

atomic MID CENTURY MARVELS ranch

THE PALM SPRINGS ISSUE

Inside This Rare 1946 Albert Frey

Inspiring a New Generation of
Architects

Make Your Mark With Outdoor
Renovations



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THE HOUSE IS ONE OF THE FEW REMAINING EXAMPLES OF PALMER & KRISSEL'S WORK THAT HAS NOT BEEN EXTENSIVELY ALTERED OVER THE YEARS. AT 1,371 SQUARE FEET, IT EMBODIES THE BEAUTY OF MODERNIST SIMPLICITY WITH ITS LOW-SLUNG ROOFLINE AND AN OPEN INTERIOR WITH FLOOR-TO-CEILING WINDOWS.

BEFORE: IN 2022, DANIELA AND VICTOR GROZDICH WERE ON THE HUNT FOR A SECOND HOME IN THE DESERT. ONE DAY, A NEW LISTING POPPED UP WITH A SINGLE PHOTO OF A VERY RUNDOWN 1957 KRISSEL ALEXANDER HOUSE THAT NEEDED A TON OF WORK. THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT THEY HAD BEEN LOOKING FOR—AND THE BEST PART WAS THAT THE HOUSE SEEMED UNTOUCHED FROM THE ORIGINAL. NO ONE HAD ENCLOSED THE CARPORT OR ADDED SQUARE FOOTAGE LIKE MOST OTHER HOUSES FROM THIS ERA.



LOVE FOR A Desert Classic

Palmer & Krisel meet preservation
and modernization.

By Sarah Jane Stone | Photography by Oscar Flink





SIMPLE YET REFINED, THE LIVING SPACE IS A FAMILY FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT THAT ISN'T FUSSY AND CAN ADAPT EASILY FOR GUESTS.

Tucked away in the iconic Little Beverly Hills neighborhood of Palm Springs sits a once-neglected Palmer & Krisel home. Today, it is a lovingly restored testament to their understated brilliance and architectural genius.

Designed in 1957 and originally built by the Alexander Construction Company, this desert gem found new life thanks to the passion and dedication of architect Daniela Grozdich and builder Victor Grozdich. Purchased in 2022 as a second home for the couple and their two young sons, Luca and Milo, the family spent the next year meticulously preserving the home's original spirit while introducing modern touches that align with today's design sensibilities.

MOVIE MAGIC MEET-CUTE

Daniela and Victor's connection to mid-century architecture runs deep. Over the years, the couple has explored Palm Springs' architectural treasures. They fell in love with the iconic designs of William Krisel and the Alexander Homes, and it wasn't long before the couple began dreaming of owning and restoring their own slice of architectural history.

"I remember walking past a rundown Palmer & Krisel home years ago in Little Beverly Hills and joking to my mom, 'That's the one I'd love to bring back to life,'" Daniela recalls. "It felt

like an impossible dream at the time, but little did I know we would one day make it a reality."

Fast forward five years and the opportunity finally appeared. They spotted a listing for a dilapidated 1957 Krisel Alexander house in its original form—untouched by any major renovations. "It was everything we had been searching for," Victor says. "No one had enclosed the carport, no additions had been made—it was the perfect blank slate."

Despite its condition, they were undeterred. The couple made an offer on the house without even seeing it in person, confident that they could restore it to its former glory. When they arrived in Palm Springs to see the house for the first time, Daniela had an epiphany. It was the exact house she had commented on all those years ago. With that, their journey to bring the home back to life began.

MATERIAL MATTERS

Victor and Daniela's approach to the renovation was rooted in respect for the home's original design while imagining how a mid mod home might be interpreted today. The home was built to feel spacious despite its modest 1,371 square feet. Not wanting to add or make major structural changes, the duo had a lot of work ahead of them.



ABOVE: CONSIDERING THE PREVIOUSLY DILAPIDATED STATE OF THE HOME ITSELF, IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT THE BACKYARD WAS OVERGROWN AND WILD, WITH MATURE TREES THAT HADN'T BEEN TRIMMED IN DECADES. THERE WAS NO POOL OR LANDSCAPING—JUST MOUNTAINS OF LEAVES.

BELOW: "IT'S NOW THE PERFECT PLACE TO RELAX AND ENTERTAIN, WITH A VIEW OF THE MOUNTAINS THAT FEELS LIKE IT'S PART OF THE LANDSCAPE," VICTOR SAYS OF THE BACKYARD.





"We didn't want to recreate the 1950s exactly but rather think about what choices a modernist architect would make in the present day," Daniela explains. "We wanted to preserve the soul of the house while updating it for contemporary living."

The renovation was led by Daniela, who designed the interiors, landscaping and hardscaping, while Victor

took on the role of general contractor and personally handled all the glasswork—a skill he honed over the years. Key design elements like walnut and pegboard kitchen cabinets, terrazzo tiles and hairpin legs are nostalgic nods to Krisel's original interiors but are paired with contemporary materials that modernize the home without sacrificing its charm.

"WE USED JUST ONE TYPE OF TERRAZZO TILE IN THE ENTIRE HOUSE, INCLUDING THE FLOORS AND SHOWERS," DANIELA SAYS. "WE WANTED A CLEAN AND SIMPLE LANGUAGE THAT CREATES A NICE FLOW THROUGHOUT THE HOME."

"We didn't try to replicate the original exactly. We wanted to bring **Krisel's language** into the 21st century while maintaining the essence of his work."



Cooking Up *Cool Design*

Daniela and Victor's kitchen has undergone a stunning transformation that honors the original design while introducing some essential modern functionality.

