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No Stone Unturned

An eco-friendly home and garden literally evolved from the ground up, starting with stone excavated on-site.

BY KAREN WEIR-JIMERSON | PHOTOS ED GOHLICH
STYLING ANDREA CAUGHEY

Brian Andreas and Ellen Rockne sit amid wispy grasses and bison-size boulders. Their garden is a little bit of wilderness within city limits.

Earthbound

Ellen Rockne and Brian Andreas' prefab Santa Barbara home is designed to leave a light footprint. The structure, with its hardwood and rusted-steel exterior, is as natural-looking as it is eco-friendly. The couple wanted their landscape to follow suit, and not only because green living is important to them. A low-impact landscape, rich in earth tones from stone and drought-adapted plants, would visually bring their garden and home together, as well.



Rusted Cor-Ten steel makes a handsome foil for the green foliage of a wisteria vine, *above*.

Wide stone steppers seem to echo the hardwood steps leading to the entry, *left*, creating visual as well as physical house-to-garden continuity.



Stony Exterior

After the house was finished, 200 tons of sandstone chunks were left behind. Brian and Ellen chose to use it in the garden rather than expend resources hauling it off. Landscape architect Margie Grace moved the rocks around until the flat city lot yielded defined living areas including a hot tub and an amphitheater with fire pit.



Stair-stepped boulders create sturdy seating and wide walkways around the inviting cedar hot tub, left.

The amphitheater, below, is ringed with boulders to provide seating; plump pillows bring a soft touch. A fire pit provides a glowing centerpiece for nighttime gatherings.





California Greenin'

Santa Barbara gets only 15 inches of rain a year, so it made good green sense to add unfussy grasses and drought-tolerant natives. Because the couple wanted to minimize time spent on gardening and maximize other activities, they installed a drip-irrigation system that automatically waters plants as needed. Pinpoint watering also eliminates many weeds. ■

Wavy Mexican feather-grass, above, reminds Ellen and Brian of their native Iowa.

Sandstone slabs interspersed with gravel, right, form a more permeable—and stylish—pathway than concrete pavement.

