room comprises 40 percent of the total square footage of the home. Yet it is sparingly furnished, with only a gray sectional sofa gracing the wire-brushed oak flooring and a few white barstools lining the long, white Silestone countertop.

“We were going to get a dining room table, but we started using this counter, and we just said, ‘Forget it,’” says Kerry, a custom-home builder.

The couple has built and lived in more than five houses since 1987, with Lynn managing the interior design. For their latest venture, they worked with architect Ted Schultz to create a one-story, Mid-century Modern home where clean lines and uncluttered surfaces reign.

In the kitchen, the perfectly flush Thermador refrigerator appears encased in the taupe cabinetry. A glass backsplash and screwless wall plates achieve an equally smooth finish. The absence of baseboards throughout the house allows walls to meet the floor without demarcation of surfaces.

Lynn jokes that her mother collected antiques to the point of hoarding, influencing Lynn’s desire for order and minimalism. The couple’s young border collie, Darla, also gets credit for the clutter-free environment.

The sparsely furnished great room reflects the homeowners' minimalist taste and serves as a gallery for their art collection. Glass walls offer a view of the courtyard and bring in natural light.







Above and right: Clean lines define the kitchen space. Instead of maintaining a formal dining room, Kerry and Lynn Rutherford opted to extend the island into a table for a more casual ambiance, with Kartell's Italian-made, polypropylene stools designed by Philippe Starck. The white-and-taupe color palette provides a quiet backdrop for boldly colored artwork and servingware.

The rambunctious dog gets into everything, so vases, bowls and other decorative items remain ensconced within cabinets. The vast space and streamlined design go hand in hand with the neutral colors Kerry and Lynn chose for exteriors and interiors.

"I love beach rocks," Lynn says. "I love the grays, I love the tans of beach rocks. I have no idea why, but that was kind of the inspiration."

Brownish gray, concrete-look porcelain covers the west wall of the 500-square-foot guesthouse, where their 23-year-old daughter lives, as well as the floors and showers of every bathroom. Gray fascias, punctuated by thin aluminum channels, border white exterior walls. Kerry and Lynn also used aluminum — a popular design component in Australia, where they once lived — for their custom garage door.

They contrast their love of neutrals with brilliant splashes of color in the art that adorns the walls inside their home. Many of the paintings they've sourced locally. Lynn found one of her favorite works rolled

up in the corner of a consignment shop in Ocean Beach. The painting of a blue dog on an orange background is now encased in acrylic.

"I love the way it makes the piece look," Lynn says. She explains that enclosing a painting in acrylic can make it stand out and give it a gallery quality.

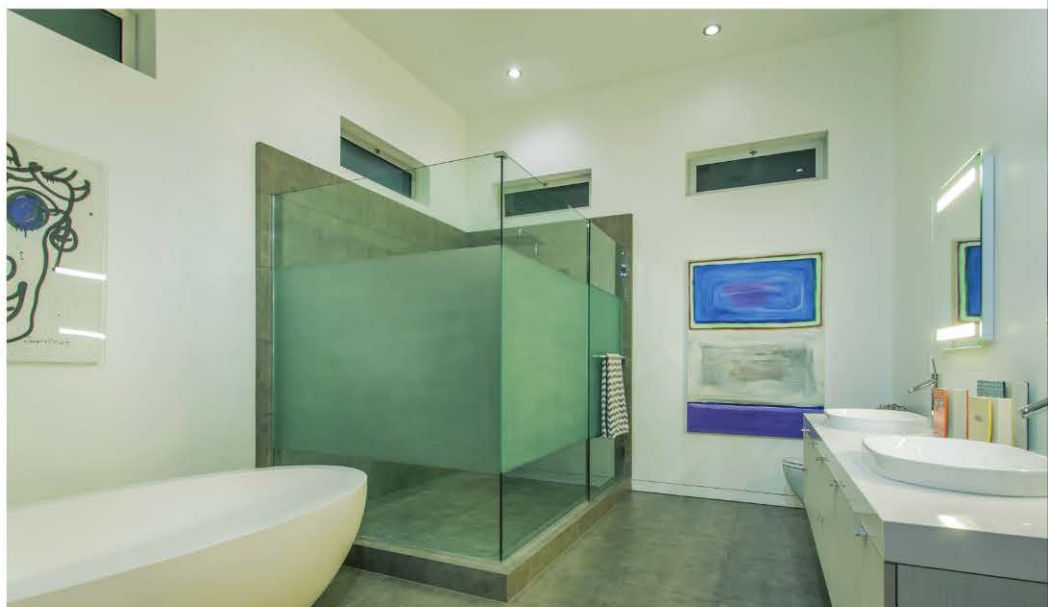
The great room features a large painting of a man in a suit. Kerry and Lynn discovered the piece in the trash bin of an art supply store. It was originally a door with a handle, so Kerry cut out the middle section to create a vertical "diptych."

The couple own several paintings by San Diego artist Tim Caton, whose work they first stumbled upon in a now-defunct shop on Kettner Boulevard in downtown San Diego. They gently tease each other about their taste in art, with Lynn admitting she likes scary faces and skeletons, while Kerry identifies one painting as shock rocker Marilyn Manson.

"Our daughter is horrified by a couple of them," says Lynn, laughing.







Above: In the master bathroom, concrete-look porcelain tiles cover the shower walls, as well as the floor. This same material carries over to the exterior walls of the guesthouse and the home's front entryway.

Left: The master bedroom is a study in simplicity, with more room for artwork. Elephants in Indonesia painted the canvases that hang above the bed.

“All of a sudden, we’ll see some new materials and it will get in our heads; and we say, ‘Hey, let’s go ahead and ...’”

If their taste in art gravitates toward the dark side, it’s diffused by light pouring in from 10-foot-tall windows that line the great room and hallway. The windows also reveal a pool and patio.

“It’s nice and open,” Kerry says. Even when you’re indoors, “you really feel like you’re outdoors, with all the glass. We love that feeling.”

When they lived in Cardiff, they enjoyed a 270-degree view of the ocean. The pool helps compensate for their move away from the beach.

“We wanted to see water from the house,” Kerry says.

The patio features cast-resin chaises and planters of molded plastic in dark browns and neutrals that cluster around the pool

and in front of the outdoor fireplace. Cream-colored, concrete-block walls topped with frosted glass offer privacy.

On the other side of the pool stands the guesthouse. The main home includes the master suite and two guest bedrooms, each with a bathroom.

Though they’ve lived in the house only since April 2015, they speculate that they may move again in another couple of years.

“It just depends,” Kerry says. “All of a sudden, we’ll see some new materials and it will get in our heads; and we say, ‘Hey, let’s go ahead and ...’”

“... ‘try it out,’” Lynn finishes for him.

“That’s the way we’ve always done it,” Kerry adds. “We’ve never really planned it.” ♦