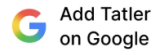


Home tour: inside a sophisticated yet whimsical San Francisco bachelor pad for two brothers



By Celeste Goh
May 22, 2026



COVER The two-unit home in Pacific Heights went through an extensive gut renovation

Butler Armsden Architects and JayJeffers reimagined the two-unit Colonial Revival-style home in Pacific Heights through a meticulous renovation that balances heritage character with contemporary living

Perched upon a hill in central-northern San Francisco, the affluent neighbourhood of [Pacific Heights](#) is afforded sweeping views of the city's most iconic landmarks, including the [Golden Gate Bridge](#), Alcatraz, and the Bay.

Considerably one of the most expensive neighbourhoods in the country, the serene, tree-lined streets form an open-air showcase of historic luxury homes—ranging from ornate Victorian and Edwardian mansions, to French château-style estates that reflect the immense wealth of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



ABOVE The arched doorway and windows at the front façade were preserved while the trim was repainted

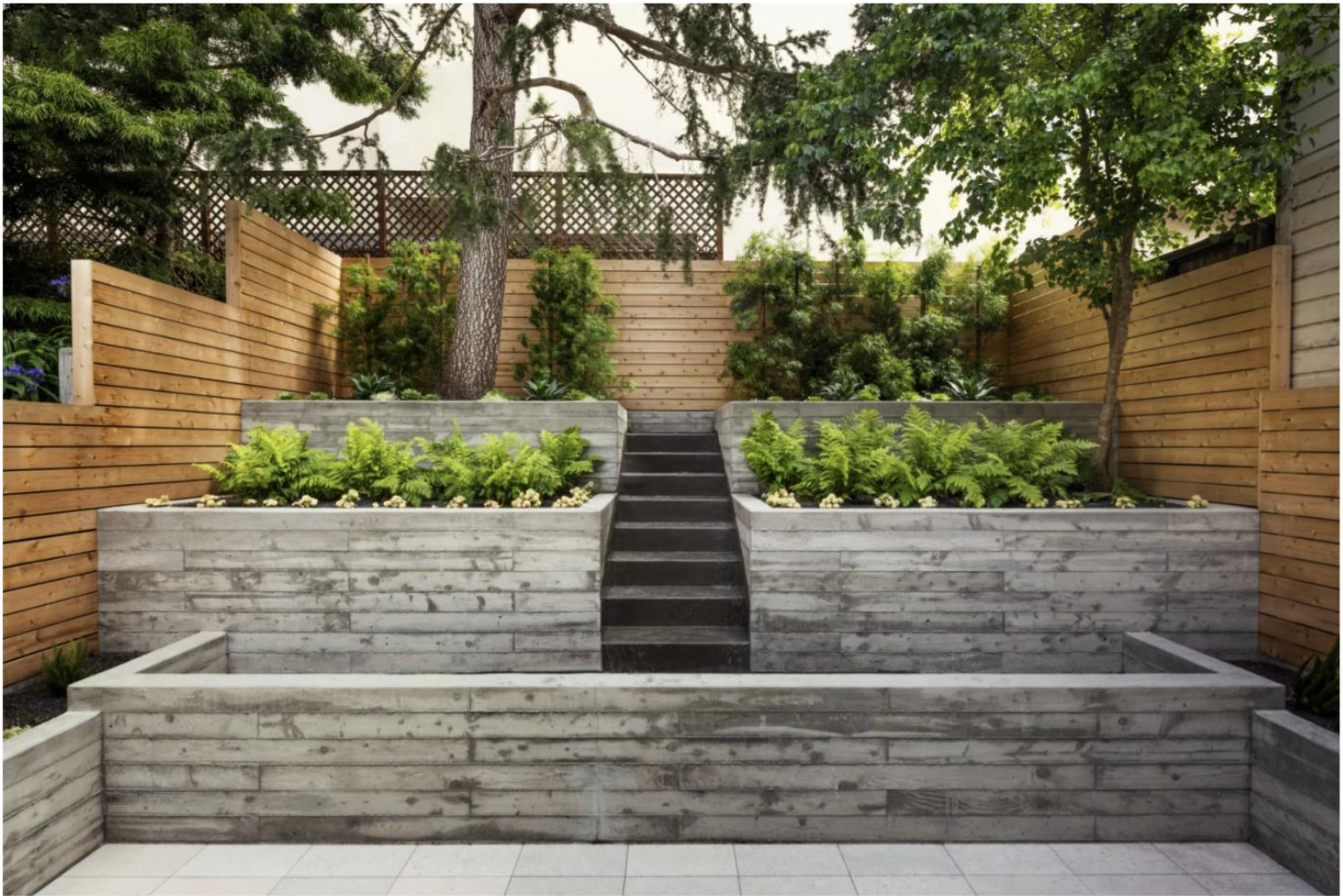


ABOVE The rear façade was rebuilt to accommodate expansive windows and sliding glass doors

Among the many different Revival-style residences is one of Colonial Revival style, built in 1922 by a Woolworths executive for his family.

