

An aerial photograph of a luxurious oceanfront property. The scene is dominated by a large, curved swimming pool with clear blue water, bordered by a brick patio. On the patio, there is a dining table with a white tablecloth and a large teal umbrella, surrounded by chairs with blue and white striped cushions. To the right, there are lounge chairs with teal cushions and yellow towels. The property is surrounded by lush greenery, including palm trees and flowering bushes. In the background, the ocean is visible with waves crashing against the shore. The sky is clear and blue.

a fortress of solitude

An iconic Ed Niles masterpiece on Malibu's Point Dume Bluffs shines with four oceanfront acres and a rare celebrity pedigree.



For philanthropists Caroline and Sidney Kimmel, houses are like chapters bookmarking different seasons of their lives. Their current home by modernist architect Edward R. Niles is an autobiography told in intersecting triangles of wood and glass that point like arrows to the sea, representing a blissful decade spent atop Malibu's majestic Point Dume Bluffs.

Caroline, who had grown up in Malibu, was immediately drawn to the property's voluminous spaces, indoor-outdoor qualities, private beach access and coveted position above Little Dume, where she surfed as a young girl. "For me, it was full circle and back to where I grew up," she says. She first became intrigued by the property after seeing an advertisement in a 2007 edition of *View*, although they had "no intention of buying a home in Malibu" at the time. Still, the couple was curious. Sidney's work as a film producer had meant they were spending more time in New York and Los Angeles, and less time at their prized West Palm Beach home. Maybe there was a possibility this oceanfront oasis could replace it?

A tour of the secluded four-acre modern masterpiece was all the nudge they needed. Entering the magnificent estate for the first time, Caroline was awe-struck. A private and gated red-bricked motor court curved

under a canopy of Coral trees, guiding them through a verdant garden to what Caroline calls a "work of art." Niles — who had designed the house in 1978 for the Schmidt family — had angled the main residence to capture the most cinematic views possible and amplify the vibrant West Coast light. "Every room was a triangle or contained intersections of triangles," she recalls. The double triangle shaped living room was an immediate standout. Sunbursts of light pierced through the 30-foot high glass ceiling and wooden fretwork above, creating a dramatic dappled effect across the original marble floors and indoor arboretum. Glass walls on both sides of the living room opened completely to the outside, where a stone bluff terrace captured views of the entire Santa Monica Bay stretching from Paradise Cove to Queens Necklace. She could hear the sound of a waterfall cascading into a Koi pond below, near the pool and sun deck. Anchored by a sunken indoor copper-and-glass firepit, the living room flowed effortlessly from formal to informal with a swanky upper lounge and a black marble and Asian-themed bar. Despite some signs of deferred maintenance, "there was a lot of sex appeal," she recalls.

The Kimmels hadn't given much thought to the seller's identity until they walked across the street and toured the property's adjoining two acres consisting of manicured rose gardens and grounds, as well as a championship



“We were told that the bench was a gift from NBC to Johnny upon his retirement, and the bench was from Wimbledon,” recalls Caroline. “That’s when we realized. This was Johnny’s home. As we walked back to the main residence, we noticed the security station and learned that Johnny was an early morning tennis player. This home had been his personal sanctuary and his fortress of solitude.”



tennis court/viewing area and pavilion with two separate guest suites, kitchen, gym/locker room and sauna. Their first clue arrived in the pavilion: a collection of photographs depicting celebrities who had appeared on “The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson.” When the Kimmels reached the tennis court, the listing agent pointed to a plaque on a green bench. ———

It took the couple — serious fans of Carson, who passed away in 2005 — about 10 minutes to decide to purchase the property. Having worked previously with Thierry Despont on four other homes, Caroline had developed an eye for decorating. She quickly took up the charge of styling their new Malibu home. She hired a team led by I. Grace Construction, with May Sung and Chris Barrett managing the architecture and design. Carson’s widow, Alex, was kind enough to give Caroline early access for measurements. She zipped back and forth between L.A., New York and their Palm Beach home, making selections of textiles, furnishings, antiques and art from their personal collection. One fortuitous find from Manhattan’s Newel

gallery ended up anchoring the living room to near perfection: a massive gold sunburst stretching nearly 16 feet across the ceiling. “Suddenly the living room felt balanced,” she says. “At dusk, beams of light shine right on the gold orb. It creates a lot of drama.”

She left the original floorplan largely in tact, which included the main level living room and lounge areas, a light-filled formal dining room, chef’s kitchen as well as a lower entertainment level with an outdoor lounge, a wood paneled media room and bar, wine cellar and casual indoor/outdoor dining room. Her only modification came with the master suite, which encompasses the entire second floor. She added a “his” bathroom and walk-in wardrobe, with deep wooded tones and onyx surfaces, which connect to a private office. She also incorporated a “her” bathroom suite, highlighted by an expanse of stone, artisan tile and Jacuzzi soaking tub, in addition to an impeccably detailed walk-in closet, ocean front terrace and separate glass enclosed office.

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Considerable attention was paid to creating grounds that feel lush and tropical as you meander through gardens, mature trees and stone pathways leading to the beach. A rich palette of green, highlighted by a brilliant festival of colors from various flora that change with the seasons, provided the canvas for the couple's coveted sculptures by Rodin, Miró, Giacometti and many others – which Caroline thoughtfully arranged on the property to look as if they were one with their earthly surroundings. The massive undertaking took Caroline less than four months to complete.

"I never showed the property to Sidney again until the day we moved in," says Caroline. "I'll never forget his reaction. He was so happy he moved me to tears. It was the beginning of an exciting new chapter for us."

Today, the property functions as part-retreat and part-business center, where Sidney can carry on meetings or host film-related lunches with actors, directors and producers. The Kimmels have hosted many memorable dinner parties over the years in their dining room. Earlier this year, they transformed their living room into a grand event space for 60 people as they celebrated the 20th anniversary of Kimmel Scholars, a program that takes the best and brightest in cancer research and gives them a start in building their labs. Perhaps it was just this kind of party that set Carson on his path of ownership on Point Dume 33 years ago.

Carson's memory still lives within the angled walls. His Koi still swim in the pond to this day. The tennis court bench still bears his namesake. The Kimmels' deep sense of stewardship and respect for his legacy will endure with the property, long after they have left and the new owners start their next chapter.

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