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Home of the Year

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HOLIDAY DESIGN TIPS

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The trout pond is a focal point of this Jackson Hole compound, and it is the stage for an ongoing wildlife show comfortably observed from the indoor-outdoor seating areas. Ospreys, herons, deer, moose and, in the fall, bugling elk, all visit the pond.

HARMONIOUS CONNECTION

A simple and beautiful home inspired by the Teton Valley's farm buildings

STORY **IRENE RAWLINGS** PHOTOS **ROGER DAVIES**
ARCHITECTURE **DESIGN ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS**
INTERIOR DESIGN **WRJ DESIGN ASSOCIATES**
CONSTRUCTION **JH BUILDERS**

Comfort and good design were important to the homeowner. The walnut-and-leather chairs are a century-old Finn Juhl design. The alpaca-and-wool sofa is an Italian design; the chandelier is hand-blown glass from Prague. A custom cashmere rug covers the floor.

The house sits beside a small pond in the middle of a small forest. "I fell in love with this land," says the homeowner, who was raised in Colorado and spent most of his working life on the West Coast. "But, after a time, I just wanted to get back to the mountains," he says. He chose Jackson Hole, Wyoming, a valley surrounded by the rugged Teton and Gros Ventre Ranges, for many reasons—he is keen on hiking, skiing, mountain biking and, generally, enjoys being outdoors. He was also drawn to the small-town vibe of the town of Jackson with its locally owned restaurants and art galleries. "I saw it as the best of all worlds," he says. Then he adds that, perhaps, the most important reason for choosing Jackson is that his brother and sister live here. "I'm a single guy … with dogs," he says. "It is important for me to be around extended family."

He eventually found the perfect spot on which to build his long-term home: 14 acres of riparian forest. It didn't have the amazing mountain views that many homeowners covet, but it did offer an abundance of privacy. There were two existing structures on the property—a little guesthouse and a barn-like RV garage. He briefly toyed with the idea of remodeling the guesthouse and living there, but it was too small to be a gathering place for his family and all the friends who would inevitably be invited for long ski weekends.

As he began assembling his architecture and design team, the homeowner kept refining his vision. He wanted a home that was simple and casual with a definite "mountain-masculine" look. Because there were no mountain views, he wanted the pond to be the focal point. He was clear about having a home that would be the right size for himself and his dogs but would also "feel

good when I have a full house." In addition, he was definite about avoiding any wasted space. "I want to use every room and every piece of furniture—not just walk by it every day," he says.

Christopher Lee, principal of Jackson, Wyoming-based Design Associates Architects, whose firm dates back more than 50 years, remembers those first client meetings. "The homeowner didn't want anything too flashy," he says. "He wanted to refurbish and update the two existing structures and, as we designed the main house, he wanted to make sure the three buildings worked in harmony." The RV garage was completely gutted and reimagined as a boathouse-like party barn and media center, where the family frequently gathers to canoe on the pond or simply sit on the deck and dangle their feet in the water. The guesthouse was transformed into a welcoming one-bedroom, one-and-a-half-bath sanctuary (with living room and full kitchen).

OPPOSITE: Natural materials were used throughout the house—stone, linen, cashmere, fur and leather. THIS PAGE: A tone-on-tone interior color palette is complemented by darker wood—cedar ceiling, barnwood walls and oak floors. Clerestory windows, in a row just below the roofline on both sides of the room, flood the space with natural light.

Lee sited the 4,443-square-foot, single-story main house as close to the water as possible. The architecture was influenced by Teton Valley's old agricultural buildings. Lee says, "They are simple, uncomplicated structures that have an honesty about them." As he describes it, the home, which sports three bedrooms and 3 ½ bathrooms, is designed as three "blocks" (the main bedroom wing, the central living space and the guest wing) with a light-filled shotgun hallway running along "the spine" from end to end. The central living space is slightly taller than the other two and has barnwood walls, but, instead of running the boards horizontally, as is the custom, Lee chose to run them vertically "so the eye soars upward, making the space seem taller."

Andrew Miller, partner of Jackson-based JH Builders, says, "The vast glass windows were manufactured in Poland, which is able to produce massive sheets of crystal-clear glass of a size and transparency that does not exist in North America … Maybe it is the Baltic Sea sand."