An arched doorway and windows articulate the front façade, whereas at the rear, a large cedar tree anchors the garden, in stark contrast to the formal streetscape.

Inside, herringbone floor tiles line the entry foyer, while the wood-burning fireplaces lend warmth and intimacy to the interiors.



ABOVE The rear garden was revitalised with cast-in-place concrete planting tiers and a new timber fence set on fresh concrete foundations

Two brothers—one in engineering and [construction](#), and the other in technology—are proud homeowners of the two-unit sloped lot.

Each unit spans approximately 2,200 sq ft, comprising two-and-a-half baths, a bedroom that can be converted to a small office space, as well as an elevated level for the [primary bedroom suite](#).

At street level, a shared multipurpose garage accommodates the gym, storage, and mechanical spaces, while the full-time residence also enjoys access to the rear garden and a modest [penthouse](#) addition currently under construction.



ABOVE The living room with the client's favoured blues and greys

Having previously worked with former clients who owned the property, [Butler Armsden Architects](#) was already familiar with the home's untapped potential.

"The building had been constructed really well, even in a very [neoclassical](#) mode, but it needed a lot of modern upgrades," shares Dave Sturm, senior associate at Butler Armsden Architects, regarding the [extensive renovation](#) that spanned 25 months.



ABOVE The original wood-burning fireplace, updated to comply with present-day safety codes



ABOVE The arched motifs on the front façade translated into the interiors with a touch of whimsy

Each unit was almost entirely gutted and rebuilt, with a few original elements remaining where necessary to maintain the character of the building.

On the exterior, the trim along the front façade was repainted and the garage door replaced, while the rear elevation was completely reconstructed with braked metal to accommodate expansive windows and sliding glass doors—a technically intricate intervention that required extensive detailing and close coordination with the builders.



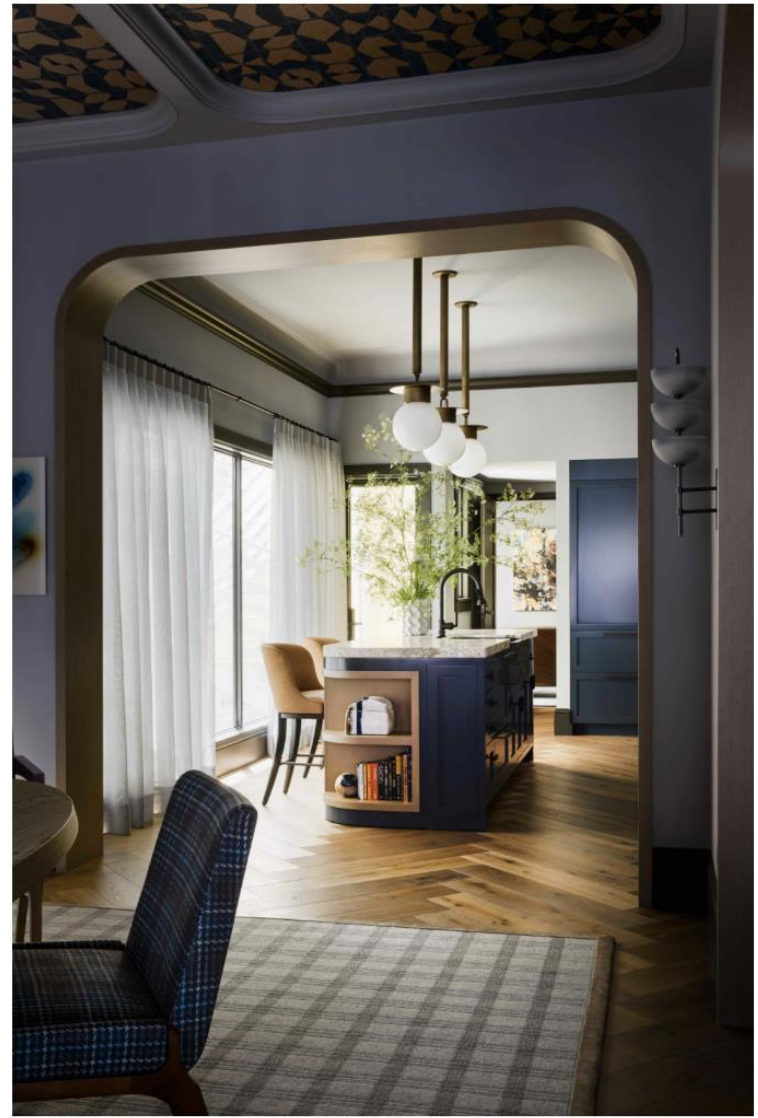
ABOVE The dining room with an oval oak pedestal dining table, and playful graphic wallpaper on the ceiling

