

Glass-Walled California Home Beautifully Conceals its HVAC System

They say those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. Real estate developer and custom homebuilder Allan Martia might add that one should not mar a sleek design with bulky metal heating and cooling ducts, either. Allan took that to heart when he chose the small-duct Unico System for an ultra-modern new home in Southern California.

Allan has been building custom homes for many years, so he knows a thing or two about what people want in a new house. When he purchased a tear-down property on a beautiful, tree-lined street in Sherman Oaks, he reviewed architectural plans for the new structure: a large contemporary home with floor-to-ceiling glass walls and sliding doors.

Allan knew it would be beautiful, but he wanted to make it even more spectacular. He wanted a house that would appeal to high-end buyers looking for a one-of-a-kind home. Allan completely modified the original plans and increased the size from 2,900 to 4,300 square feet. He took out several interior walls, and added movable glass walls and skylights, which created a need for specialized heating and cooling.

Strategy

During the design and planning phase, Allan knew the Unico System would be the only way to heat and cool the structure since there would be nowhere to hide conventional metal ducts. Unico's small-diameter, tubular ducting is flexible and can snake under floors,



The master bath flows seamlessly into the bedroom thanks to full-wall glass doors. A Unico outlet quietly delivers air from the ceiling.

around support beams and above ceilings, quietly delivering high-velocity air through either slotted or small round outlets. With this unique type of contemporary design, soffits and dropped ceilings are not a viable option.

Allan had specified the Unico System on other projects, including storefront strip malls his company built. He appreciates the flexibility the Unico System gives him as a builder and says it is easy to install. Allan is also an advocate of “Made in America” and is proud of the American craftsmanship built into the Unico System.

Allan says the installation process for the Sherman Oaks home was simple and went smoothly. He designed on his own a section of ducting that comes out of the floor parallel to the sliding glass walls to control the ambient temperature of the interior structure even with the glass walls opened.

“The Unico System works amazingly well in both heating and cooling modes, with the doors open or closed,” Allan said.

The home has two, 2.5-ton Unico Systems and one, 4-ton Unico iSeries split system matched with an outdoor heat pump. Sound attenuation duct, only 2.5 inches in diameter, was used with approximately 12 outlets on each of the 2.5 ton systems and 20 outlets on the 4-ton system. Several custom design details went into the system such as custom floor grilles and outdoor enclosures for the two Unico blowers and coils.

Results

The photos of Allan’s beautiful “glass house” speak volumes on the quality and craftsmanship achieved by the builder.

But what you cannot see is just as important – the heating and air conditioning ducts. They are hiding beneath floors and above ceilings, delivering even, draft-free temperatures efficiently throughout the home. Not only is it practically invisible, but the Unico System is also quiet because the ducts feature sound-deadening insulation. This feature also means zero duct leakage, resulting in efficient heating and cooling.

“I’m impressed with the thought that went into the design and functionality of this system. It’s easy to install, and easy to access for maintenance,” Allan said. “The Unico System is truly an innovation in heating and cooling. I will not use any other system – that’s how much I like it.”

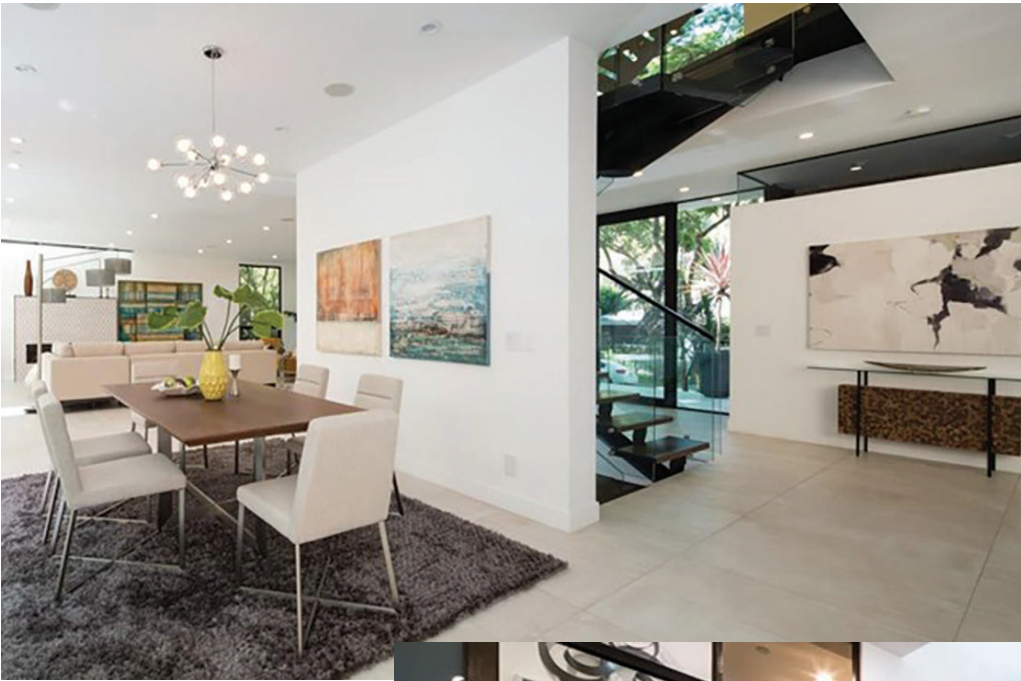
Allan Martia’s modern beauty, perfect for entertaining, recently sold for more than \$2.6 million. It was only on the market for a few months. No doubt the new owners will enjoy the home’s tranquil atmosphere and the year-round comfort that the Unico System provides.

Builder: Allan Martia Development

Unico Contractor: Gomez Heating & Air Conditioning

Location: Southern California

*Photos courtesy of Casey Markovic,
Realtor in Orange County, CA.*



Round white Unico outlets disappear into the ceiling



A multi-level view illustrates the numerous glass walls. Bulky ducts would not have worked for this architectural design.



Custom-designed slotted heating and cooling vents are positioned on the floor, just inside the sliding doors.

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The Unico System®

Unico, Inc.
1120 Intagliata Drive
Arnold, MO 63010
+1 800 527 0896
+1 314 481 9000
www.unicosystem.com



Unico, Inc. is the leader in small duct heating and cooling systems and other high-end HVAC systems. The company manufactures all of its products in St. Louis, Missouri, with over 125,000 square feet of modern manufacturing space. The company is well known for extensive use in older, architecturally unique homes and buildings as well as elite, high-end custom homes. The company is family owned and operated and their products are available throughout the United States and Canada, and in over 28 countries around the world.



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