

MOUNTAIN LIVING[®]



KITCHEN LOVE

TOP MOUNTAIN BUILDERS LIST
WHERE THE BISON ROAM

Bold hues and patterns enliven this modern mountain masterpiece overlooking a placid lake in Whitefish, Montana

FLYING COLORS



OPPOSITE: Surrounded by Douglas fir, natural stone veneer and black metal, the rustic modern home's glass front door offers guests a tantalizing glimpse of the lake beyond. THIS PAGE: Conveniently located between the fireplace and wet bar—and boasting unrivaled water views—the great room hits all the right notes.

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PHOTOGRAPHY **GIBEON PHOTOGRAPHY**
ARCHITECTURE **ALTIUS DESIGN GROUP**
INTERIOR DESIGNER **HUNTER + CO**
CONSTRUCTION **BRANDT CONSTRUCTION**



There are oodles of charming ski areas sprinkled throughout the West, but according to empty nesters from Pacific Palisades, California, there's no place quite like Whitefish, Montana—at least not for nature lovers like them. The first week the couple spent there, they hardly sat still, golfing, boating and hiking the days away. “We fell in love,” the husband says.

They felt the same sort of stirring when they sat at the top of the hill on a wooded property overlooking Whitefish Lake, ultimately buying the land from contractor David Brandt, who went on to build the house in collaboration with architect Rich Graves at Altius Design Group and interior designers Hunter Dominick and Kay Crnkovich Sherman at Hunter + Co.

“We all worked as a team to build a beautiful high-end home,” Brandt explains. “My vision was only enhanced by theirs.”

Built into the hillside at the bottom of a long driveway, the L-shaped modern mountain manse is clad with Douglas fir siding accented by a natural stone veneer, black aluminum-framed windows and Corten metal roofing. “It’s just coming into its rusty phase, and as it ages, it’ll become a deeper brown,” Graves says.

Offering a powerful first impression, a large metal-and-glass pivot door frames a breathtaking view of the lake from the huge expanse of windows in the great room—a double-height space with porcelain tile flooring, a high wooden ceiling and a floor-to-ceiling fireplace clad with a durable troweled-on material that resembles metal.

The roaring fire offers a compelling alternative to the breathtaking views, which are perhaps best enjoyed from a chaise lounge positioned next to the window—part of a comfortable grouping that includes a tailored sofa and chic maroon leather lounge chairs.

Overhead, two sculptural glass chandeliers that reminded Dominick of bear grass soften the linear architectural lines—one of many unique lighting fixtures throughout, including the >>

A graphic mural adds a jolt of color and pattern to the kitchen and dining area, where the owners and their guests enjoy sharing meals and conversation at the custom live-edge dining table.



iconic Sputnik-style chandelier over the live-edge walnut dining table, where the owners have spent many hours breaking bread and playing games with family and friends.

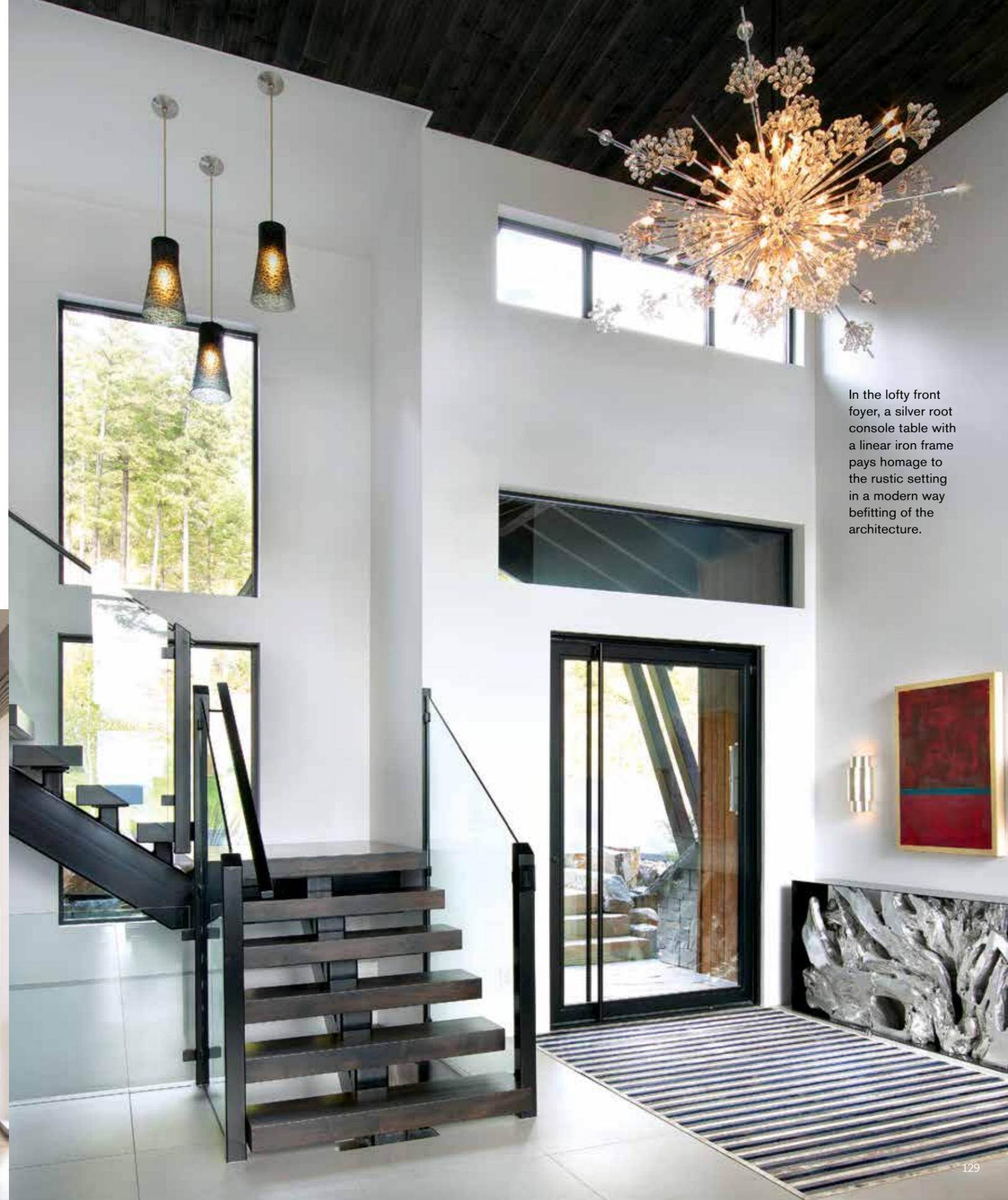
"There are lots of layers, and everything is on a dimmer," Dominick explains, noting that lighting is crucial in a place like Whitefish, where it's dark and gray throughout much of the winter. "Lighting makes a huge statement, and the clients were in agreement."

