



*Venice Beach, California*

**VENICE BEACH DESIGN  
PHOTOGRAPHER + ENTREPRENEUR  
MARISA VITALE SHARES *some of*  
LA'S MOST FASCINATING HOMES**

RUNNING HER OWN BUSINESS, TAKING CHANCES and WHAT IT'S  
LIKE to BE ONE of LOS ANGELES' TOP INTERIOR PHOTOGRAPHERS.

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PHOTO OF MARISA: Dabito

**Tell us about yo'self!**

I am a photographer based in Venice Beach, California. I'm a serious believer in YOLO and a sufferer of FOMO. I am a sun lover, an adventure seeker, and I will always be down to take a last-minute trip absolutely anywhere. When I'm not out on the open road, you'll find me with my husband and twins cruising our hood in Venice Beach in our bucket bike.

**You've photographed so many spectacular homes. How did that come about?**

I got really lucky and got in with Apartment Therapy without any real previous experience photographing interiors. I got to start there, and they used to give you a lot of leeway to find whatever homes you wanted. With a plethora of creatives in LA, it became a snowball effect of a friend of a friend of a friend that I photographed and then passed me around. It's been such a great ride! I'm still riding that snowball two years later!

**As an artist, what is one of the most important things to you?**

To continually feel inspired. Once I stop being inspired, my drive is dead. But the things that inspire me are creative spirits, driven women,

artists breaking bounds, a vignette that just makes me happy, travel, adventure, etc. As long as I keep doing those things, then I'm all good.

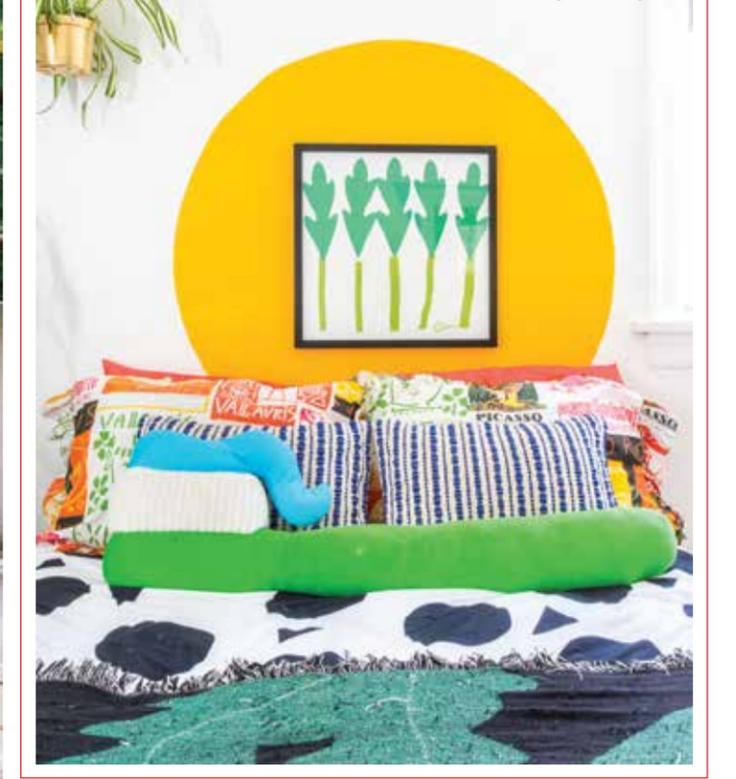
**How do you balance being an artist and a business owner/entrepreneur?**

The hardest question! I find myself always shooting something at a shoot just for me, just something that I like. It's sometimes related to the shoot, but sometimes it's not. Something will catch my eye, and I have to take a picture of it; I have no choice, in a sense. I find that this is what keeps up my "artist" side when I'm shooting day in and day out with an otherwise exhausting schedule at times. I work really hard most of the time, and then I take breaks really hard, too. I completely work around my kids' school schedule, so when it's a holiday break, I break with them and try not to work at all. This also helps me take a break and step out of my business owner role to get some perspective. But in all honesty, when you own your own business, it's hard to ever truly step away completely. It's always on your mind: how can I be better, what can I do different, how can I shoot differently in a way that keeps my creative juices flowing, where are my next clients going to come from, etc. It's so hard to turn it off.

Home of Samantha Santana for Design Sponge. Samantha is a wallpaper designer who lives with her husband, a landscape designer. They completely renovated a 1920s home to its original character and added so many amazing details.



Coast to Coast vintage for Apartment Therapy. These two have the epitome of a creative home, they painted these wild palm trees themselves and have no shyness about breaking rules and making their home reflect exactly who they are.



**Any life hacks you wanna share?**  
 Break the rules, do things that are uncomfortable and scary, follow your heart and your gut. And with that as your guide, everything else will fall into place. But news flash: this doesn't happen overnight. And it doesn't mean you'll have a ton of money overnight either. That comes later... I hope.

