

THE GREAT DIVIDE

When mere tax brackets separate fantasy and reality.



THE DREAM

District: 2140 Jefferson St., Marina
Damage: \$8,180,000
Digits: Richard Sax, Pacific Union Real Estate, 415-345-3060
Deets: Two houses overlooking the Palace of Fine Arts lagoon were combined to create this 7,000-plus-square-foot, four-level, five-bed, five-and-a-half bath home. Its highly designed spaces and custom rare finishes—marble, pear wood, white onyx panels and cast and hand-blown glass flooring—are just the start. And let's not forget the views.



THE DEAL

District: 115 Carl St., #5, Ashbury Heights
Damage: \$399,000
Digits: Amanda F. Swain, West Group Real Estate, 415-596-5290
Deets: Clean and modern is what you get with this top-floor, one-bed, one-bath condo with a top-of-the-line starter kitchen. There's even a parking spot included—though you might not need it since you're a hop, skip and jump away from the N-Judah. —Amy Sheppard

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MODERN LOVE

A creative couple brings a 140-year-old house back from the brink. BY LEILANI LABONG

Taking on the monumental remodel of an 1860s Bernal Heights cottage—one that had survived the 1906 earthquake, but, at the time of its sale in 2006, was suffering the effects of old age and bearing the scars of the previous owner's unfinished home-improvement projects—required one thing above all others: a leap of faith. (It had been slated to be razed by the city, after all.) The buyers, Melodie Froment and Jerome Doran, a stylish professional couple with a young daughter, put their trust in local architect Jonathan Feldman to turn the dilapidated home into a modern gem. “Melodie and Jerome were drawn to its simple form and the rawness of the original redwood,” says Feldman, who discloses his own take on the home's selling point: the charm factor. “It wasn't livable, but among the tall trees, it had a fairy-tale appeal.”

The blueprints specified an open-plan design for the three-bedroom, two-and-a-half bath, 1,600-square-foot home. The new galley kitchen—which overlooks a step-down dining room, and via the enormous sliding glass doors, a large backyard—features a vintage Wedgwood stove and deep drawers to store big appliances. A built-in coffee dock showcases Jerome's well-utilized espresso machine and Melodie's collectible cups. A textured slate backsplash provides a cool contrast to the earthy redwood siding in the dining room. “Blending old and new materials is a good way to bring an antiquated building into the modern day,” says Feldman.

To that end, the architect designed a new two-story annex with a dramatic, south-facing glass enclosure. The 500-square-foot tower, connected to the original structure via a central staircase, houses Jerome's second-floor office loft and Melodie's dainty ground-level workspace. Unmistakably modern, the new see-through addition is a sparkling counterpoint to the home's vintage redwood exterior. “Melodie and Jerome wanted an old house they could transform,” says Feldman, who carefully juggled the limitations of the historic neighborhood with the homeowners' contemporary tastes for the nearly three-year renovation. “I think we did a good job.” x



BEFORE: The 19th-century Bernal Heights cottage might have had fairy-tale allure, but the interior left something to be desired. Feldman kept some of the old (the vintage Wedgwood) but made most of it new, including a two-story annex with a glass enclosure.

