

PROJECT PORTFOLIO

A SCRAPBOOK OF DESIGN/BUILD OVERHAULS

Room for a view

THE MISSION

Incorporate outdoor living space and provide more opportunities to showcase the views of the Bay.

This San Francisco Bay property was at one time part of a larger estate with some historical significance. The landscape project began midway through a major renovation to the primary residence, which itself was added years before with a more modern, contemporary design than its neighbors. It was that design style, and the need for additional outdoor living space, that provided the basis for the landscape design concept.

The team consisted of David Thorne Landscape Architect, Oakland, Calif.; Gardeners' Guild, Richmond, Calif.; the owner/architect; and the general contractor. Kip Matthews, operations manager of Gardeners' Guild's construction division, notes that BCP Concrete, Pleasanton, Calif., and Above The Rest Builders, San Rafael, Calif., went "above and beyond" to make this project a success.

"There were a few challenges," admits Matthews, "including narrow streets, neighbor coordination and a wet winter."

But the team met and overcame these obstacles, he adds, and success soon followed.

"Concrete stairs, walls and balustrades from the original estate were removed and terraces cut to capture much of the sloping hillside, creating additional usable space," he explains. "Ledge stone and CMU/stucco retaining walls were constructed. Turf areas for the kids were added, as well as planting areas with specimen olive trees, perennials, annuals and vegetables from various patios and sun decks."

Matthews notes that engineered footings, piers, sub-slabs and grade beams "provide a solid foundation where necessary. A water-efficient irrigation system, extensive drainage system, and other required utilities were provided to energize and sustain all the elements and functions related to the project."



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THE WORK



1 | A welcoming walk. The concrete grand staircase entry to upper levels from the driveway and property entry. A specimen *Acer* tree anchors the front entry planting area.

2 | The great outdoors. The further end of the turf area shows a custom design/build water feature, concrete patio, fireplace sitting area and kitchen area.

3 | Hidden spa. Adjacent to the fireplace is the outdoor kitchen/barbecue area, complete with a Big Green Egg smoker. Behind the kitchen is a secluded spa inset in another deck, cantilevered off a slope. Extensive site and underground work accompanied this portion of the project.



4 | Retaining elegance. The view from the top of the grand staircase, looking at the back of the residence. Note the Ipe deck and suspended bridge from the house with clear redwood and black poly-coated welding wire railings. The midlevel turf area is retained by a CMU/stucco wall with a bluestone cap. Upper levels are supported by dry-stacked ledgerstone walls.

5 | Garden of paradise. The view from the upper sun deck, with plantings such as fruitless olive trees, herbaceous perennials, vegetables and fruit and citrus trees.

6 | Water wonder. This custom water feature can be enjoyed from the front porch. The vertical piece is a broken basalt column with a cut and polished basalt base.



Founded in 1972, Gardeners' Guild is an employee-owned landscape management company with experience maintaining and building both commercial and residential landscapes throughout the San Francisco Bay area. Learn more at GardenersGuild.com.

