



## SPIRITED SKI HOME

**R**ain Houser and Skye Anderson thrive on being involved in designing a home from its inception, especially when they can participate in conceptualizing the interior layout and hard furnishings. But the founders of Urbaine Home in Bozeman also love the challenge inherent in working within an existing template built to a high standard for contemporary mountain living. In such a case there's a joyful mandate: to personalize a space to reflect the lives of the owners in ways that are spiritedly unique—and to transform a space into a home.

A 5,500-square-foot townhouse at the Yellowstone Club in Big Sky, Montana, was designed by architect Andrew Brechbuhler as part of a compound of sophisticated high-country homes. The dwellings would be traditional in style, but would lean modern in the interiors to create a fresh, clean, mountain-appropriate palette that homeowners could make their own. When designing, Brechbuhler says, he tries to keep the forms simple, clean, and in proportion so that spaces are nicely scaled, have good flow for active families and for entertaining, and offer a pleasing sense of progression. In these high-elevation locales, in addition to addressing challenging topography, heavy snow load, and possible site instability, he prioritizes maximizing views and creating usable exterior spaces—protected areas that can be enjoyed even in winter.

The entry from the street to the three-level home makes an immediate statement in the use of steel on the staircase and its choice of wall treatments: a combination of reclaimed barnboard on ceilings, trim, and select walls, and neutral painted surfaces contrasted with stone. The effect is striking immediately upon entry to the low-ceilinged foyer. There, Houser and Anderson created a jewel-box effect through the installation of an eye-catching custom-made bronze console. Built by designer and artisan Tim Sanford of Bozeman, the console has a contemporary finish but reflects the transitional rustic modern look with the introduction of a wood-grain pattern on its facade. A textured, earth-toned runner and an artistic array of vintage rattan mirrors sourced internationally set against a multihued stone wall complete the effect.

From the entry one is drawn by the view and sense of space to the great room where the volume opens up dramatically. The living room, with its high, sloped, wood-beamed ceiling and glass end wall facing the mountain prospect, opens to an outdoor deck with additional seating. The adjacent kitchen and dining area are tucked under a lower ceiling to create a sense of intimacy and separation within the open plan. The top floor is

In a Yellowstone Club townhouse designed by architect Andrew Brechbuhler, Rain Houser and Skye Anderson of Urbaine Home worked with the owners to pursue the mandate of “fun and young.” The curved lines of the caribou-hide-covered chairs and the sleek grid of the metal firewood box add a contemporary contrast to traditional wood and stone elements. The elk mount over the fireplace is by Kirsten Kainz, and the gold-leaf ram skull on the coffee table is by Owen Mortensen. Interwoven porcelain antlers redefine the classic antler chandelier.





given over to the master-bedroom suite, which faces the view, and a quiet study, while the expansive lower level accommodates three bedrooms and a large rec room with bar.

At the time of purchase, the owners had three children under the age of seven. They envisioned family-friendly interiors that were youthful and fun; they didn't want anything too precious or fragile. The pursuit of elegance and comfort with durability allowed for sumptuous alpaca draperies, sheepskin rugs, and sturdy but beautiful furniture in luxurious fabrics and leather. A dusky blue runs throughout the house, appearing in upholstery, drapes, counter chairs, and the powder room vanity; it ties the interiors together while referencing the sky. Throughout the home, statement lighting defines the spaces: a wreath of interwoven porcelain antlers in the living room; soap-bubble pendants in the dining room; a Bocci chandelier in the master bedroom; and, suspended over the kitchen island, handmade glass pendants by Montana artisan Ona Magaro. Elements of surprise abound in such details as a hair-on-hide headboard and a side table made from a stump sheathed in leather in the master bedroom; a sculptural lacquered polar bear bookshelf in the bunkroom; and an urban-edge wallpaper behind the bar in which the words "Kiss Me" have the trompe l'oeil effect of a neon sign.

A sleek steel box for firewood injects a modern sculptural presence in the living room, while the powder room marries a bold wallpaper featuring an oversized bull's-eye target with vintage mirrors and a custom-made vintage-look arrow that lights up. Many original interpretations—such as a living-room end table made from a stump encased in resin, and a coat-closet niche with hair-on-hide walls—combine mountain and modern in a fresh way. References to nature appear throughout the home, from Pendleton fabric deer mounts to curtains with velvet deer heads to the ethereal chandelier in the nursery, an assemblage of more than 100 white butterflies. Straight-from-nature touches, such as sheepskin, hair-on-hide, and fur, appear throughout the house: on furniture, in throws, on the floors—even lining the inside of the bunk bed niches.

The effect is lively and playful. It offers original and unexpected interpretations yet is still elegant and comfortable—a ski house imperative. "They wanted it to feel like a mountain house," explains Houser, "but they still wanted it to be clean and bright. We always focus on bringing warmth through texture. But as with the simple stone fireplace against the white wall, this house really is about simplicity, along with natural materials and fun art."

The art is anything but staid. The designers worked with the owners to choose paintings by Amy Ringholz, Bill Schenck, Tracy Stuckey, and a series of whimsical wildlife photographs by Nine Francois. In yet another indication that this is not your typical '80s mountain home, the elk mount occupying the traditional pride-of-place over the fireplace mantel is a Kirsten Kainz art piece made entirely of found objects. It's just one more detail that advances the mandate "fun and young" for a family with flair.

On the lower level, a wet bar with a built-in refrigerator anchors one end of a lounging space. The trompe l'oeil effect Wall & Decò wallpaper was procured through Urbaine Home. The table lamp is vintage.





RIGHT: In the dining room, a bold painting by Tracy Stuckey celebrates the contemporary West. The hair-on-hide rug is from Kyle Bunting. The leather bench is a vintage gymnasium piece.

FACING: The main-level great room and outdoor dining space take full advantage of expansive mountain views. Lower ceilings over the kitchen and dining areas create intimacy within the larger volume. Statement lighting throughout the house includes handmade glass pendants by Montana artisan Ona Magaro.







FACING: The entry hall makes a statement to new arrivals with a bronze art piece console by Tim Sanford of Bozeman. An array of vintage rattan mirrors, brass candlesticks from Alexander Lamont, and a collectible tramp art box complete the vignette.

LEFT: The textural wood walls, ceiling, and Kyle Bunting hair-on-hide headboard are balanced by the ethereal grace of a Bocci bubble cluster chandelier. The sheepskin stool is from Azadeh Shladovsky; the Baxter lounge chairs are available through Urbaine Home in Bozeman.



RIGHT: The powder room wows with its custom target wallpaper from Wall & Decò, an antique round mirror, and a custom arrow scone.

FACING: A comfortable and convivial wood-walled rec room is grounded by a Verellen sofa in Holland & Sherry wool plaid fabric atop a sheepskin rug. Wildlife photography by artist Nine Francois adds a playful element, as does the Bambi stool, available through Urbaine Home.







FACING: A soft, light, inviting effect was achieved in the nursery with a Wall & Decò wallpaper of a deer in snow, a fluffy rug, a white crib, and an uber comfortable Ligne Roset Togo fireside chair. A chandelier made from more than a hundred white butterflies floats above.

LEFT: Custom-designed bunks lined in shearling accommodate extra numbers in the utmost comfort. The whimsical Polar Bear Bookcase is available through Urbaine Home.