The rear garden was revitalised with a cascading “waterfall” fountain, alongside cast-in-place concrete planting tiers and a new timber fence set on fresh concrete foundations.

Meanwhile, the patio seating area was subtly expanded to incorporate a pedestal system beneath the large-format stone paving surrounding the cast-in-place fire pit.



ABOVE A multicoloured ceramic floating console in the dining room



ABOVE A mixture of modern and traditional designs in the home

Inside, although the entry foyer was rebuilt, the original herringbone floor tiles were meticulously preserved, as no contemporary replacement came close to matching the size, shape, or glazing of the originals.

“The entry foyer with its skylight really lets the daylight into the centrally located staircase, and is quite an opening ‘statement’ to the upper unit,” reflects Sturm on one of his favourite spaces within the project.

Another original feature retained was the wood-burning fireplaces, which were updated to comply with present-day health and safety codes while also being enhanced aesthetically.



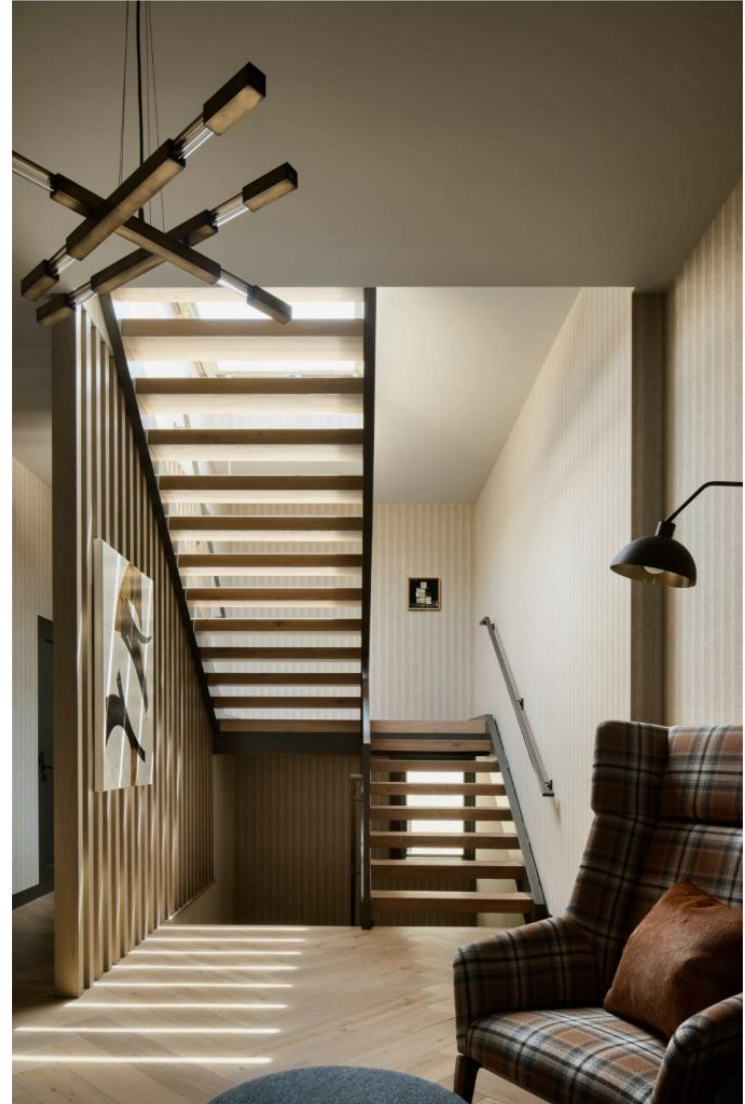
ABOVE The kitchen area with natural oak used throughout the cabinetry

Elsewhere, the structural framework and routing of the mechanical ducting were carefully reconsidered, while the mechanical and electrical systems were comprehensively upgraded—crucial interventions required to meet contemporary standards and expectations.

