



Future Perfect

With the help of savvy design pros, a vibrant East Coast couple creates a mountain-contemporary retreat with an eye to the future

BY LACEY HOWARD PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID PATTERSON

Ellen and Rob Race know that when the time comes they want to retire in Steamboat Springs. After a few years of owning a condo in the iconic ski town, the couple, who have lived in the same traditional Massachusetts home for decades, purchased a lot adjacent to the Steamboat Ski Resort. They were finally ready to build a place to suit their second-home dreams and future considerations.

“Ellen and Rob are outgoing people. They love the active lifestyle that the mountains have to offer—they hike and golf in the summer and ski in the winter,” explains interior designer Susse Budde, half of the team at Dimension Fine Homes. “They wanted

The expansive living room views capture the Steamboat ski area, the gondola, and the slopes. Inside, an attention-grabbing fireplace wall balances out the mountain vistas; local artist Susan Schiesser’s *One Hundred Blooms* adds a vibrant splash of color. Interior Designer Susse Budde’s favorite item in the house, a Jean de Merry chandelier, has a place of honor. “I am passionate about lighting and believe the right fixture really makes a room pop,” she explains. “It reminds me of a porcupine—something we see a lot of in Steamboat. It is custom made and anything but traditional!”



(opposite) The dining room doorway is framed in reclaimed oak beams. “They have notches where they were mortised from their previous constructions. They have tons of character,” builder Corey Larsen says. Reclaimed oak floors echo the beams’ patina. The dining room’s windows capture the Flattops and Emerald Mountain. “They have the perfect view of the fireworks during Steamboat’s historic Winter Carnival and 4th of July,” Budde says. (above) While the kitchen’s open layout is perfectly suited for gatherings, the room’s ability to work well was paramount—Ellen loves to cook. Custom drawers and cabinets with specialty storage components—spice shelves on cabinet doors, peg systems for dinnerware—give the chef easy access to all her culinary necessities. “You can grab everything and see it all,” Budde says. “The big door to the right of the range has my favorite contraption, the LeMans by Häfele—it’s the Mercedes of Lazy Susans.”

to look at this project as their forever home, even though they won’t live here full-time for a few more years,” she says. “And they wanted a place where their grown daughters and sons-in-law would want to come and stay.”

Budde, along with Corey Larsen, a talented builder and craftsman and the other half of Dimension Fine Homes, worked with architect Keith Kelly of KSA & Associates on the home’s structural design. The team designed with the Races’ lifestyle in mind, and they welcomed input from the couple. “It was important for the Races to have a space that would be perfect for entertaining and hosting a houseful, as well as being cozy and inviting for when it was just the two of them,” Budde says. The resulting structure embraces the lot’s enviable location and breathtaking views, and offers an open floor plan for entertaining, plus a lower level with both public and private guest spaces. The design also takes into consideration what the long-term future could hold, including wide doorways and a curbless master suite shower.

The main floor features an adjoining living and cooking space, dining room, and master suite—all under a ceiling of reclaimed wide-planked barn wood. Antique oak floors stained a warm brown create a soft counterpoint.



(above) In the master suite, Budde turned to a dependable old friend—Cole & Son's "Woods" wallpaper—to outfit the room's focal wall. "It is ideal for Steamboat because we have so many aspen trees and this paper captures them perfectly," she says. The Cheryl Rogers intaglio print etching is from Walker Fine Art. (opposite) The master bath features a large curbless shower dressed in Gascogne Blue limestone and recycled glass tiles, both from Walker Zanger. The custom-made floating vanity features vertical grain walnut with a concrete counter. Modern pendant lights illuminate the his-and-hers vanity. "Their sinks are separated by a large casement window that allows the Races lots of natural light as well as stunning views of the ski mountain and the aspen-loaded forest," Budde says.



Reclaimed oak beams add rustic charm to the living area and master bedroom. "They are so heavy—it took three guys to lift a four-foot section," Larsen says. "But they are all so unique and full of character. They bring their own sense of personality to each room."

The vintage building materials harmonize with the home's sleek modern elements—off-white painted walls, wood window frames painted a steely gray, and a cable-and-steel stair rail. Furnishings and accessories add more up-to-date style, with reproduction Barcelona chairs in the living room and contemporary art throughout the home.

The reclaimed-modern mix continues on the lower level, with a family room, two guest suites and a bunkroom, all anchored by heated, polished-concrete floors and sharing common created-by-Corey details—sliding barn doors crafted from leftover barn wood. "That's



DESIGN DETAILS

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something we try to do in every house—unique custom-designed pocket doors or barn doors. These doors are like pieces of art,” Budde says.

The home itself is a lovingly crafted objet d’art, thanks to the design team’s sophisticated vision and homeowners with open minds. “Initially, Ellen was leaning toward more traditional finishes, as that was what she and Rob were used to in their long-time home in Massachusetts,” Budde remembers. But those well-worn preferences were destined to change. “After exposing Ellen to a plethora of images and design materials, she became passionate about contemporary finishes and was excited to push the envelope to make this house completely different from their home on the East Coast.” And, Budde says, the Races are looking forward to full-time life in their modern-mix manse—one that will serve them well into the future. □

(above, left) A custom concrete trough sink with a raw edge is the star of the tiny powder room perched just off the kitchen. Budde brings her design signature to this small space with a triple-teardrop pendant light fixture. Paintings are by Lance Whitner. (above, right) A second guest room has a more modern feel. “I love this wallpaper!” Budde says. “The little mirrored side tables bring a touch of vintage glam.” Bedside rugs soften the heated concrete floors throughout the lower level. Each bedroom has a bank of windows and doors leading to an open-air patio. (opposite) An antique bed frame chosen by the homeowner reflects her love of American antiques and sets the tone for this space with a more rustic cottage air. “We wanted a feature wall and tried to be resourceful,” Budde says of the repurposed barn wood. “It’s much grayer here than the other installations because we were picking out the white painted pieces for everything else, leaving the darker ones. They worked perfectly for this.”