They were also game for color, as seen in the graphic, large-scale panel resembling agate that conceals the door to the wine refrigerator. Fittingly the dramatic installation, a fusion of photos with digital imaging and hand-processed materials, plays off the bar stool seats at the quartzite waterfall island in the kitchen, which has sleek laminate cabinetry.

Color takes on even more importance on the lower level. One of the walls in the family room, for example, is upholstered in a fabric with a Keith Haring-like pattern. Leaning into pattern, Dominick and Sherman also brought in a vibrant wool rug with a tree-of-life motif and punctuated the plush U-shaped sectional sofa with complementary orange accent pillows.

And each of the bedrooms has an accent wall covered in a different design, including one with a painterly watercolor >>

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Vibrant pillows pop against the neutral sofa in the family room, which sports a graphic wall covering by Pindler. A custom chair and ottoman lean into the vibrant modern motif the owners envisioned. An ornate floral wall covering makes the powder room feel unique.



In the lofty front foyer, a silver root console table with a linear iron frame pays homage to the rustic setting in a modern way befitting of the architecture.



USING NATURE IN UNEXPECTED WAYS

Eager to honor the natural setting without disrupting a sleek, vibrant design plan, interior designers Hunter Dominick and Kay Crnkovich Sherman incorporated contemporary pieces that reference nature in unique, often unexpected ways. Here are a few of our favorites:

AGATE MURAL Painted on metal to resemble a gigantic piece of agate, the mural disguising the wine refrigerator in the great room packs a visual punch. **FOYER CONSOLE TABLE**

Encapsulated by a linear piece of steel and sporting a reflective metallic finish, the console table in the entry foyer offers a natural element in a modern container. "It's unexpected," Dominick says. "A little bit went a long way."

LIVING ROOM CHANDELIER For the living room, Sherman selected a fantastic glass chandelier that reminded her of bear grass, a perennial that grows in the area. Who knew it could be so sculptural?

FAMILY ROOM ACCESSORIES A trio of ceramic cocktail tables resemble petrified stumps of wood. And on the nearby floating media cabinet, an actual piece of wood has been mounted on a metal stand, elevating it to art in the process.

"It could be teacups, pennies or pieces of wood," Dominick explains. "How you display something makes a huge difference."

TOP: Outfitted with sleek glass railings that ensure unobstructed treetop views, built-in ceiling heaters and a rustic stone fireplace perfect for crackling blazes, the covered back porch can be comfortably used and enjoyed for the better part of the year. RIGHT: A casual sectional sofa and a wooden dining set—all by Link Outdoor from Hunter + Co—make the space as functional, stylish and comfortable as the inside rooms.





THIS PAGE: A pair of organic chandeliers from Arteriors take advantage of the pitched ceilings in the master bedroom, where wall tile from Rocky Mountain Tile and Stone creates a compelling backdrop for a leather bedframe. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: This guest bedroom's painterly wall covering feels like a custom mural. Symmetry reigns in the master bath, which features matching sconces flanking a pair of mirrors by Arteriors. Orange marks the spot in one of the posh guest bedrooms.

installation that looks like a piece of artwork. "Most people are scared of color or think it's a little too much of a commitment," Sherman says.

"Seeing the color brightens my mood," the wife explains.

However, the designers changed course in the owners' suite, which is situated on the second floor overlooking the lake, embracing a more soothing palette that includes a neutral three-dimensional tiled wall and a brown leather headboard flanked by matching wooden end tables. White metal-and-wood chandeliers add sculptural interest without distracting from the view. "You're perched out over the lake in the treetops," Dominick says, comparing it to a treehouse.

That's also the case for the covered porch off the kitchen, which, outfitted with a handsome wood-burning fireplace and integrated ceiling heaters, allows the owners to take advantage of the space for much of the year. There's a second covered porch with a hot tub outside the lower-level family room.

The owners only visited the site a few times during the multi-year construction, relying on Dominick to act as both interior designer and project manager. So, the first time they ever saw the house was especially dramatic. "When we walked in, it was done," the husband says. "They did a terrific job. There's a real warmth to it."

Indeed, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the house drew the couple and their daughters like a moth to the flame, offering shelter, social distancing and tons of time together for the first time since they left for college. "They get excited about being here," the wife says. "It's been so nice to have everyone all together." ◻

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