

The Eastern Seaboard Style Masterpiece

Project Profile: Carnation Drive in Newport Beach, CA

Spinnaker Development and the team at Brandon Architects collaborated to build the Carnation Home: a truly unique, landmark property that will remain timeless in its architecture.

By Marco Martinez



The “tower element” which surrounds the entry is veneered with a painted reclaimed brick

This Eastern seaboard style masterpiece by Spinnaker Development is located in the heart of “the village” in Corona Del Mar, Ca. This is one of the most coveted coastal communities in Orange County due to its proximity to world class shopping, restaurants, beaches and its central location between Newport Beach, Newport Coast and Laguna Beach. The specific property is located on a corner lot which provided a tremendous amount of flexibility and impact with regard to the architecture of the home. The existing home was a single story cottage in original or “tear down” condition.

The inspiration for the design was a Cape Cod/ Nantucket “eastern seaboard” style traditional home. “To this day we receive more feedback from this development than any other previous home we’ve built within this community,” said Mike Close, president of Spinnaker Development. “This home has been described as a ‘landmark’ design and has created a significant amount of buzz for both Spinnaker and our design team,” said Close. The corner lot provided an opportunity to create great “curb appeal” and drama within the architecture. The interiors of the home were cohesively designed with the exterior building materials and architecture in mind. Our interior designer executed the architect’s vision in perfect harmony by incorporating many design architectural elements in the furnishing and décor.

We were able to incorporate a roof top deck capturing ocean and Catalina Views, as well as city light views toward Fashion Island.  
– Mike Close, President of Spinnaker Development

The architect designed an interior courtyard that opened to the main level.

The location of this development provided great exposure for both builder and architect. The feedback Spinnaker received shortly after completion was extremely positive. Many homeowners and neighbors commented on how the style of the home was perceived as “refreshing” in a community that features primarily 30’ wide lots with tight setbacks. “This again was the major advantage of having this corner property to work with,” said Close, “we were able to implement several architectural design features and elements not often found with a street facing façade on a 30’, 40’ or 45’ lot.”

Mike Close explains that one of the major challenges with the design and build was creating an open floor plan and feel without sacrificing functionality. These building envelopes dictate a “bowling alley” type feel on such narrow and long lots. Spinnaker strived to maintain the popular indoor/outdoor program without losing formality to the necessary utilitarian spaces. Chris Brandon designed an interior courtyard that opened to the main level featuring a corner pocket door system. The courtyard became an extension of the main living area and flooded the home with an abundance of natural light and as well as providing a secondary entertaining space.



The same brick detail used on the exterior was used in cladding the interior fireplace wall in the master bedroom.



Polished nickel light fixtures, plumbing fixtures and hardware provide formality to the design.



The gambrel roof sets off the street facing elevation with a quaint master balcony opening to the bedroom with large French doors.



The gourmet kitchen with island and marble countertops.

The existing community has incredible character. Most of the existing homes are traditional in style with a mix of contemporary or Tuscan/Mediterranean style homes. Without the influence of a homeowner’s association the Village benefits from a great mix of architectural styles. This being a spec development they chose to stay traditional in design yet strived to push the boundaries as far as the architecture was concerned. There have been a significant amount of black & white traditional homes built in recent years within CDM village and Spinnaker demanded that this home stand out from the rest. This is where Chris Brandon’s vision came to life. They worked closely with Chris and his team at Brandon Architects to design and build a truly unique, landmark property that would remain “timeless” in its architecture.

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The gambrel roof sets off the street facing elevation with a quaint master balcony opening to the bedroom with large French doors. The roof lines are one of their favorite elements of this design. The use of gambrel, gable and hip roofs as well as copper standing seam and natural wood shake really drive the elevation. “We were also able to incorporate a roof top deck capturing ocean and Catalina views,” said Close, “as well as city light views towards Fashion Island and Newport Center.”

The Carnation home is full of unique features, most popular of which is the “open air” rooftop cabana. This informal space could be used in so many ways. The secluded retreat is protected from the elements and finished as if it were an interior space. Another great feature of the home is the transition of materials from the exterior to the interior of the home. The reclaimed brick wraps the interior courtyard surrounding a large corner pocket door system. The brick continues into the adjacent interior space around the door header and onto an accent board. This same brick detail was used in cladding the interior fireplace wall in the master bedroom. The board and batten siding is used on the interiors as full height paneling throughout most of the main living spaces and again ties the architecture to the interior design. Design elements such as reclaimed wood barn doors provide solutions for door swing issues in tight corridors or hallways and act as an impactful design feature. The mix of lacquer painted tongue and groove ceilings and reclaimed wood box beams blend the old and new. Polished nickel light fixtures, plumbing fixtures and hardware provide formality to the design aesthetic. A wire brushed French Oak hardwood was used throughout the home. The lacquer painted custom cabinetry and floor to ceiling finish carpentry added tremendous warmth to the casual yet elegant design.

About the future of Spinnaker, Mike said the following: “We are currently working on 3 new spec developments all within the community of Corona Del Mar. Our three new projects are all large subterranean builds located on incredible view facing properties in the community of Cameo Shores and Ocean Blvd in Corona Del Mar. We have collaborated with our design team on all 3 new builds and expect the completion of 2 of these properties early next year with the third scheduled for a Spring ‘16 completion date. We anticipate bringing 3 of the most extraordinary homes ever built in our area to the marketplace in these next few months.”

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