

*Drawn first by the snow-covered slopes in Big Sky, a family makes the move West*

# MAKING MONTANA HOME

An upsloping second-floor expands already panoramic views of Lone Mountain and the Spanish Peaks from the home, set on 60 acres. Abundant glass, steel, wood and Sebastian stone combine in the modern residence.

STORY **SUZANNE S. BROWN** PHOTOS **GIBEON PHOTOGRAPHY**

ARCHITECTURE **REID SMITH ARCHITECTS**

INTERIOR DESIGN **CLEAN LINE CONSULTING**

CONSTRUCTION **AVANT BUILDING GROUP**

A family of four from Connecticut began coming to Montana in 2013 because they loved the winters—and then they discovered the summers. In the summer of 2018, when they moved to Montana full time, their son was getting ready to enter his sophomore year in high school and their daughter was 11. While living in a condominium at the Yellowstone Club, the couple made plans to build a permanent home: a place to work, study and socialize while also indulging their love of the outdoors, from skiing in the winter to hiking, fishing and golf in the summer.

They bought a 60-acre site teeming with wildlife and offering panoramic views five minutes from Big Sky, Montana, and enlisted the services of architect Daryl Nourse of Reid Smith Architects to design a five-bedroom, seven-bath modern residence.

The resulting stone, steel and glass home was built with meticulous attention to aesthetics and environmental detail. An abundance of glass on each level of the 6,200-square-foot home offers views of Beehive Basin, the Spanish Peaks and Lone Mountain.

Nourse designed the house to maximize its views, stretching it out along a ridge. “We blurred the lines between indoors and outdoors,” he says, by extending steel and reclaimed wood-wrapped timber beams and using the same dry-stacked Sebastian sandstone on interior and exterior walls. “The glass is meant to be a suggestion of where the perimeter is.”

A traditional gabled roof was originally planned for the homeowner’s office on the upper level. But he and the architect realized that if the edge of the roof was lifted, it would open views of Lone Peak. “The construction was relatively tricky,” Nourse says of the resulting upsloping roof. The lifted roof section, for example, was built in a controlled indoor environment, disassembled and craned into place on the property.

“It took complex coordination to build that off-site and ensure it would integrate with the structural steel and fit properly at installation,” adds builder Joe Umberger, president of Avant Building Group in Bozeman.

The home’s main floor contains the primary bedroom suite and a guest suite as well as the open-layout kitchen, great room and dining room. Balconies offer additional spots for meals and relaxation. The lower level has bedrooms and entertainment space for the teens and their friends.



A wall of windows provides a dramatic backdrop in the living room. Comfortable yet practical furnishings include the Taylor King custom sectional sofa upholstered in crushed velvet, a Taracea cocktail table and Integral Thread rug, a favorite spot for the family’s bulldog.



### ENERGY-EFFICIENT LIVING

Montana temperatures go from subfreezing in the winter to warm in the summer, so the homeowners used these energy-saving features in the project.

#### A GEOTHERMAL HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEM

reduces expenses for electricity and propane. Sunk deep into a pond that also offers a spot for fishing and swimming in summer and ice skating in winter, the lake plate heat exchanger is a device through which fluid passes, connecting to an indoor geothermal heat pump, and uses the pond water as a heat source or heat sink.

**THE COLD ROOF** is a multi-layer design that Joe Umberger of Avant Building says has become best practice in Big Sky and other high snow load areas. The roof has a cross-ventilated design that features an air cavity that keeps the roof cold, preventing the formation of ice dams and potential water damage to the roof and structure. It carries a sizable snow load and meets the region's seismic rating requirements (Yellowstone National Park and its frequent earthquakes are only 50 miles down the road). **DOUBLE-PANED ENERGY-EFFICIENT GLASS** is used throughout. Motorized solar shades that are part of the home's automation system are hidden in valances and can be raised and lowered for light control and privacy.



“THE FAMILY WANTED EVERYTHING TO BE BEAUTIFUL, BUT COMFORTABLE FIRST.”

—INTERIOR DESIGNER ASHLEY SANFORD

OPPOSITE: The homeowner's second-floor office has a vaulted ceiling and balcony. THIS PAGE: The open kitchen was designed with minimal cabinetry and a roomy pantry for storage. Two islands topped in leathered Taj Mahal quartzite offer space for food preparation and seating on Thayer Coggin stools.

THIS PAGE: Wraparound windows offer restful vistas in the primary bedroom, where solar shades can be lowered for privacy and light control. The bed and night tables are from Restoration Hardware. RIGHT: The homeowners can also soak in views from a freestanding tub in their bathroom, which is tiled in Marble Attaché Calacatta stone.



Interior designers Ashley Sanford and Kelly Lovell of Clean Line Consulting in Bozeman were brought in to help with furnishings and finishes. “The family wanted everything to be beautiful, but comfortable first,” Sanford says. The color palette was kept muted so it complements rather than competes with the setting. “We pulled in colors from the mountains and sky,” she says.

Practicality was another consideration. In the living room, the Taylor King custom sofa in crushed velvet is not only pretty but stain resistant. Soft fabrics were chosen for rugs, upholstery and bedding as a counterpoint to the all the stone and steel in the home. Solar shades hidden in valances on the glass walls and windows offer privacy and energy efficiency.

When the residence—christened the Rockin Bar B—was finished, family members turned their attention to the acreage outside. Trails were forged for hiking in the summer and cross-country skiing in winter.

They haven’t looked back. Of the decision to choose a mountain lifestyle, the homeowner says, “I feel the biggest opportunity was for our kids to have more activities in the outdoors that they could embrace, as opposed to being on their phones, computers and tablets. It’s an active, healthy outdoor situation.” ◊

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