

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE

Coastal

SAN DIEGO HOMES

ECO-NESTS BY THE SEA

EVERYONE, FROM ARCHITECTS
TO DESIGNERS, ARE JOINING
THE GREEN REVOLUTION

SATURDAY, JUNE 26, 2010

IN STEP AND IN STYLE

CONSERVATION MEETS ELEGANCE
IN THIS AWARD-WINNING DOWNTOWN LOFT

By **Martina Schimitschek**
SPECIAL TO THE UNION-TRIBUNE

Scott and Jaimi Julian Thompson's downtown condominium is functional, stylish — and eco-friendly. And that's exactly the point Jaimi Julian Thompson, president of Artisan Design Group, wanted to make.

Thompson wanted to show people you don't have to give up style to be green.

"We believe in being environmentally friendly," Thompson said. She said she recycles, carpools and drives a Toyota Prius.

She uses the loft in the Smart Corner tower on Park Boulevard as a showcase for clients and as a downtown getaway. The Thompsons' main residence is in Scripps Ranch. Thompson said she could see living downtown permanently one day. But for now, she said, her husband is not ready to give up his garage.

The 1,200-square-foot, 17th-floor condo has a main living/dining area, a bedroom, two bathrooms, a kitchen and an additional room that serves three purposes. Desk and chair make it an office, a Murphy bed makes it a guest room and a large sliding door makes it an extension of the living area when extra space is needed. The door's opaque glass allows the light to come through while providing privacy for guests.

When the Thompsons bought the condo in 2007, the loft was one big room with exposed ducts and cement walls and ceilings.

"By adding walls, we actually made it



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This 1,200-square-foot condo features a large bedroom, a multipurpose room (upper right) and twin pocket doors (upper left) made from recycled glass mosaic tiles. Gail Owens / Artisan Design Group photos



The Thompsons' flat-screen TV is mounted on a pillar in front of the window, using the 17th-floor view as a backdrop. *Gail Owens / Artisan Design Group photos*

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look bigger," Thompson said.

The space is now filled with warm colors and rich wood that is easy on the planet. The floor is bamboo, which is durable and rapidly renewable. The cabinets are made of a composite veneer to give them the streaked look of Macassar ebony, a rare hardwood from Indonesia.

Walls are painted in muted colors ranging from olive green to burnt orange. The orange was inspired by a glass candy jar that Thompson bought in Austria. It sits on a table behind the creamy yellow sofa.

But the dominant feature of the living area is the view, which spreads from the San Diego-Coronado Bridge across downtown and the bay over to Point Loma. A roomy deck offers the same view from the outside.

"You have the city and bay views," Thompson said. "You have the best of both worlds."

The view is even the backdrop while watching television. The flat-screen TV is mounted on a pillar in front of the window.

To keep out the sun's heat and the winter cold, the bedroom shades have triple honeycombs, which, Thompson said, is equal to lowering a brick wall in front of the



Low-emission dark quartz countertops were selected for use in the kitchen, as were more recycled glass mosaic tiles.

window.

Two side-by-side pocket doors brighten a bedroom wall. The yellow doors, one leading to a bathroom and the other to a closet, are made from recycled glass mosaic tiles.

Recycled glass tiles are also used to decorate the office wall and the kitchen backsplash. The kitchen's dark quartz countertops were selected for their low emissions and have been certified by the Greenguard Environmental Institute.

SEE **Downtown, 26**

GOING ECO-FRIENDLY

These are some of the eco-friendly products used in the Thompsons' condo:

FLOORING

Teragren stranded bamboo: The manufacturer's flooring is tested by Scientific Certification Systems to comply with California's volatile organic compound emissions criteria for indoor air quality. The flooring qualifies for Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) construction because of its low emissions and because it is a rapidly renewable resource.

Stainmaster carpet: These carpets are supposed to last 50 percent longer, which means fewer carpets to go into landfills. Invista, which makes the carpets, also operates a carpet recycling program.

APPLIANCES

Liebherr refrigerator: All of Liebherr's refrigerators are Energy Star-rated. The company also uses 100 percent recyclable packaging, purifies water used in its production and redirects any heat released during production to heat the manufacturing plants. Liebherr doesn't use lead, mercury, cadmium or certain types of chrome and biphenyl in its products.

Fisher Paykel dishwasher: The company has a recycling plant in New Zealand. It doesn't use CFCs in production, and the dishwashers have low water usage.

Miele coffee system: Miele is also known for its commitment to the environment with energy efficient appliances and recyclable products.

CABINETS AND COUNTERTOPS

Wood-Mode cabinets: The company has been certified by Kitchen Cabinet Manufacturers Association for meeting its Environmental Stewardship Program measures. Manufacturers are evaluated in five categories, including air quality, resource management and environmental stewardship, as well as energy conservation and recycling programs. Brookside, the veneer company, contributes to reforestation efforts.

WINDOW COVERING

Hunter Douglas Duette-Architella blinds: The blinds reduce energy consumption by blocking sun and keeping in heat. They are also air quality certified.



The dominant feature of the living area is the view, from the San Diego-Coronado Bridge to Point Loma. The floor is bamboo, which is durable and rapidly renewable. Gail Owens / Artisan Design Group photos

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The dishwasher and the faucets were selected for their low water usage and the refrigerator for its low energy usage.

The bathrooms also have low-flow fixtures without sacrificing comfort. The shower in the guest bathroom can turn into a steam room by closing the flaps on the shower door.

Thompson said all these green features may have helped her win the 2009 Best Model Home Award from the National Association of Home Builders. Thompson said she was very surprised to get the top award because she was competing with homes in the \$650,000 to \$1 million category nationwide.

"It was really a labor of love," Thompson said. "We've stayed here a lot this year. It's relaxing."

Her favorite time is in the evening.

"We love to sit on the deck and watch the sunset," she said.



Cabinets in the kitchen are made of a composite veneer to give them the streaked look of Macassar ebony, a rare hardwood from Indonesia. The dishwasher and faucets were selected for their water efficiency and the refrigerator for its low energy use.