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Darryl Wilson's Hollywood Hills house is a modern beauty with a panoramic view, but it wasn't always this way

# LOOKOUT OVER L.A.

Designer Darryl Wilson and his wife, Kristin Young, with Zeke, their 12-year-old vizsla, a Hungarian hunting dog. The clear plastic chairs are by Philippe Starck for Kartell. Chaise longues are a 1963 design by Richard Schultz. The pool tiles are by Dal Tile.



THE HOLLYWOOD HILLS HOUSE of designer Darryl Wilson is sleek and compact with a contemporary midcentury floor plan that includes a bevy of windows looking out over Los Angeles. Sparkling white interiors frame the vista, and putting-green grass surrounds the modern, Jacuzzi-equipped swimming pool. But this was not always the case.

When Wilson first saw the house three years ago, it was filled with Victorian furniture and outdated fixtures; saloon-style ceiling fans whirred above many rooms, and a large wet bar jutted out near the front doors. There was no yard at all. Beyond the

pool, a rotted wooden deck perched precariously on a steep, eroded hillside.

At the time, Wilson was remodeling his own house, located directly across the narrow street. He loved the house he was living in, “but I wanted a one-story house with a pool on the same level.” He finally persuaded the owner to sell, then spent the next year restoring the 1958 house to its original charm.

The first thing he did was create a yard. He erected an enormous retaining wall—160 feet long, 12 feet high, and 20 feet deep—then backfilled the slope. Atop the dirt he planted a flat, dense Bermuda

*Above: The natural linen sofa is by B&B Italia. In the background, the cherry kitchen cabinets are inset with stainless-steel panels. An Indonesian hardwood known as merbau covers all front room floors, including the kitchen. Opposite: Darryl Wilson pets Moses, his younger vizsla, in the front walkway. White marble dining table is vintage 1960s Florence Knoll. Dining chairs, by Richard Schultz, were reupholstered in white leather to give continuity to the two rooms.*



Above: Wilson cut and bound the white shag broadloom carpet by Flooring Resource Group to fit the space. The Plexiglas and glass table is by Charles Hollis Jones from the mid-1970s. The vintage black-and-white photos above the sofa are by Gyorgy Kepes, circa 1960, and were purchased at a Butterfield's auction. Opposite: Orange office chairs are late 1950s Italian. For more details, see Resources.

grass commonly used for putting greens. He designed a fence with flat, horizontal rails to surround the yard because he says they frame a view better than vertical ones. He also retiled and replastered the existing pool and added a negative-edge Jacuzzi that he likens to “an overflowing champagne glass.”

Wilson loves natural light, and this 2,200-square-foot house had plenty of sunshine streaming through the floor-to-ceiling windows. He also removed two windows, one in the kitchen and another in the den, and added two new large windows in the office with a view to the pool and downtown Los Angeles. To lighten up a back hallway, he added clerestory panels above each interior doorway and installed translucent glass in the interior doors. Each back room has a sliding glass

door, and he again installed glass panels above them to bring in even more light.

Wilson bought his first house, in Encino, at age 19. He remodeled it, sold it, and bought another. His day job was in the music industry, and soon his remodeling work began attracting celebrity clients via word of mouth. His first was actor Leslie Nielsen, and soon he was doing home and office renovations for rock stars and music companies, and for actor Kelsey Grammer's Malibu estate.

As much as Wilson and his wife, Kristin Young, enjoy their house, it's doubtful they will live here much longer. “I usually live in a house two years,” Wilson says. “Then I want to go create the next thing.” It will include, no doubt, plenty of windows, garden space, and a grand California view. ●