Finally, the upper unit now features new skylights that allow natural light to permeate the primary suite and guest bathroom; while a newly introduced stairway leads to a large operable skylight that opens onto a rooftop deck, with potential for a future vertical addition to the property.



ABOVE Furnishing pieces that feel distinctive and slightly unexpected



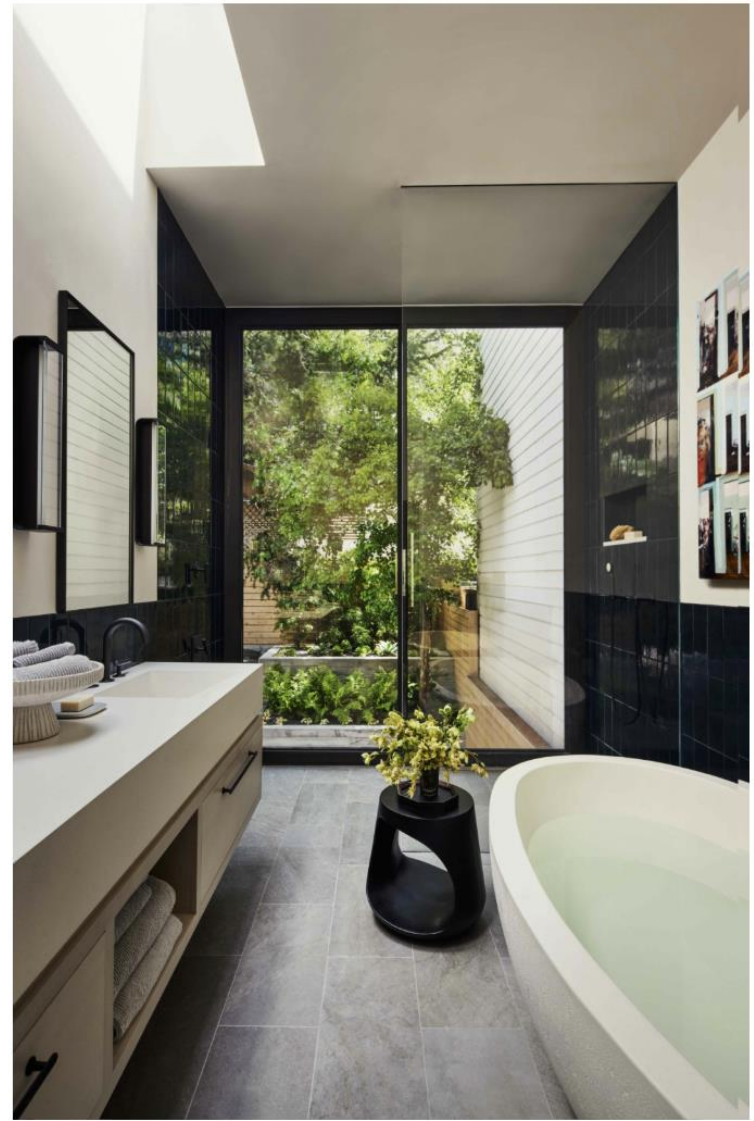
ABOVE The newly introduced stairway leads to a large operable skylight

For the interiors, the brothers—both receptive to “a high level of design”—enlisted San Francisco-based firm JayJeffers, drawn to its comprehensive and highly tailored design portfolio.

“I seem to often attract bachelor clients, as my work does tend to skew slightly masculine,” laughs Jay Jeffers, founder of the eponymous design firm. “It is also comfortable and well edited, which appealed to them as they were looking for a modern aesthetic for a sophisticated home that exudes youthful exuberance.”



ABOVE The powder room



ABOVE Ample light through the skylight

Drawing inspiration from the arched motifs on the front façade, Jeffers translated the architectural language into the interiors with a touch of whimsy, most notably through the decorative ceiling beams, cased openings, and cabinetry.

As the client really likes blues and greys and wasn't big on bright, punchy colours, the interior designer also selected furnishings with personality—pieces that feel distinctive and slightly unexpected, while still being exceptionally well made without appearing overly precious.

Furthermore, natural oak used throughout the cabinetry, staircases, and portal surrounds further imbues the home with warmth, calmness, and understated sophistication.



ABOVE The primary bedroom suite that overlooks the rear yard

Jeffers adds that the dining room was his favourite space to design, particularly due to the playful graphic wallpaper applied to the ceiling: “It is really a great spot for a dinner party,” he quips.

Here, beside a multicoloured ceramic floating console, an oval oak pedestal dining table anchors the room and seats up to 12 guests—perfectly suited to the upper-level homeowner, who plans to entertain frequently.

Credits

Photography: Sam Frost