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CALIFORNIAHOME+DESIGN

THE 2017 DESIGN AWARDS



MODERN
RUSTIC
ELEMENTS
BY JENNIFER
ROBIN
INTERIORS IN
ST. HELENA



2017

Jennifer Robin Interiors

RESIDENTIAL
INTERIOR DESIGN
LESS THAN
3,000 SQ. FT.



ST. HELENA IS A NAPA VALLEY creative enclave that, though only a quick drive from San Francisco, feels a million miles away from the bustle of the big city. It's there, in the beating heart of Northern California's Wine Country, that people go to relax, to enjoy fantastic food and even better vintages, and to escape the manic pace of the day-to-day.

And it's there, on a sprawling property with picturesque views, that interior designer Jen Macdonald, founder of Jennifer Robin Interiors, perfected a bucolic but sophisticated getaway for a family of four from Los Angeles: 1,200 square feet of peaceful retreat.

It was, like many of Macdonald's projects, a comprehensive collaboration with Luke and Ani Wade of Wade Design Architects. By

teaming up from start to finish, they were able to realize a truly unified vision that merges their respective expertise with the client's desires to have a space that feels effortlessly livable.

The concept for this particular endeavor began as a guesthouse. With another, larger home already on the property, the owners wanted a place to welcome visitors that had the same appeal and stylistic sensibility as the original. Luke Wade helped them select a perfect spot for the new construction: atop a small ridge, situated amongst the newly planted vines that they hope will eventually support a high-end winery. Vegetables are already being grown on-site; these certified organic greens will be part of the menu at nearby Long Meadow Ranch's new American,

family-style Farmstead Restaurant.

The goal was to erect a rustic ode to the unique locale, one that blurs the lines between indoors and out. Reclaimed wood lines the walls and ceiling, where strong, exposed beams support the A-frame structure. This seamless expanse envelops the open plan with a warm, rustic vibe that befits the natural surroundings. Nearby redwoods inspired the earthy color palette. "With all the windows, the flow of colors from indoors to outdoors helps the home feel more spacious," Macdonald says.

Macdonald created a collection of custom, site-specific furniture to maximize the square footage. Many of the pieces do ingenious double duty to ensure that anyone and everyone staying there can find their niche and



PHOTO: PAUL DYER

OPPOSITE PAGE: AN ILLUMINATED VIEW OF THE NAPA GUEST RETREAT. THIS PAGE: WOOD CLAD WALLS, JADE GREEN CABINETRY AND POPS OF COPPER COMPLEMENT THE LA CORNUE RANGE.



make themselves comfortable. A few of these engineering marvels include: a dining nook that also serves as a cove to nap or stay the night; twin beds upstairs that can be joined together as a king or swiveled around to act as a sofa, thanks to casters on their legs; and ottomans that can become dining table seating, should the RSVPs outnumber the traditional chairs. This multi-purpose approach imbues each element with a small thrill of discovery, but also the distinct feel-

ing that everything was made to support actual people actually using it; there's no showroom, look-but-don't-touch mentality here.

"We wanted a blend of old and new so the home felt lived-in and comfortable from the beginning—not too 'perfect,'" Macdonald says. To achieve this, she added flourishes like an old chicken coop that was converted into a hanging light fixture, and an antique rug in the master bedroom.

Rich, reflective tones of amethyst in the

master bedroom and copper throughout the kitchen create a sense of value and specialness that can be felt as much as seen. In fact, Macdonald and the team coined the project "the jewel box"—a common architectural trope signifying keen attention to detail and quality materials. The thoughtful moments throughout made this small space truly live up to its name—a genuine gem of a home in more than archetype alone. —Jordan Kushins

PHOTO: PAUL DYER

OPPOSITE PAGE: THE MAIN LIVING AREA IS EQUIPPED WITH UNEXPECTED SLEEPING NOOKS INCLUDING A LOFT AREA WITH TWIN BEDS. TOP RIGHT: A VIEW OF THE GUEST HOUSE AT NIGHT, NESTLED AMONGST THE VINES. MIDDLE: A PAIR OF TWIN BEDS SET INSIDE THE COZY LOFT. BOTTOM: GUESTS CAN ENJOY DINING AND LOUNGING OUTSIDE.