The original kitchen layout, though full of character, was cramped by an awkward fridge placement and a tall cabinet next to the sink, making the space feel tight and workflow inefficient. For Daniela and Victor, the goal was not to replicate the past but to imagine how a modernist architect would approach that same kitchen today.

"We thought about what choices a modernist architect would make now, incorporating new technologies while staying true to the home's original spirit," Daniela says.

The new design is clean and uncluttered. The fridge, a stacked washer and dryer, and pantry are cleverly concealed behind walnut panels, keeping the space tidy and streamlined. The Grozdichs carefully considered how every inch of the space could be made functional while preserving the home's open, airy flow.

"The kitchen feels spacious and cohesive, with a sense of openness that matches the rest of the house," Daniela says.

Notable mid mod touches, such as hairpin legs on the base cabinets and custom slanted fronts on the upper cabinets, pay homage to Krisel's design language. Meanwhile, modern touches, like the fully integrated fridge and a floating dish drawer, bring the space into the 21st century without sacrificing its mid-century charm.

With an emphasis on clean lines, functional design and timeless style, this kitchen is a perfect reflection of the Grozdichs' commitment to preserving mid-century style while modernizing it for the sake of livability.

OPPOSITE: THE KITCHEN LAYOUT WAS REIMAGINED TO CREATE A MORE FUNCTIONAL AND OPEN SPACE. "THE ORIGINAL KITCHEN HAD THE FRIDGE ON THE BACK WALL, WHICH MADE IT FEEL TIGHT," DANIELA EXPLAINS. "THERE WAS ALSO A TALL CABINET NEXT TO THE SINK, WHICH WE REMOVED."

TO MAKE THE KITCHEN FEEL CLEAN AND UNCLUTTERED, THE FRIDGE, STACKED WASHER AND DRYER, AND PANTRY WERE HIDDEN BEHIND WALNUT PANELS.





THE ART ABOVE THE BED IS BY DIEGO OLIVERO AND SOLD BY WEST ELM. IT ADDS A PERSONAL TOUCH TO THE SPACE. "THE ART BRINGS A SENSE OF WARMTH TO THE ROOM WHILE STILL FEELING MODERN AND IN TUNE WITH THE HOME'S DESIGN," DANIELA SAYS.

The original footprint and spatial flow were carefully preserved. "Every detail was considered," Victor notes. "For example, we kept the open floor plan and large windows, which blur the lines between the interior and the spectacular desert landscape outside."

RATED (VERY) CHILD-FRIENDLY

The kids' room features a creative art wall that was inspired by the Grozdich family's love of design and their time spent in Palm Springs.

"We often bring other families with kids to Palm Springs, and we thought it would be fun if the art wall could be filled with memories from all of our guests," Daniela says. "It's a space where kids can get creative and make it their own."

ACT II: STYLING

The open living space was designed with comfort and versatility in mind. "We wanted it to feel modern and cozy," Daniela says. "Since we often have a bunch of kids in the house, it couldn't be too staged or precious—it needed to be practical and adaptable for spontaneous get-togethers."

The furniture choices are influenced by mid-century style but have a European sensibility. "I was inspired by Berlin apartments, which are often modern but cozy," she says. "We wanted to capture that feeling here."

That same sensibility, a merging of modernism and comfort, is seen in the primary suite. Through carefully chosen furnishings they have created a tranquil retreat with sweeping views of the desert and mountains.


"Waking up to that Palm Springs view is magical," Daniela says. "The mountains glow pink in the morning when the sun rises. It's unlike any other place."

"The bathroom vanity and upper cabinets in the kitchen and bathroom feature slanted fronts, a playful reinterpretation of Krisel's signature design."

RIGHT: THE BATHROOM WAS CUSTOM DESIGNED TO REFLECT KRISSEL'S PLAYFUL MID-CENTURY AESTHETIC, WHILE THE MATERIALS WERE UPDATED FOR MODERN SENSIBILITIES.

BELOW: SONS LUCA AND MILO ENJOY THE SPACE. "THEY LOVE TO COME HERE AND PLAY AND CREATE," DANIELA SAYS. "IT'S A ROOM THAT GROWS WITH THEM."





THE COUPLE ADDED THOUGHTFUL LANDSCAPING TO WORK WITH THE HOME'S DESERT LOCATION, USING NATIVE PLANTS TO CREATE A SIMPLE, ELEGANT DESIGN. PAIRED WITH HARDSCAPING THAT WORKS FOR THE FAMILY'S NEEDS, THE BACKYARD IS NOW A PERSONALIZED DESERT OASIS THAT BLENDS SEAMLESSLY WITH THE ARCHITECTURE.

"Waking up to that Palm Springs view is magical. The mountains glow pink in the morning when the sun rises. It's unlike any other place."

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

"When we arrive at our house, it feels like instant vacation," Daniela says. "The house is flooded with light, the pool sparkles in the sun, and through the glass we see the mountains and palm trees."

Victor adds, "We really wanted to capture the feeling of being in Palm Springs. The combination of sunshine, palm trees, desert and modern architecture has drawn people here for decades. It's what makes this place so special."

This Palmer & Krisel home is more than a Mid Century Modern gem—it's a labor of love that perfectly balances historic preservation with modern sensibilities. For the Grozdich family, it's not just a home—it's their "happy place," a retreat where design, nature and family come together in harmony. And for those who visit, it's a breathtaking example of how modernist architecture can respectfully evolve. @

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