

Janna Levenstein

Providing an interplay between indoor and outdoor, the subtlety of nature and the bold visual lines of the Viking Designer Series.



In the climate of Los Angeles, indoor and outdoor blend effortlessly, but seldom has their interplay been as beautifully choreographed as in Janna Levenstein's stunning creation, Rising Glen, set on ½-acre above Sunset Plaza. "It's all about circulation," says Levenstein. "The property was designed around the interplay of indoor and outdoor architecture."

A green yard wraps around the entire house as if it's a theater in the round, an open look that is especially dramatic viewed across the pool at night. The kitchen reinforces this concept with a massive, monolithic island that radiates from inside to outside, intensifying the indoor/outdoor circulation. Nearby is a counter that doubles as a workstation. You can plug in your computer and look up recipes or send a quick email while you are waiting for a cake to rise. Out the panoramic kitchen window are Zen stalks of black bamboo, sculptural palms, and the shimmering city beyond.

The stainless steel and glass bi-fold doors were designed by Levenstein because she couldn't find what she had envisioned. The doors fold away and nature rushes in. You can push a floating window back into its hidden place inside the wall if you want to pass things inside while working at the grill.

"Integral to the design of this kitchen and the entire home is a kind of tango between subtle and bold," says Levenstein. "The subtlety comes from gentle colors, greenery and soft feeling woods. This is balanced by strong visual lines and the bold, contemporary structure of the Viking Designer Series."

Designer of contemporary homes

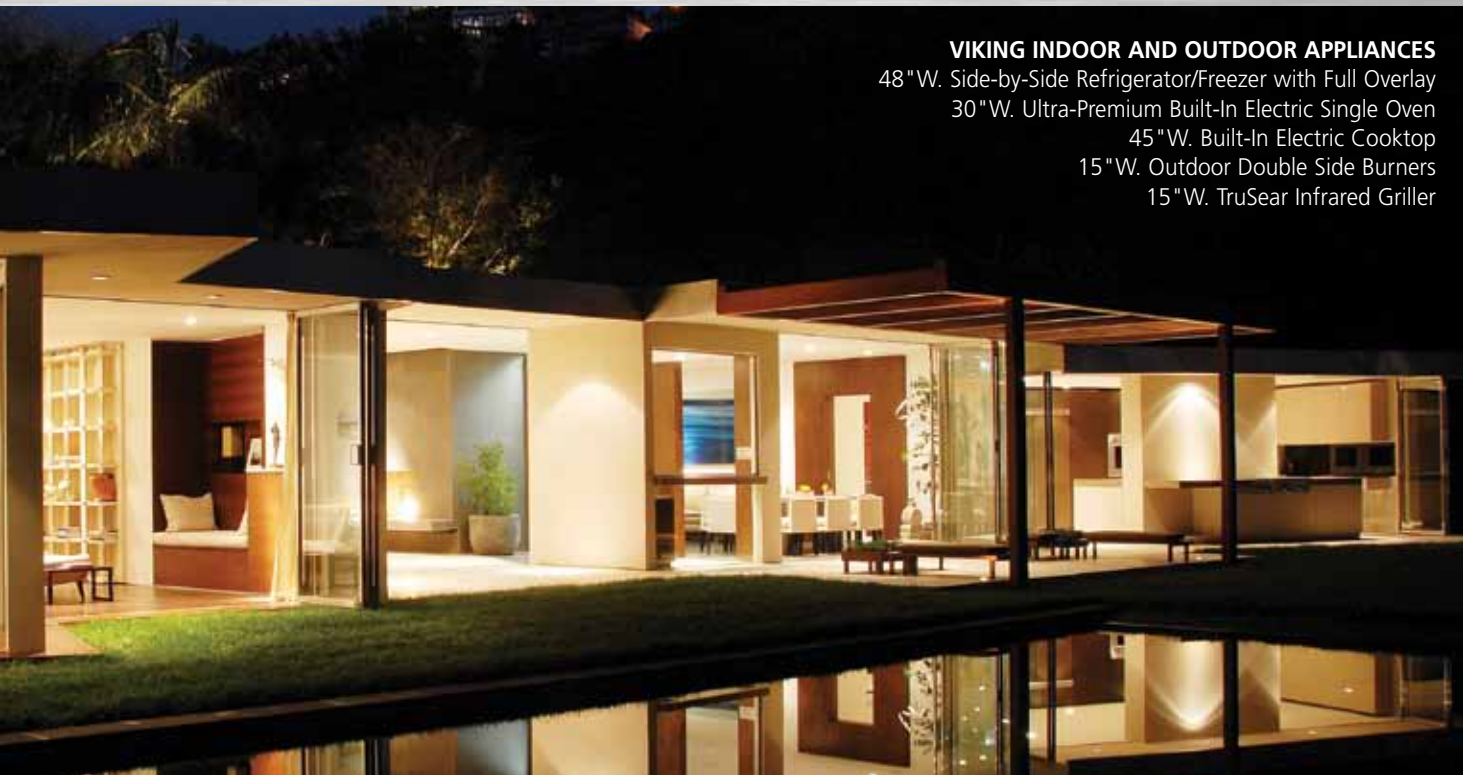
A Chicago native, and a graduate from Bennington College in Vermont with a concentration in 20th century art, Levenstein first worked in Los Angeles as a professional voice-over actress. With her background in art, after she bought her first home in Los Angeles, she designed and remodeled it room by room.

