



An Outdoor Room With a View

by Jim Grant

In 25 years of cleaning and restoring decking in Southern California, I've seen a lot of great views. But I still wasn't prepared for the sight that greeted me when I walked up the stairs on the side of a hillside home in La Jolla, where we had been called in to clean and seal the home's 14-month-old rooftop ipe deck. Sure, the deck, the pool, the cabana, and the 2,000-square-foot marble patio on the other side of the pool were awesome, but what was truly stunning was the vista, which extended from La Jolla Shores beach all the way up to Dana Point.

We started by carefully stripping off the decking's original clear finish and followed that with a thorough cleaning. Normally we use a pressure-washer for this phase of the job, but on this project we hand-scrubbed the surface to limit the amount of water we used and to avoid overspray on the various types of adjacent surfaces and finishes, which included glass block, exotic tile, marble, smooth-wall stucco, and glass privacy fencing. Then we applied Superdeck wood brightener to restore the color. The next day, after the deck was dry, we came back and carefully applied Superdeck 2501 natural hardwood oil, which I think does a great job of enhancing and protecting the natural beauty of ipe.

We didn't get to spend much time there, but I know we'll be back. The owner realizes he is going to need regular annual follow-up maintenance, since the deck is located but a very short distance from the ocean. ♦

Jim Grant is the proprietor of Jim the Deck Guy, in San Diego, Calif., which specializes in the cleaning and sealing of all types of exterior lumber.