

RENO HOME

INSPIRING AREA HOMES

MOUNTAIN LIVING

OPEN THE DOOR TO THIS EXTRAVAGANT
NORTHSTAR RETREAT

SURFACE APPEAL

NEW TRENDS IN TILE
PRODUCT AND DESIGN
CONCEPTS

GARDEN DIARY

HOUSEPLANTS BRING
WARMTH TO WINTER
SEASON OF CHANGE



SKIING is BELIEVING

NORTHSTAR HOME OFFERS EXPANSIVE VIEWS AND
BREATHTAKING RECREATIONAL FEATURES

SCENIC SETTING

The home boasts stunning views of the Pacific Crest and a striking mountain arts-and-crafts feel, accomplished largely through Douglas fir interior wood beams and rich stone accents.



OPTIMAL ORIENTATION

Top, the home was built long and shallow, allowing the architect to optimize views and increase the amount of privacy afforded the owners. View decks and sunny patios create stunning venues for outdoor entertainment interconnected to the home. Below, a “bridge” connects the home and garage, surrounded by tall timber and natural stone that further punctuate the arts-and-crafts ambiance.

For ski aficionados, no lodging amenity rivals the cachet of ski in/ski out access. It is the hallmark of quick and convenient access to ultimate winter fun.

But for the owners of this “Summit” home in the prestigious Big Springs neighborhood of Northstar, ski in/ski out access is not a lodging amenity; instead it is a built-in feature of their home.

“You can literally access on and off the trails at Northstar from the lower floor,” says Dennis Zirbel, owner of Dennis E. Zirbel Architect. “The chairlift travels right in front of the house, making this one of the few homes in the neighborhood that is truly ski in and ski out, with no walking.”

The project was four years in the making; the site itself, because of its steep slope and location among tall pines and dense timbers, was difficult to access.

“We had a lot of options with the site and the orientation of the home, but in our view, there was only one true choice,” Zirbel says. “It was our job to prove to the owners through good design that this was the right choice. The land is shaped like a slice of pie, and as you come off the road, there’s probably a 40 percent slope.”



HEART OF THE HOME

Designed for a large family who loves to entertain, the home's spacious kitchen is organized to accommodate a fully functional work triangle. Detailed oak cabinets and intricate tile define the space as one tailored to form and function.



So, Zirbel educated the owners about the advantages inherent to a home that was long but not very deep, having one particularly remarkable feature: a garage that is vertically and horizontally separated from the home.

“We created a ‘bridge’ to the garage,” Zirbel explains. “The house is then located down the hill and away from the garage, near the rear of the lot. This opened up the home to more impressive views and gives the owners a feeling that they’re almost by themselves with no neighbors, as everyone else built up by the road. Conceptually, we also thought it would be fun to engage the chairlift with the home while still maintaining privacy.”

The home’s characteristic mountain arts-and-crafts feel is interpreted through abundant wood and stone. The owners were seeking a retreat that would serve their family of three daughters — now all college age and

beyond — as well as the couple themselves. Features of the 4,750-square-foot home, which is located on almost half an acre, include five suites and 4-1/2 bathrooms, a separate office, music room, and large recreation room.

“They wanted to take advantage of the abundant recreational opportunities both inside and outside their home,” Zirbel says of the owners. “We have incorporated lovely gardens, water features, view decks, and sunny patios, so there’s lots of opportunity for stunning outdoor entertainment interconnected to the home. Plus, everyone in the family has their own suite.”

One of the most utilized family spaces in the home, he says, is the recreation room. The expansive area houses a pool table, kitchenette, separate gaming area and even a small theater — all in one room. It’s centrally located to the three girls’ suites.

GAME ON

Opposite page, a large game/family room is centrally located downstairs to the kids' suites, creating a separate space where the family's children and grandchildren can play pool, watch TV, or socialize.



DETAIL ORIENTED

Top, the home's water features add auditory and visual appeal to spectacular outdoor living spaces. Above, opulent and detailed wood and metal accents enhance the character of this majestic mountain retreat.

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RENO HOME

"But at times, it's just the owners, so they don't even have to go downstairs if they don't want to," Zirbel says. "Everything is conveniently located for them on the main floor."

Of course the kitchen serves as an appropriate focal point, with a built-in coffee bar, ceramic-tile accents, and spectacular wood-beam ceilings. In keeping with the arts-and-crafts décor, Zirbel notes, the kitchen cabinets are oak; the majority of the wood in the house though is Douglas fir, paying homage to the home's indigenous surroundings.

"My absolute favorite aspect of the home is how much we were able to take advantage of the views and privacy through the strategy of moving the house to the rear of the parcel," Zirbel

says. "We had a lot of trees on the lot, but we were able to weave the house and the covered walkway around the trees. To further integrate the home and site, we used field stones that blended in with the existing stone on the site, with stonework featuring deep joints and shadows. The home and the land complement each other beautifully."

SOURCES

BUILDER

Masterworks —
A Design-Build Firm

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

L & P Designworks

INTERIOR DESIGN

Dennis E. Zirbel Architect,
owner and Bentley Interiors

LIGHTING DESIGN

Dennis E. Zirbel Architect



PRIVATE ACCESS

While the home is situated in an upscale subdivision with many neighbors, the layout allows the owners to feel as though they're in a private mountain sanctuary. Breathtaking views are framed by large windows in the master suite's tub and washroom area.



Architect Q&A:

DENNIS E. ZIRBEL ARCHITECT

Q: What is your favorite aspect of your own home?

A: The amazing feel it has, inside and out. It takes your breath away.

Q: How did you become interested in architecture?

A: As an apprentice carpenter during summers of my college years, I was changing the designs of the structures we were building as we were building them — making them shine.

Q: What advice would you give aspiring architects today?

A: Sketch all the time, and go to an accredited architectural school.

Q: What has been your favorite project to date?

A: I don't really have a favorite because there are so many. Like your children, you love them all. We strive very hard to design each structure to be unique for the owner's needs and responsive to the area/site. There are some pretty cool aspects of many projects, but again too many to mention them all.

Q: Who has had the most powerful influence on your professional life, and why?

A: Any architect who truly is tying their design to strong concepts — because it shows.

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