Realizing she had a new passion for construction and remodeling, Levenstein continued to work independently, complet-

ing multiple housing remodels in Southern California, Chicago and Hawaii. She eventually opened her own firm, Tocha Project.

For each project she undertakes, she enlivens her clients' homes with new and innovative architectural elements that are unique to each client — a signature staple that has inspired many top designers and builders to seek out her design advice. Her projects have been seen in numerous national magazines, TV shows, commercials and print ads. Janet Jackson, David Beckham and other celebrities have used her designs





VIKING INDOOR AND OUTDOOR APPLIANCES

- 48"W. Side-by-Side Refrigerator/Freezer with Full Overlay
- 30"W. Ultra-Premium Built-In Electric Single Oven
- 45"W. Built-In Electric Cooktop
- 15"W. Outdoor Double Side Burners
- 15"W. TruSear Infrared Griller

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MCCREARY

as sets for photo shoots. Janna also has been recognized by the American Institute of Architecture (AIA) and *Architectural Digest*.

"I do not like to work from the ground up," says Levenstein. "I get excited by the challenge of having to work around a structural beam that is too pricey to move, or a roofline that has to stay. I get inspired by the existing walls that shape the original house."

A palette to create in

The concept of the kitchen is what Levenstein calls "an easily approachable,

clean palette to create in." The cabinetry has pull-out stainless steel shelves with outlets to use your mixers and food processors. Everything you need is here, but it's all disguised in an ergonomic, user-friendly and organized fashion. A flat screen TV in front of the island lets you watch a cooking show or movie while you are working. A door pops open on the island and a smaller island on rollers comes out when you need it.

"I used the Viking Designer Series because my aesthetic is contemporary," says Levenstein. "It was an easy call. The sleek looking black, glass electric cooktop has elegant lines. The ovens flush in beautifully. The Designer Series is gorgeous, right down to the handles and knobs. I care greatly about all these details. I had the luxury of ample space so I went for the 45"W. cooktop and downdraft. The downdraft for the electric cooktop is very cool, and people are

always impressed with how 'James Bond' it feels when it's in operation."

The value of Viking from a broker's perspective

"I am a designer, but I also am a real estate broker and property developer. I have my own brokerage firm, Tocha Realty. From the moment I started searching for properties, I saw brokers' ads that read 'all Viking kitchen,'" says Levenstein. "It's a real draw to get people in the door. It helps to brand the home as quality. Buyers and sellers know how important it is to have Viking products for resale. It's simply a name people trust and want to see.

"That's why I wanted Viking, but I needed something that could follow the spirit of my contemporary designs," says Levenstein. "I was thrilled to find the Viking Designer Series. Problem solved!" For more information, go to TochaProject.com.



■ FEATURING MINT JULEP FROM THE VIKING "RANGE" OF COLORS

