

MOON TIDE MEDIA'S

ventura blvd

*where we live*TM

**NEW ON
THE BLVD**

Hot & Happening
in the Valley

BACKYARD LIFE

Patios, Pools
& Popsicles

**PREMIERE
ISSUE**

OURVENTURABLVD.COM



0 71486 02103 2

SIX DOLLARS

MAY/JUNE 2011



The Family That Plays Together...

Enjoying the great outdoors is a daily pleasure for the Shallman family; they use every facet of their fantasy-meets-reality Encino backyard.

WRITTEN BY MICHELE GARBER • PHOTOGRAPHED BY BRIAN FAINI



Above: As John prepares to serve a fresh pizza from the wood fire oven, Jonah, the youngest (and the comedian of the family), has everyone smiling. Right: Lani tends to the family's organic vegetable garden, where John gets many of the fresh ingredients for his homemade pizzas.

W

hen Lani and John Shallman built their

gorgeous San Fernando Valley dream home, they put as much emphasis on creating an ideal outdoor space as they did on designing the home's beautiful interior. John, who owns a political ad agency, and Lani, a former ad exec turned stay-at-home mom, were perfectly content living with their four children, two dogs and a bird in a charming Cape Cod home in Sherman Oaks. But as the kids grew, they needed more room, especially outside.

As luck would have it, they found a perfect, mostly flat lot abutting a steep hillside, forming what almost feels like a natural amphitheater. The lot was generous, with enough acreage to build a spacious abode to accommodate their large family as well as a back yard that offered all the bells and whistles of a Southern California lifestyle. Beyond the requisite pool, lawn, and barbeque, the Shallmans wanted a gathering place that was part playground, part haven—a place where the family could entertain friends, play sports, read, swim, relax and most of all spend quality time together.

Lani and John have always been simpatico when it comes to design—both preferring traditional style homes with a modern flair. They especially love with the local architecture of Martha's Vineyard, where they vacation. So when it came time to build, they easily chose a quintessential New England style and hired highly-regarded Doug Raub Construction. At the same time, they were searching for an interior designer. One afternoon, Lani was at a friend's newly redecorated home and remarked how beautiful it was. The friend told Lani it was designed by Dayna Katlin Interiors. Turns out, Lani knew Dayna from years back when their kids attended preschool together. In a serendipitous twist, the Shallmans tapped Dayna's firm to create their ultimate outdoor urban retreat.





Taking it Outdoors

"Growing up in Illinois, there were no fences between or around yards, just wide open lawns. We loved to play pickup football," John says. "When designing our yard, I wanted a lawn large enough for my kids to have plenty of space to play football," he adds. "For me, it's my way of being a kid again. Knowing all of this is in my back yard, I'm going to play."

Lani, too, wanted an outdoor area that inspired interaction. "Both John and I come from large families," she explains. "It was very important to us that our family spend time together as often as possible. We wanted to create an environment that was welcoming and kid-friendly—a place where our children would prefer to hang out with friends," Lani says. "We open up the pool house, light a fire in the fireplace, make popcorn in our old-style popcorn machine, put on a movie. Especially with our teenagers, we want them to want to be here at home with us. So we tried to make our home as inviting as possible."





Gathering Place

Designer Dayna Katlin took a dual approach to the job—aiming to create a space that was beautiful and functional. Dayna says, “They wanted an outdoor eating area where they could entertain large gatherings of family and friends. I designed the custom wood table so they could easily seat up to 12 adults, with an additional dozen at the zinc high-top table for the kids. All the furnishings are covered in Sunbrella, including the velvet couch in the pool house, so the kids can sit in we bathing suits on any piece of furniture without worrying.”

Spend a couple hours with this busy, gregarious family and it’s clear: the Shallmans enjoy one another, as well as the company of others. They love to entertain, inviting other families over for game or movie nights. Lani, described by her brood as a “baker extraordinaire,” makes delicious desserts, while John bakes his signature, homemade organic pizza in an oven he was inspired to own after dining at the popular LA eatery Mozza. The families often play Beatles Monopoly (all the Shallmans are Beatles fans) or games they’ve created, such as “Running Charades.”

With so much square footage, the Shallmans make a point to be environmentally conscious. To offset energy use, they installed solar roof panels. The family also uses a state-of-the-art system, accessible from any room, to monitor and turn on or off lights and HVAC.





Far left: Nina, a self-described voracious reader, enjoys a moment of solitude with a book in a cushioned, pool house window seat; The Shallmans gather around the fire pit while oldest daughter Ariana cuddles Milo, the family Schnauzer, and Jonah mischievously tickles the family funny-bone. One of the group's favorite pastimes is roasting marshmallows.