

SPIRITUAL SCALE

PERCHED HIGH IN THE HILLS, A THOUGHTFULLY DESIGNED NAPA VALLEY HOME PAYS HOMAGE TO MOTHER NATURE

*By Laura Eckstein Jones
Photographed by Adam Rouse*

Consisting of two separate pavilions connected by a glass breezeway, this carefully situated 10,000-square-foot Upper Napa Valley home was designed to maximize views of the surrounding landscape while providing separate public and private living spaces.



Warm, gracious, and full of trust and purpose are not words often associated with residential projects. But the creation of an Upper Napa Valley home by Signum Architecture, Shawback Design,

Cello & Maudru Construction and Jack Chandler Design warranted such descriptors, and many more that speak to a truly symbiotic and fulfilling partnership. “It turned out to be an unbelievable team of artisans and craftspeople and businesspeople,” says Shawback Design’s Penny Shawback. “The stars lined up.”

The homeowners—a couple who moved from Southern California—spent three years searching for the perfect site for their next home. “When this property came up, [the husband] felt it was the right property for them,” says Signum Architecture’s Juancarlos Fernandez of the 40-acre forested site. “They had a spiritual reaction to it.”

After presenting three different models to the clients, a decision was made to create a home with two pavilions divided by a glassed-in breezeway. One pavilion houses the family’s private spaces: the primary bedroom suite, offices for the husband and wife, and a meditation room. The other pavilion—the main building—is a three-level space that contains the living, dining and kitchen areas, and the guest quarters downstairs. An infinity-edge pool overlooks the valley, while the pavilions surround a heat-and-wind-protected central courtyard used for entertaining.

At 10,000 square feet, the home is large but doesn’t stick out in the landscape or feel overly massive. “It looks more like a 4,500-square-foot house,” says Fernandez. “We didn’t



Antonio Citterio’s Ray sofas from B&B Italia and tables from Holly Hunt reside atop a silk and wool rug from FloorDesign. Opposite page, from top: In the powder room, a stone wall made from Italian travertine brings the outdoors in; the Lohja pendant light from Cameron Design House hangs in the primary bedroom.



From left: Sonoma-based artist James Gray of Studio Gray created the custom sculptural island in the kitchen; iconic landscape architect Jack Chandler gifted the massive rounded stones to the homeowner. Called “basaltic spheres” by Chandler, the rocks—naturally formed underground—were found in the Midwest during a mining expedition.



DESIGN DETAILS

TYPE

Single-family home

LOCATION

Upper Napa Valley

ARCHITECT

Signum Architecture
signumarchitecture.com

INTERIOR DESIGNER

Shawback Design
shawbackdesign.com

BUILDER

Cello & Maudru Construction
cello-maudru.com

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Jack Chandler Design
jackchandlerdesign.com

RESOURCES

B&B ITALIA

Living room sofa
bebitalia.com

BULTHAUP

Kitchen cabinetry and stainless steel countertop
bulthaup.com

CAMERON DESIGN HOUSE

Primary bedroom pendant
camerondesignhouse.com

DESIGN WITHIN REACH

Kitchen bar stools
dwr.com

FIRST, LAST & ALWAYS

French oak flooring throughout
first-last-always.com

FLOORDESIGN RUGS

Living room rug
floordesignrugs.com

HOLLY HUNT

Living room coffee and side tables
hollyhunt.com

MIELE

Kitchen appliances
miele.com

TBC PLASTER ARTISANS

Wall treatment throughout
tbcplaster.com

WATERMARK

Powder room fixtures and pendant lighting
watermark-designs.com

want to have this big mansion competing with nature.” A clever floor plan—like putting the guest areas out of sight downstairs—made that possible, as did the home’s placement. “It doesn’t look impeding in any way,” adds Shawback Design’s Damon Savoia. “It’s really just a couple of rooflines. And then when you step into that courtyard you realize you’re in a sanctuary.”

The home’s interior design also honors the land. “We had bark from the oak trees and other pieces of earth from the site in our office for a year at least, and that helped guide our process,” says Savoia. The interior’s soft yet modern feel comes courtesy of the materials used throughout: limestone sourced from outside Venice, Italy; French oak; and plaster. The stone played a big part in the overall design scheme. “One of the material highlights is the Italian limestone used extensively in the project, from a rough-split stone on the building’s walls to the more refined paving stone used throughout,” says Bill Schaeffer of Cello & Maudru. “With the architect, we visited the Grassi quarry in Italy to see the material quarried, discuss finishing options and see firsthand how the designs would be brought to life.”

Understated, classic furniture and fabrics in a light palette were key. “They wanted the architecture and the views to be the prominent [feature] of the house,” says Savoia. “The house had to embody easy living, functionality and simplicity, and everything had to be soft, really comfortable and built to last.”

When reflecting on the project, all parties involved agree that it was extraordinarily special and pushed them to do some of their best work. “Every project has its own personality and holds up its own sense of values,” says Savoia. “This project was warm, gracious, and full of trust and purpose.” ■