

Best Of O.C.: Design & Realty

BY ANDERS LASATER | JANUARY 5, 2017 | [FEATURE FEATURES](#)

It's the start of a new year, and foremost on our minds is enjoying all that Orange County has to offer—arts and culture worthy of standing ovations, style that's always on point, health and beauty so we feel and look our best, design and realty for true bon vivants, and food and drink that are as tempting as ever. It's all right here. Happy 2017, indeed!



HEAVY METAL

If there were ever an architect in Orange County known for diversity of design projects, that honor would go to **Anders Lasater**. The Laguna Beach-based talent (who likes to joke that, as a kid, he wanted to either be a drummer in a heavy metal band or an architect) is known for his modern take on site-responsive, light-inviting residences. But he's also been tapped to create everything from high-tech offices in the South Coast Metro theater district to a boutique hotel in San Diego. Add to that art galleries, salons, restaurants and retail environments, and you've got a portfolio that points in pretty much every direction. Is there a line running through the core of it all? In a way, yes. "When we do commercial projects, we're not trying to make a 15,000-square-foot house," says Lasater. "It's not a matter of making everything feel like a home. It is, however, all about making things feel comfortable and creating smaller, intimate moments throughout." It's an approach that's earning Lasater and his team at his eponymous firm accolades: In 2016, he was honored with three American Institute of Architects awards, one of which recognized his innovative design of the so-called Dillon Residence in Laguna Beach. The hillside property, which originally featured a series of three cottages from the 1920s, represented both a challenge and an opportunity. "We designed the new house to mimic the orientation and location of the three little structures, but we knit them all together with a modern hallway [and] stairway system that creates a village of buildings," he explains. Although that home has yet to be realized, Lasater is busy building plenty of other residences, including an exposed concrete compound above the Balboa Bay Resort, as well as two residential projects on the Strand at Dana Point. "What we're trying to do with these two homes on the beach is not create a spectacle," he says. "I want it to be a little more quiet, but also be about the inward experience of living in that environment."

