

A MODERN MOUNTAIN RETREAT

Borrowing from the local vernacular, a rugged yet contemporary abode reflects the sensibilities of its high-country locale.

BY NANCY ERDMANN PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE THOMPSON

The kitchen and great room both benefit from floor-to-ceiling windows, which open to expansive views and allow natural light to brighten the space. Interior designer Victoria King fashioned chairs and a coffee table from acrylic to keep the space from feeling weighed down.

THE PICTURESQUE town of Pine is located in Arizona’s rim country, about 100 miles northeast of Phoenix. Settled in 1879, many of its original structures remain in use to this day. “These early buildings look very comfortable in the meadows and mountains surrounding the region, so it was our intent to make a connection to the original character of the town while incorporating some modern sensibilities,” says architect Clint Miller about the residence he created for Eric and Corrie Wichterman.

Elements of Alpine design can be found throughout the house, including large timbers that often are seen on old mining structures. The vertical board and batten siding recalls old barn construction. “These exterior materials give it a traditional authentic mountain home look that you wouldn’t get if you worked with off-the-shelf materials,” notes builder Brennon McLaws. Moss rock used on the foun-

ation walls as well as on the tall masonry block chimney is native to the area.

Miller, a *Phoenix Home & Garden* Masters of the Southwest award winner, designed the house with numerous gables that give shape to the front and back roofline. “They provide an uplifting emphasis, and with the peaks and valleys, the elevation is very playful,” he remarks. Adding a deck that captures the best views meant building it at the front of the residence. “From there, Milk Ranch Point—a geological feature on the Mogollon Rim—is visible and, in the other direction, you can see straight through the interiors of the house to Strawberry Mountain.”

While the residence occupies a modest footprint at 2,500 square feet, Miller says it lives large. With three bedrooms plus a bunk room, it features sizeable social spaces that are ideal for entertaining. Oversized sheets of glass help visually connect the house to the

national forest, opening it up to large stands of ponderosa pines. “Tall ceilings, even in the hallways, make the house feel big and spacious,” says McLaws. “I think the lowest ceiling is 10 feet high.”

Interior designer Victoria King chose a neutral color scheme, then incorporated layers of darker hues in the fabrics and accessories. “The family wanted a stylish cabin retreat, so we integrated many custom details into the decor to create a fresh, modern vibe,” she explains. “I worked with a custom furniture builder in Tucson to design several pieces that employ translucent acrylic to help keep the floor-to-ceiling windows as unobstructed as possible.”

Most of the decorative lighting is made of forged iron, mirroring the wood-burning iron stove in the living room’s fireplace and the railings outdoors. Reclaimed mushroom wood planking on the walls, a look that resembles

wainscoting, was painted white to reflect light and enhance the volume of the space. “We chose quartzite for countertops in the master bath and kitchen, which gives the eye a break from the characteristics of the various wood materials,” notes King. Layers of texture in the finishes and furnishings draw the eye across the rooms and produce a sense of warmth and comfort.

“The alpine views here are gorgeous, with each window beautifully framing the outdoors like a painting,” says King. “It is remarkable how open the space feels, and yet the home is simultaneously warm and relaxed.” □

ARCHITECT: Clint Miller, Clint Miller Architect.

BUILDER: Brennon McLaws, Blue Moon Construction.

INTERIOR DESIGNER: Victoria King, Victoria King Design.

For more information, see Sources on Page 104.



Fitting a long stretched house onto a narrow lot was a challenge, says architect Clint Miller. “This led to a leaner design that incorporates several gables, which add peaks for visual interest and create an uplifting effect,” he explains. The wood walls are reverse board and batten, recalling the area’s early barn designs.



TOP Mushroom wood walls and French oak floors define this quiet reading nook. The cozy window seat looks out to the forest. **ABOVE** An early concept sketch of the home by Miller.



ABOVE Floor-to-ceiling windows in the great room of this Arizona rim country residence are framed with heavy timbers. On the TV wall, stone cladding reflects rocks that are found on the outdoor retaining walls. **RIGHT** The homeowners love to cook, so a kitchen where two chefs can share a large island made sense. The barstools swivel and resemble old tractor seats, adding to the rustic ambiance. Overhead, an antique iron industrial scale was converted into a light fixture. The flooring is French oak, and the island is pecan.



Mixing rustic and modern details in the master bedroom, King used reclaimed beams to form a built-in headboard inset with leather tiles. The iron light fixture is an element repeated throughout the home.