

Home Green Home



Eco-Friendly Architecture on the Peninsula

BY RENEE BRINCKS

It used to be that "building green" meant installing a few solar panels and incorporating a few recycled materials. Thankfully, those days have passed.

Today's sustainable building practices leave a lighter ecological footprint, reduce toxins and help residents save resources and money—all without sacrificing architectural style. With thoughtful construction techniques and pioneering new materials, some as simple as denim insulation and soy-based paint, home building has become healthier for people and for the planet.

These local projects, builders and distributors prove that do-good home design can also be comfortable and beautiful.

Homes by architect Jonathan Feldman (top two photos) and by architect Safwat Malek (bottom photo) incorporate nature into the design. Feldman designed a home in the Santa Lucia Preserve with a living roof, and Malek remodeled a home in Carmel utilizing multiple solar panels.

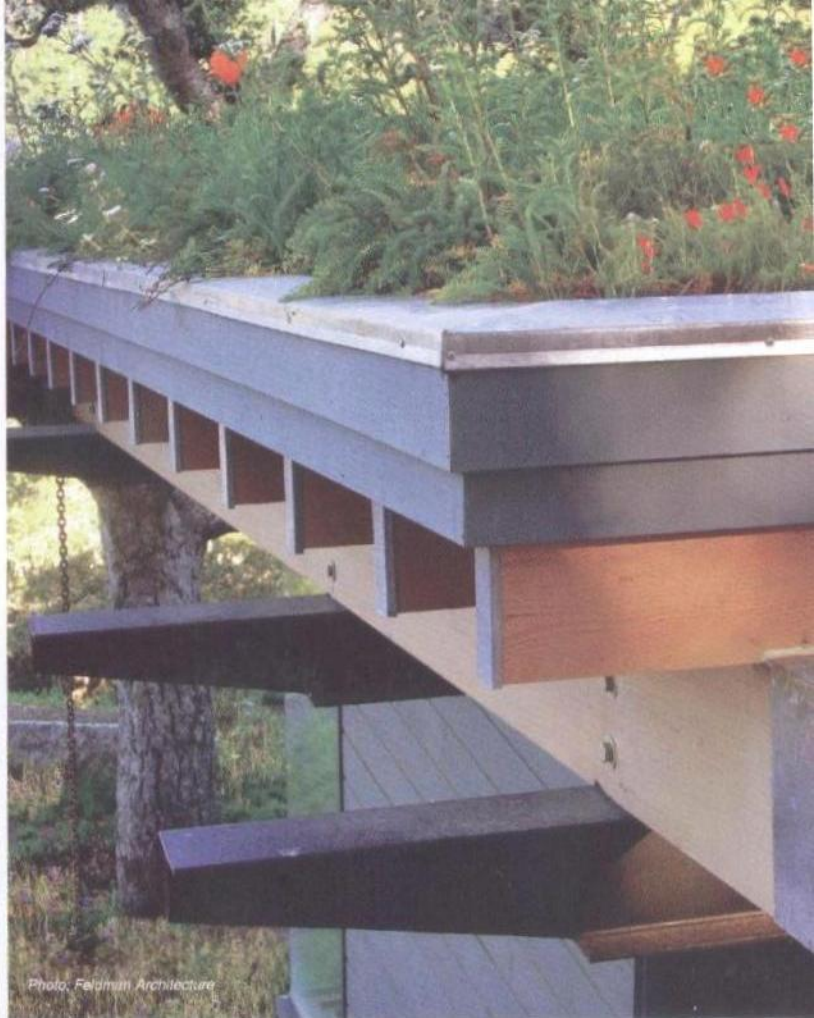
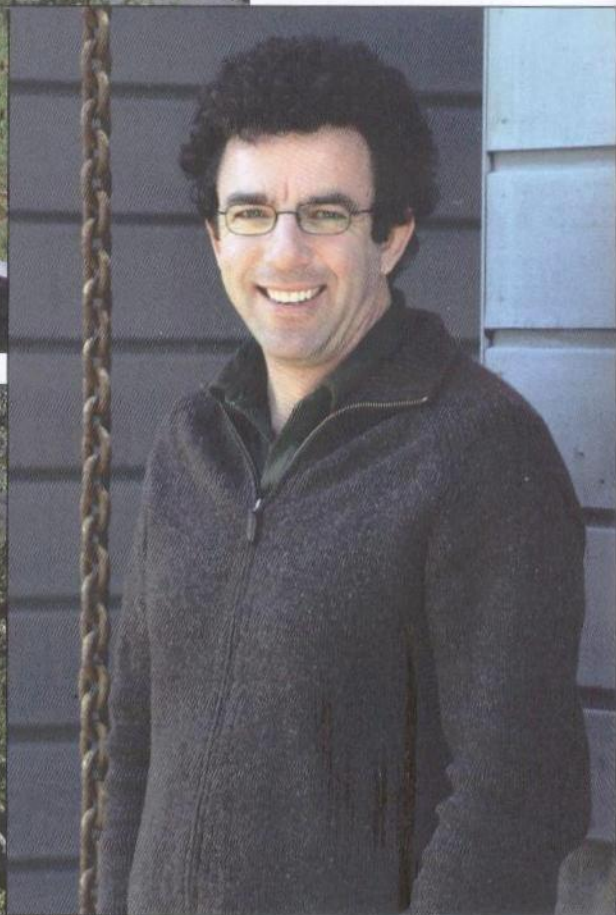


Photo: Feldman Architecture



Jonathan Feldman paid attention to the natural slope of the land and established oak trees when he designed this Santa Lucia Preserve home in three sections. Native plants sprout from the roofs.



A Hillside Home With a Living Roof

When San Francisco architect Jonathan Feldman designed his parents' vacation home in the Santa Lucia Preserve, he faced mandatory open space corridors, steep grades and established oak trees. His solution was a three-piece, 4,250-square-foot hillside home.

"The design...happened around the idea of a green roof," says Feldman, principal of Feldman Architecture. "The roof allowed the house to blend into the surrounding meadows."

Rana Creek, a Carmel Valley environmental design firm, topped each section of the house with six inches of sand, lava rock and growing materials, and installed an irrigation system to minimize summer maintenance. Designers then selected 33 indigenous plant species for the

project, including sand sedge, yarrow and wild strawberry. Lupines and poppies bloom on the roof in spring; mushrooms provide winter cover.

While the lush roof enhances the home's beauty, its additional benefits are far from superficial. The growing matter decreases outside noise by 43 decibels. At the same time, it protects surrounding habitat and wildlife by muffling noise from inside the home. Rooftop vegetation filters and stores rainwater. And, the layer of natural insulation reduces summer energy consumption by as much as 30 percent.

Feldman, who calls this a "dream project," also incorporated thermal mass and passive solar heating, low-toxicity paints and Forest Stewardship Council-certified lumber into the design. The home has been recognized by Green Roofs for Healthy Cities and the San Francisco American Institute of Architects. ■

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