



A Labor of Love:

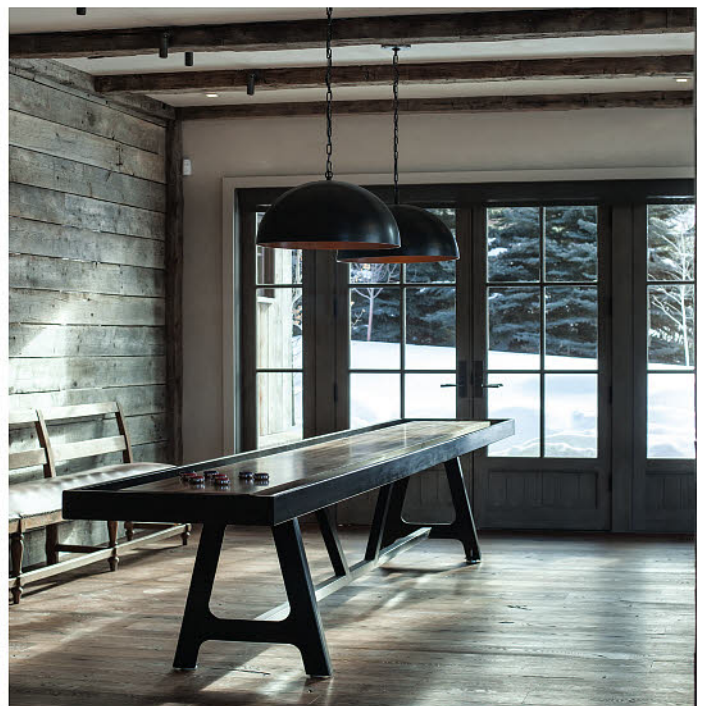
Light and Warmth on Back Pay Way

By Erin Kennedy Photography by Josh Wells

Above: Mountain retreat on the Sun Valley Fairway.
Right 1: A rustic modern twist in the upstairs Jack and Jill bathroom.
Right 2: Game of shuffleboard anyone?

In a quiet, classic Sun Valley neighborhood sits a new custom home with a picture-postcard view. Reclaimed timbers and Montana-culled stone waltz with Italian clay tiles and wood framing to create a one-of-a-kind living space destined for family gatherings and celebrations. A fireplace, plaster walls, and antique metal finishes generate a sense of warmth that permeates the home. Most importantly, architecture and design work together to highlight the most amazing view of Baldy Mountain that Sun Valley has to offer. How could it get any better?

The story of this custom build began several years ago when homeowner Sherri Luhr saved a photo spread from a magazine that captured the essence of a rustic modern design. Years later, when Luhr decided to build her Sun Valley dream home, she





Above: A dramatic chandelier accents the rough-hewn beams and farmhouse white painted wood in the kitchen.

interviewed architect Janet Jarvis, who, as it turns out, had designed the very home from the long-saved magazine photo. “Fortuitous, serendipitous, and fabulous,” Luhr says of the meeting. “Janet is supremely talented with a rarefied taste level. Being from Sun Valley, she understands the environment of the area and the requirements for mountain living.” With local general contractor and builder Paul Conrad from Conrad Brothers Construction in the mix, this trio of custom creators was ready to tackle every challenge during the two-year build.

“A home is an extension
of your personality.”
– homeowner Sherri Luhr

And then challenges seemed to spring up from the ground when building began. “One of the more unique features of this home is the fact that it is built at the base of an alluvial fan in the mouth of a canyon,” says Conrad. The soil conditions were not suitable for building, and required extensive geotechnical remediation in order to begin construction. Nearly 200 helical resistance piers drilled up to 40 feet deep anchor the home’s foundation.

Conrad emphasizes the importance of working with a team from pre-construction to finish: “Strong relationships and trust are key to winding through the maze of details and emotions when building custom.” Having previously worked with Luhr, an art director and interior designer, to remodel her Sun Valley



Above: Light floods the hall leading to a series of rustic barn doors.



condo, Conrad was prepared for the meticulous thought put into every aspect of the home's design. While the adage "form follows function" could be a general guide to the design of the house, Conrad allows that aesthetic, setting, materials, and mood would sometimes override the basic function of a design element, creating a unique experience. "That attitude," says Conrad, "makes for a beautiful home and a great project."

Many of the minutiae incorporated into the design were chosen to elicit a feeling of coziness in a home that boasts around 6,000 square feet. Five bedrooms and four and a half baths ensure space enough for family and friends to enjoy a lodge-like stay in the mountains. Painted wood plank ceilings meld seamlessly with custom oak and stone floors. A mix of traditional old country design blends with modern forms in the custom kitchen by Five Star Kitchen & Bath. The old-world kitchen boasts painted wood cabinets, a vintage metal hood, and a LaCanche range, while custom lighting and appliances round out the modern function of the space.

"It has been fun. I've worked with a lot of styles of architecture but this is new for me," says Luhr, of combining modern, industrial, and traditional design elements. She reiterates that an inviting atmosphere of relaxation and contentment was paramount in the design process. "I want people who come to visit to feel comfortable and I want it to be a warm, friendly, and interesting place." She gathered ideas from a range of resources, seeking to infuse rustic elements into the home's modern design. "Sometimes industrial modern design can feel cold," admits Luhr, "and I wanted to stay away from that."

While every room in the home exudes a welcoming appeal, the real focal point is the extraordinary view of Bald Mountain, captured by a magnificent picture window in the main living area of the house. The homeowners spent years scouring the Valley for the ideal location before finally setting on this private neighborhood close to town. The location of the



This page: The ultimate bath graces the first floor master suite.



architectural trends

home is ideal for the Luhrs, who use the local trails and bike paths to travel to town and back, weather permitting. The view was a major factor in choosing the build site. Luhr says, "I love the view. I have a 'pinch-me-moment' every time I walk in the home and look out at the mountain."

Whether enjoying the scene of Bald Mountain from the great room or from the hot tub outdoors, guests will be struck by the quality of craftsmanship throughout the home. In fact, Luhr has a hard time choosing her favorite features. The kitchen, master bath, and living and dining rooms are all stand-out spaces. The view and location work for her family, and the style of the home creates a modern mountain escape.

While the house itself is a testament to the workmanship of those involved, the design and building process may be the most gratifying part of the endeavor. Luhr considers any home a "forever project" and she is happy with the metamorphosis of the build, from abstract idea inspired by a magazine spread to newly completed home. "I changed a lot of things throughout the design process and I'm very happy with the outcome," says Luhr. She adds, "It was wonderful to work with Janet and Paul, and get their input throughout the process." The cooperation of homeowner, builder, and architect has coalesced into a stunning home that is sure to be enjoyed for years to come. It's almost as if the home, and the team of people who created it, were meant to be.

Builder: Paul Conrad
Conrad Brothers, Inc
105 Lewis St, Suite 101 | Ketchum
208.726.3830
www.conradbrothersconstruction.com

Architect: Janet Jarvis
The Jarvis Group, AIA, PLLC
511 Sun Valley Road | Ketchum
208.726.4031
www.jarvis-group.com

Kitchen: Five Star Kitchen & Bath
105 Lewis Street, Suite 101 | Ketchum
208.726.4039
www.fivestarkitchenbath.com