

CALL OF THE WILD

A Florida couple collaborates with an Atlanta-based designer and many local craftsmen to revitalize a dated house in Big Sky, Montana

A chandelier by Andrew Crawford Ironworks illuminates the great room, which is furnished with a mix of antiques and new pieces, including a sofa by Bradley and a daybed by Bjork Studio.

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PHOTOS **GIBEON PHOTOGRAPHY**
INTERIOR DESIGN **PEACE DESIGN**
CONSTRUCTION: **HIGHLINE PARTNERS**

Punctuated by the occasional rise in pitch, the rhythmic cadence of an old-fashioned auctioneer is something to behold. That was the scene on a snowy winter day in Big Sky, Montana, when a small group, among them David and Cameron Given, gathered to bid on a chalet-like house on a secluded lot at the Yellowstone Club.

After a tense, rapid-fire round of bidding, the couple's final competitor dropped out, and with a bang of his gavel the auctioneer shouted out that timeworn phrase: "Going once, going twice, whoa," Cameron recalls. "It was wild."

Perhaps it's an apt way to buy a home in a region of the country known for its abundant wildlife: The couple sometimes spy bears, moose and elk in the woods behind their place—a far cry from their residences in Seattle and Florida. Fortunately, renovating their home with interior designer William "Bill" Peace and builder Rob McRae and Allison Roberts of Highline Partners was as collaborative as the auction was competitive.

During the first phase of the project, Peace set out to modernize the dated interior finishes, staining the exposed hand-peeled log structural beams and tongue-and-groove ceiling in a far darker hue inspired by the color of the trees behind the house. Newly plastered walls add contrast, depth and richness. "They wanted a fresher, updated approach," Peace says.

In its new context, the living room's stone fireplace takes on a whole new life—a warm and rustic focal point for a cozy sitting area with contemporary clean-lined seating around an antique Italian cocktail table. An armless daybed separates the space into two distinct sitting areas without interfering with the majestic vistas. "The palette was inspired by tones that you see in the mountains," Peace explains, referencing the textured fabrics and accessories.

The setting also influenced the art pieces that Peace helped the couple acquire. An abstracted landscape depicting wild horses by Theodore Waddell hangs above the living room fireplace, and a large encaustic painting of a wolf by Theresa Stirling brings the great outdoors into the front foyer. "People come to Montana to be outside, but they also need shelter," Peace says. "We created something that complements the exterior."

In the same vein, a mounted elk rack adds a sculptural element above the wall-to-wall upholstered bed in the master suite, where a tactile wallcovering, a sumptuous area rug and soft >>

A coat of paint, new concrete-and-walnut countertops and a custom range hood give the handsome wooden kitchen cabinetry a new look that perfectly suits the updated interior. The pressed glass lighting pendants are by Tom Dixon.





BLENDING ANTIQUES AND CONTEMPORARY PIECES SUCCESSFULLY

Antiques and new furnishings elevate one another in this Montana manse. "We were after a balance of elegance, traditional and modern, and bringing in antiques from Robuck in special areas really gave us the opportunity to do that," says interior designer Bill Peace. Here's how he did it:

INCORPORATE PIECES THAT MAKE A STATEMENT In the living room, Peace paired new furnishings with an Italian wooden cocktail table and an antique desk that was a family heirloom. "It's important in a house like this that it doesn't feel like everything was bought in a single afternoon, that there is a collected feeling," Peace says. **CREATE A NEW CONTEXT** Paired with a sleek nickel sink, an antique Italian cabinet becomes a bespoke vanity for an elegant powder room with a silver- and gold-leafed faux bois wallcovering and luxurious finishes. **USE IT OR LOSE IT** A tall 18th-century walnut cabinet in the front entry makes a terrific spot for storage while adding a sense of history to the mountain abode. According to Peace, the mix of contemporary clean-lined furnishings with select antiques works very well in the rustic milieu. "This home has depth and richness," he says. "There's a romance about it"

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A mix of new furnishings and antiques creates a timeless feeling in the great room. In the powder room, a wallcovering by Phillip Jeffries glimmers in the light cast by the sconces from Urban Electric. A woven grass-cloth wallcovering from Phillip Jeffries fosters a sense of coziness in the den. OPPOSITE: Over a dining table from Beau Studio and chairs by Bjork Studio, a branch-like chandelier from Allan Knight references the exterior.

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— INTERIOR DESIGNER BILL PEACE



draperies create an enveloping milieu. In the corner, a wing chair with silver-leafed detailing invites reading and contemplation. “We didn’t want it to feel too Western or clichéd in any way,” Peace says. “There’s an elegance about this home that’s simple and understated.”

In the second phase of the project, the team tackled the home’s exterior, replacing the original siding with reclaimed wood. “In this day and age, when people literally annihilate homes and start over, it was exciting to repurpose what was there,” say builder McRae, who also built David’s first home in the area many years earlier.

One item remained on David and Cameron’s proverbial punch list months after the project ended: naming their house, a tradition in the area. Then a friend made the perfect suggestion: “Call of the Wild,” a nod to the classic Jack London book. David and Cameron certainly feel called to the region, skiing, golfing and breaking bread with some of the best friends they’ve ever had.

In fact, they have become friends with a couple who bid against them for the house right down to the wire. What accounts for the live-and-let-live attitude? Maybe it’s those jaw-dropping views. “They call it Big Sky for a reason,” Cameron says. “Montana makes me feel peaceful, appreciative and open. It’s spectacular.” ○

OPPOSITE: A rug from Stark Carpet and an upholstered headboard fabricated by Glass House Atelier are two of the many textures in the master suite. **CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** The master bathroom has been updated with a wallcovering, a new vanity and marble floors. Photographs of wildlife bring the outside into the comfortable guest bedroom. An upholstered bed by Ochre is flanked by custom side tables in the spacious guest suite.

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