

Next Up: Mountain View

A young family in search of short commutes and a wholesome spot for the kids teamed up with Dwell and Empyrean Homes on a prefab gem tailored to fit like a glove.

The most recent in Dwell's signature line of prefabricated houses by Empyrean, Mark Siminoff and Ellen Tauber's new home in Mountain View, California, walks the line between the standardization promised by pre-fab and the charm of a custom home.

Cambridge, Massachusetts-based architect Joel Turkel, now of Turkel Design, designed the first NextHouse for Empyrean in 2005. When Siminoff and Tauber sat down with the architect to hash out the details of their new home, it quickly became clear that modifications would be necessary. The couple, who are designers themselves—Siminoff works for design consultancy IDEO and Tauber has her own design consultancy firm, Sliced Bread Design—loved the bones of the original NextHouse, but the lot they bought required a series of



Story by Aaron Britt
Photos by Laurie Frankel

Ellen Tauber and her two young children, Sophia and Zack, enjoy the front yard of their new home in Mountain View, California. Noting that the shared driveway between

the NextHouse and the home next door is something of an eyesore, architect Joel Turkel arranged the windows on that side of the house to look beyond it.



Siminoff and Zack look down on Tauber and Sophia (top left). The living room gets ample natural light through the glass accordion door. The Real Good chair by

Blu Dot (bottom left), lent by Design Public, works well in the office. Foul weather gear is propped by the front door, custom made by Neoporte (top right). During the design

phase, Tauber (bottom right) requested a comfy window seat to read bedtime stories to her children while remaining close enough to the kitchen to hear the kettle boil.

DWELL NEXTHOUSE

modifications to Turkel's work, including shaving nearly 100 square feet from the standard NextHouse design.

"From the design standpoint," says Siminoff, "we got what we were after. We worked really closely with Joel. We must have talked to him every day." Turkel relished adapting the NextHouse to the couple's needs, not to mention those of their two young children. The result is a modified courtyard house, one that, through the use of a long glass accordion door, opens the interior living room into an outdoor one. Tauber has space to work from home, and the kids have ample room to play. "This house really embodied the thrill of using a prefab system: adapting standardized details to custom solutions," Turkel enthuses. ■■■■



"This house really embodied the thrill of using a prefab system: adapting standardized details to custom solutions."

Interior designer Sally Kuchar went to work in the kitchen: dubbed the "command center," it was designed so that the couple could keep an eye on the kids whether

they're indoors or out. The small tiles behind the sink (bottom right) are the Savoy pattern from Ann Sacks, and the sink is from Kohler. The quartz countertop is from Caesarstone,

and the appliances are from Electrolux. The bathroom (top) also features Kohler fixtures, and large Ann Sacks glass tiles. 📍