

# COASTAL REAL ESTATE GUIDE

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## ONE ON ONE WITH TRACEY TROOP:WW Re-Imagining the Empty Nest

BY GINA DOSTLER

As life moves on and children leave home and grandchildren begin to appear, couples are ready to reinvent their home to enjoy their new lifestyle. Tracey Troop, an 18-year interior designer, lately she turned to redesigning homes for parents when they find themselves entering a new phase of their life.

**Q: What are empty nesters?**

A: What I term empty nesters includes several stages of what happens after children grow up and set off on their own. They range from the early stages where kids have gone off to college, and still return home periodically, to anticipating grandchildren and the start of retirement. Many of

my clients are designing, building or remodeling their home for the next chapter of their lives and really enjoying this new stage they are entering.

**Q: What are key areas they focus on in remodeling?**

A: The three key areas for these



Tracey Troop

types of projects are public and entertaining spaces such as the kitchen, dining area, great room and living room. Another area is the private space such as the master bedroom and bath. Then there are the outdoor areas for personal or entertainment use. A job in Lido I just completed for a couple involved a lot of planning that included some of these areas.

**Q: How did the design incorporate these key areas?**

A: The Lido Island client recently retired and her husband is soon to retire in spring. Each wanted their own office space. The newly remodeled floor plan placed a downstairs office for her and a separate one upstairs for him. It was critical to them there be enough living space so not to trip over each other during their daily activities. Also important was sufficient entertaining space, achieved through an open kitchen and great room arrangement, plus their lovely interior courtyard and back patio on the strata.

**Q: What are the considerations in designing for grandchildren?**

A: The same client had their architect design a reading niche for future grandchildren, and their first one was born just six months ago. We considered safety for youngsters as well as for the couple as they "age in place." We installed a decorative wood panel above a stairway pony wall to avoid any potential danger for curious children. Though still living an active lifestyle, we also gave thought to safety and convenience with a first floor room of their two-story house as a bedroom with adjoining bathroom.

**Q: So the focus switches in very positive ways.**

A: Yes, it seems clients are embracing this new part of their life. My Newport Beach/Port Street clients remodeled their master suite after living in the home for 30 years. They had remodeled and



A little reading nook makes a perfect place to spend with grandkids.

redecorated all other rooms in their home and had saved the master for after both children were married. They had decided there weren't any other distractions or priorities and it was their turn to treat themselves to the beauty and comfort they desired in their most private space. We completely transformed their bedroom, using images of French bedrooms as our inspiration, including a 9-1/2' high custom built armoire.

**Q: So people are not necessarily downsizing.**

A: Not at all. Most of my clients are not downsizing. Instead, they are utilizing their space in different ways, even adding more space. Their lifestyle is evolving and they have the resources to invest in these changes. Changing or evolving lifestyles affect us all at one time or another and these clients have found a way to enhance their living spaces as they transition to their next chapters, each in a different way.

**Q: What ways have some clients expanded their living spaces?**

A: I have another client in Lido Island who simply moved into a larger home just down the street from where they used to live to accommodate the kids and grandkids. Another client sold their home and bought a smaller home in Turtle Rock where they live full-time and are leasing a bungalow in



Beachy bungalow is perfect for a romantic getaway.



Remodeling a home instead of downsizing to a smaller one is the order of the day for retirement.

Corona del Mar to have more space. It is two bedrooms, one bath and perfect for a guesthouse when their family wants to come and stay. They updated the finishes with a little remodel to the kitchen and were able to use the furniture from the larger home they sold in both the Turtle Rock and Corona del Mar

home. The bungalow is so charming they use it for themselves as a little romantic getaway for a night or two.

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