**What do you wish you would've known when you started out in business?**  
 It's really, really hard.

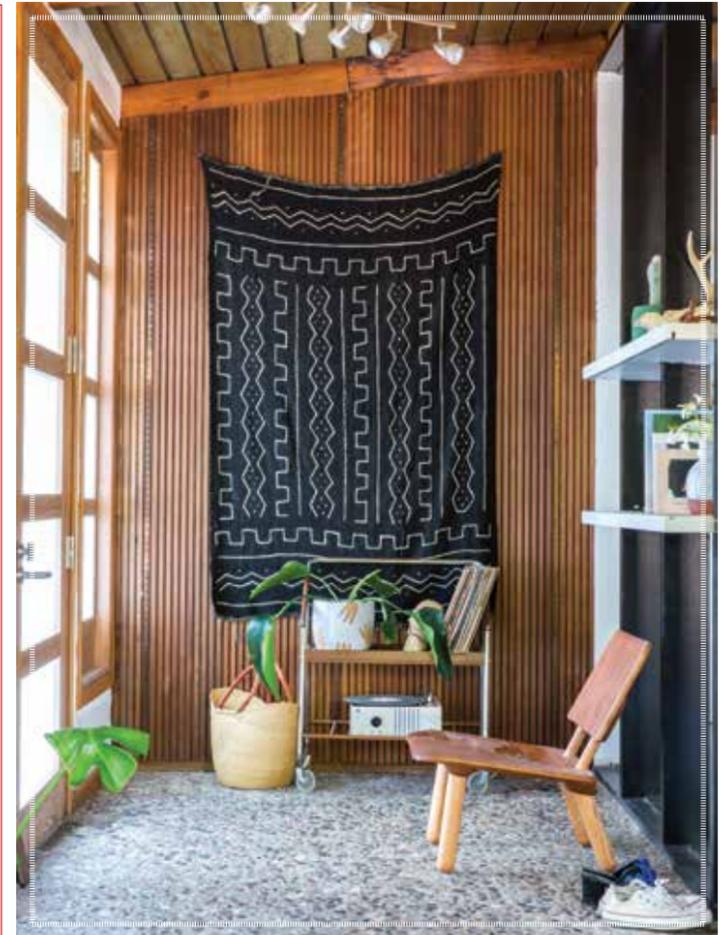
**Secret to capturing great home images?**  
 Finding great homes! Seriously. And a tripod.



# MARISA VITALE



Coast to Coast vintage for Apartment Therapy.



**Dream Project?**  
 I'd like to create a coffee table book about creatives' homes. I've been so fortunate to photograph so many creative people's homes here in LA that I'd love to create a book about them. I'd like to focus on how creatives' homes reflect their own artistry. Working title of something like *This Creative Home: Intentional Living for the Modern Creative*.

My home, with macrame wall hangings by Esmé Designs, wall paintings by college friend Danny Hess, an old propaganda poster we picked up traveling in Vietnam, pillows from another Mexico trip, the lamp from the alley and of course a little art station for my major artist 6-year-old twins.



This Page: The Butcher's Daughter in Venice Beach.



# MARISA VITALE

## Any advice to other entrepreneurs and fembosses?

Work your butt off and be prepared to eat dirt for a while. I made a big leap and switched from photographing weddings and families to interiors and products and lifestyle. It was scary and risky, but I just put myself out there and reached out to anyone who would listen. People took chances on me, but I truly had to work so incredibly hard my first year to make a dent and get that snowball rolling. I thought I was going nowhere, but I realized that it just takes time to get yourself out there. Be patient and persistent, and those will pay off. And be nice. It's amazing how far your name spreads when you're just easy to work with. Also, surround yourself with people who are in the same boat as you, whether that's in the same profession, a different profession but at the same level as you, etc. It's so incredibly helpful to have a community when you're just starting out since there are so many questions and it can feel so isolating and daunting. Having other people to talk to who are going through the same things is truly priceless.

## What is essential to nurturing your creativity?

Travel and feeling unbound by anything. The open road with very loose plans is my everything. Being out in nature and exploring is my recharge and fuels my creativity. I love to travel, and I'm always seeking to be in nature more, so if I could have one of those, I feel pretty fulfilled. If I can do both at the same time, I'm a super happy camper.

## Tips for designing a nurturing home/space?

Design in the way that makes you happy and makes you feel calm and comfortable. A space that reflects you and your own unique personality is one that creates nurture and a sense of home for you. Don't worry too much about the trends and what's in — let things speak to you, and then it's timeless. Things can come and go in your home as you grow and change as a person.

## Ways to make your life come more alive?

Travel, travel, travel, both with my 6-year-old twins and husband and without. And meeting other creatives makes me feel so alive!