"The entire wall of glass [in the central living space] opens up to views of the pond," the homeowner says. He has seen otters, ospreys and herons who come to feast on the trout. Deer and elk are regular visitors and, once, a mother moose with two calves. This land-and-water scape of natural grasses, wildflowers and shrubs was designed by Pauline Chu, principal of Rooted Landscape Architecture in Jackson, to mimic the surrounding meadows and wild lands.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The kitchen is simple, with most appliances stored in custom cabinetry by Henrybilt. The hand-blown glass chandelier was crafted by former jewelry designer Gabriel Scott. THIS PAGE: Barnwood walls were installed vertically to draw the eye upward and make the room look taller. The flamed-oak dining table comfortably seats six.

The cottonwood forest provides privacy for the main bathroom with its free-standing cast-iron tub by Waterworks. Draperies (throughout the home) are Loro Piana ultra-fine linen fashioned by Susan J. Creations. A matte-black ladder (Lostine) leans against the wall, holding towels; the satin-nickel-and-gray lighting pendant above the sink is by Articolo.

When it came to interiors, the homeowner says, "My mother was a maximalist—a collector of many amazing things—but I was often chastened for knocking stuff over." He chose Jackson-based WRJ Design Associates to create a home emphasizing great craftsmanship and simplicity—he wanted only a few well-designed pieces. "He wanted it to be minimalist and beautiful but not 'precious,'" says WRJ co-founder Rush Jenkins.

The WRJ team incorporated a subtle tone-on-tone palette—soothing grays, creamy whites, warm earth tones—throughout the home, with a focus on natural materials such as antique limestone, white marble, natural linen, leather and soft cashmere (the latter evident in the soft-under-foot rug in the main bedroom). The furnishings have a European sensibility. Many were imported from around the globe or designed by WRJ and made by local craftspeople. "We are inspired by the natural world, and [our work] is informed by the rest of the world," says WRJ co-founder Klaus Baer.

In the quietude of early evening, the homeowner sits on the porch with a glass of wine. A badger cautiously emerges from the tall grass and sniffs the air. Not sensing any danger, it waddles down to the pond to drink. "I fell in love with this land from the moment I saw it," says the homeowner, "but this is so much more than I had hoped for." ○

"HE WANTED IT TO BE MINIMALIST AND BEAUTIFUL BUT NOT 'PRECIOUS.'"

—*INTERIOR DESIGNER* RUSH JENKINS, WRJ Design Associates

The primary bedroom is all about texture—wood, leather, bronze, linen and alpaca. The Poltrona Frau bed has a wool and cashmere headboard with leather surround. Art Deco-style Ralph Lauren club chairs are upholstered in a natural linen. Taylor Glenn's photograph of an elk hangs over the bed.

THIS PAGE: A window seat in the one-bedroom guesthouse has custom mohair cushions; the walls are upholstered mohair. The walnut wood and cotton Porada sofa is complemented by a rustic natural elm coffee table (Tenango) and a Walter K (powder-coated steel and leather) lounge chair. OPPOSITE: The path to the guest house meanders through grasses and wildflowers.

HOME OF THE YEAR RESOURCES

INTERIOR DESIGN
WRJ DESIGN ASSOCIATES
Jackson, WY (307) 200-4881
wrjdesign.com
RUSH JENKINS *Co-founder*
KLAUS BAER *Co-founder*
ARIANNE GRAY *Team Leader*
SAMMY BARNARD *Designer*

ARCHITECTURE
DESIGN ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS
Jackson, WY (307) 733-3600
dajh.com
CHRIS LEE *Architect*
KATHY LEE

CONSTRUCTION
JH BUILDERS
Jackson, WY (307) 734-5245
jhbuilder.com
Owners
ANDREW MILLER
ADAM SCOTT
MIKE WILSON
PATRICK BRANHAM

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
ROOTED LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Jackson, WY (307) 203-5520
rooted-la.com
PAULINE CHU, *Landscape Architect*

LANDSCAPER
MOUNTAINSCAPES
Jackson, WY (307) 734-7512
mountainscapesjh.com

CRAFTSPEOPLE
Main House Cabinets
HENRYBUILT
henrybuilt.com

Custom Furniture
PACKSADDLE ROAD
(208) 270-0625
packsaddleroad.net

Custom Drapery
SUSAN J CREATIONS
Twin Falls, Idaho
(208) 733-1675

Architectural Lighting
HELIUS LIGHTING GROUP
American Fork, Utah (801) 463-1111
heliuslighting.com

Stone Masonry
DSM MASONRY CONTRACTOR
Jackson, Wyoming
(307) 690-0421

Photography Styling
HELEN CROWTHER

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