

A stunning view of Bald Mountain shines through the great room's tall paned windows. Hand-hewn reclaimed oak timbers were assembled into trusses with skillfully curved bottom cords, for an elegant variation on a rustic theme. Sofas and chairs from Lee Industries provide comfortable seating between the stone fireplace and a Luhr-designed wall cabinet crafted by J L Fine Woodworking in nearby Hailey, Idaho. Wide-planked cerused oak floors are accented by a custom metal-and-wood console table and a hide rug in the hallway.





WHERE RUGGED MEETS REFINED

AN IDAHO HOME FUSES INDUSTRIAL ELEMENTS WITH SOFT COLORS
AND FRESH FURNISHINGS FOR A MODERN TAKE ON RUSTIC STYLE

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WHAT EXACTLY MAKES A HOME A MOUNTAIN HOME?

"My husband has always said that a home qualifies as a mountain home only if it is over 6,000 feet in elevation," says interior designer Sherri Luhr. So when the couple built their new home in Sun Valley, Idaho, she hatched a playful plan: "Our home is at a 6,045-foot elevation, so we made it by just 45 feet," Luhr explains. "As a surprise to my husband, I had a bronze butterfly joint fabricated and inset in the flooring at the entrance to our living room with the inscription: ELEVATION: 6045 FT."

And, as the adage goes, there are three things that matter in property: location, location, location. After falling

in love with Sun Valley, the Oregon-based Luhr family bought and eventually outgrew a condo while spending years searching for a new homesite that would take advantage of the area's year-round pleasures. When the right lot suddenly came on the market, they pounced. And they're happy they did: "The location is special to us because it's close to town and activities, and yet is situated up against the hills that offer privacy and spectacular views of Baldy Mountain and surrounding vistas."

When it came to the design of the home, Luhr preferred something she considered "rustic modern," joining >>

A rustic dining room with a wall of horizontal wooden planks. A black dome pendant light hangs from the ceiling. A wicker table and chairs are arranged around the table. A vase of fruit sits on the table. Sunlight streams in from the right, casting shadows on the wall and floor.

Gatherings of cozy outdoor furnishings, a mix of metal and wood pieces, are arranged on patios paved with frontier stone. Luhr cleverly filled the narrow spaces between reclaimed wood boards on the dining room wall with strips of mirror to reflect light from the adjacent great room. "It's funny when friends take a close look and try to figure out what they are seeing," Luhr says. The salvaged-wood table is surrounded by rattan chairs and lit by custom metal pendants.

Abundant natural light pours into the kitchen through large windows. Jennifer Zarkos Conrad of Five Star Kitchen and Bath helped design the airy space, with a stone accent wall, exposed shelves and simple Shaker-style cabinetry painted a warm gray, creating a calm, fresh look. Quartzite natural stone countertops contrast with the stainless-steel top on the island, where rattan stools provide handy seating. The chandelier is by an Atlanta artist.



“IT IS THE PLACE WHERE OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS COME TO VISIT, RELAX, ENJOY EACH OTHER AND ALL THAT SUN VALLEY HAS TO OFFER.”

INTERIOR DESIGNER/HOMEOWNER *SHERRI LUHR*

rugged materials and textures with free-flowing interior spaces that readily open to the outdoors. Searching through magazines for pictures to share with prospective architects, Luhr found a house that embodied her vision. “When I showed those photos to Janet Jarvis, she recognized the home immediately because, as it turns out, she had been the architect on that project,” Luhr says. “Needless to say, I did not need to look any further for an architect.” Jarvis, senior principal of the Jarvis Group based in nearby Ketchum, agreed to create the new house in a style she describes as “mountain rustic with modern twists.”

Sun Valley’s environment became a major design influence. “I wanted the home to settle into the lot as though it had been there for years,” says Luhr. Clad

in weathered gray stone and reclaimed lumber, the home harmonizes with the silver-green hues of the sagebrush-covered hills. Outdoor living spaces take full advantage of the glorious natural setting, with dining, lounging and conversation areas positioned at various levels. Luhr says, “It is delightful to sit in the hot tub at night and marvel at the millions of stars.”

With unobstructed sight lines toward Baldy Mountain, Proctor Mountain and Griffin Butte, Luhr wanted the interiors to embrace those views, not compete with them. “The interior furnishings and finishes are for the most part neutral tones, with an infusion of color very occasionally,” Luhr says. Large windows frame breathtaking mountain scenery in nearly every room—even the shower. >>



Luhr designed a sliding cold-steel door between the dining room and kitchen. “To me, it’s an art piece,” she says. “And the ability to close off the kitchen was attractive.” The gable-roofed entry foreshadows the shape of the great room’s rustic beams while offering shelter on winter days. The hand-scraped wooden front door with metal studs is a custom design inspired by a door glimpsed on a family trip to South America.

“RESTRAINT WAS UPPERMOST IN MY MIND IN THE APPROACH TO THIS HOME, BOTH IN TERMS OF THE FINISHES AND THE ACCESSORIES.”

INTERIOR DESIGNER/HOMEOWNER *SHERRI LUHR*



IT'S ALL IN THE DETAILS

Sherri Luhr's modern take on rustic style relies on a careful editing of furniture and fittings. That sort of disciplined simplicity relies on rigorous—and in this case, gorgeous—attention to detail.

THE WINDOWS “I wanted paned windows, because it’s a warmer feel,” Luhr explains. So Janet Jarvis suggested all-wood, wire-brushed windows in incense cedar from Bend River Sash & Door Company. Luhr even visited the factory in Bend, Oregon, to watch the windows and French doors being made.

THE ROOF The Ludowici custom clay tile roof with metal standing seams is a rustic yet elegant choice. “Wood roofing shingles are not an option because of fire danger,” Luhr notes. “This was a great alternative.”

THE WOOD A dining room wall is clad in barnwood with slivers of mirror fitted into the chinks for a surprising reflective gleam. Old hand-hewn oak timbers were built into trusses on-site, but the task of curving the contour of the bottom cord “required lots of head-scratching and detail by the carpenters,” Jarvis says.





An antique candelabra hangs above the sleek WETSTYLE freestanding tub in the bright master bathroom. Luhr calls the Lucite armchair "a design surprise." She says, "I think it's always good to have a surprise." The soothing master bedroom opens directly onto the backyard through French doors, with a metal four-poster bed and rustic wood wingback chair keeping furnishings simple in cool neutral tones. Above the fireplace, a painting of an elk (there are many roaming the neighborhood) conceals a television.

Sun Valley's extraordinary setting inspired design decisions both indoors and out. Montana weathered gray stone, vintage barnwood and clay roof tiles combine to create a rustic structure that dwells gracefully amid the trees. A variety of outdoor living areas offers zones for relaxation and conversation, with a toasty fireplace and a dining table that expands to seat 14 hungry guests. A 12-foot-long, hide-upholstered antique bench and topographic map of Idaho add fresh Western flair to an upstairs hallway.





Along with a continuation of the same stone and reclaimed wood found on the home's exterior, Luhr added touches of industrial metal as a compelling contrast. "I was very careful about using that material sparingly and in such a way that those elements can be easily changed if desired," she notes. "The large metal barn door on the stone wall outside the kitchen is the exception—it is functional, but in reality stands as an art piece."

Striking the right balance was essential: "Although the spaces are large, I wanted the furnishings and finishes to be warm, comfortable, inviting—even cozy—so blankets and soft textures abound," Luhr explains. "There is nothing 'precious' here. It was important to have a home that could be sat in, played in, with no worries," she says. "Our Sun Valley home is our happy place." ○

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