



The Montans requested a white wine country house with a classic white kitchen from their designer. MacDonald acquiesced tempering the bright backdrop with a neutral palette of linens, textured rugs, woven window treatments, and traditionally shaped furnishings. **OPPOSITE** MacDonald and Wade Design Architects collaborated on several projects before working on Happy Ranch. This resulted in cohesive interior and exterior spaces with a harmonious balance of design and function.



El Rancho Feliz

JENNIFER ROBIN INTERIORS DESIGNS A SONOMA RETREAT
TEXT BY KENDRA BOUTELL | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE FLETCHER

Hap Arnold once said of his property, "Could one ask more than expansive horizons of softly rolling wooded hills stretching away to blue-misted mountains?" Now the Montans and their guests enjoy the same stretching views. **OPPOSITE** MacDonald says of the great room, "My favorite part of this home is how it feels when you are in it. The open layout of the main living spaces connects people and makes it the ultimate entertaining house."

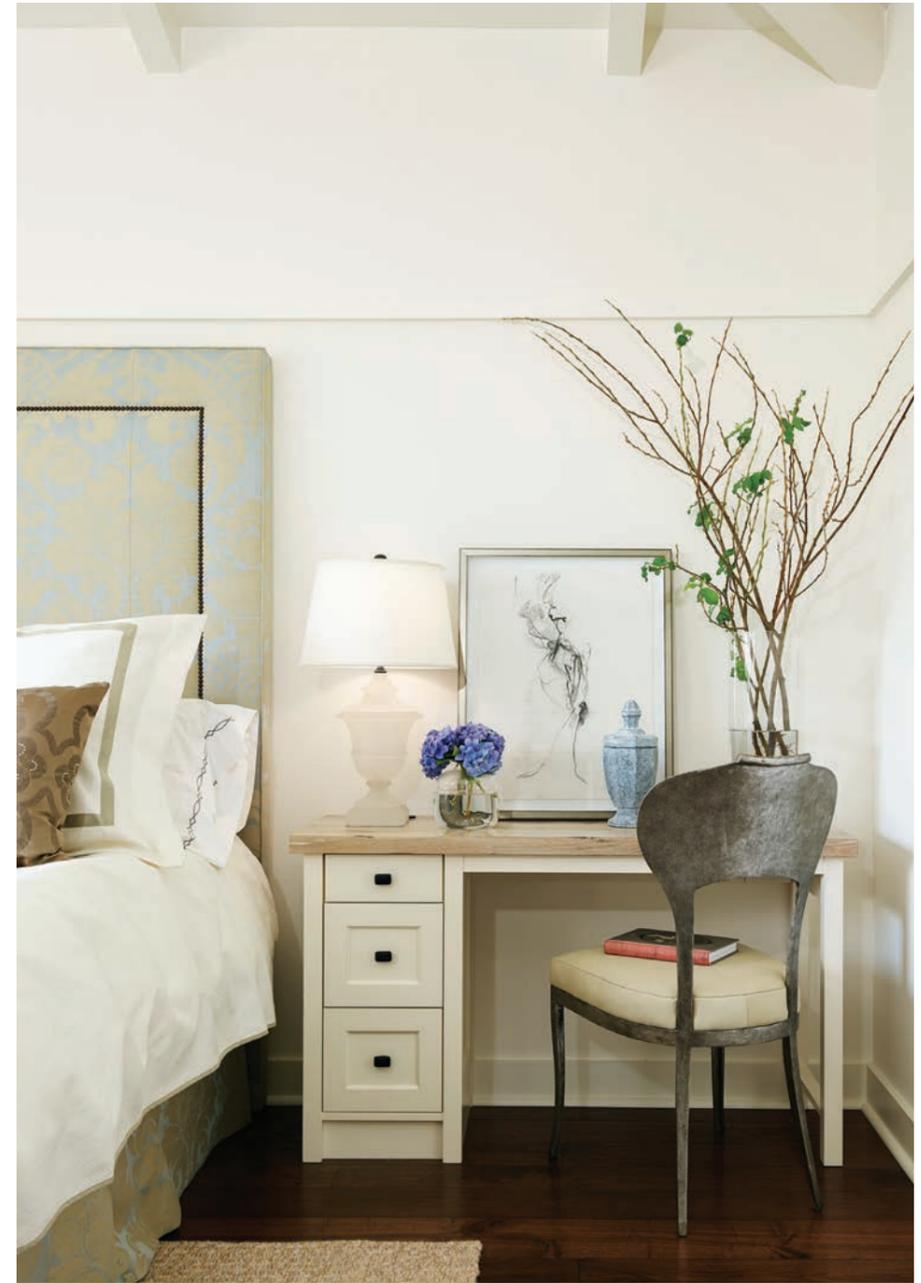


WHEN FIVE STAR GENERAL HAP ARNOLD retired in 1946, he said, "I'm going out to my ranch, in California's Valley of the Moon, and sit under an oak tree." Today Arnold's 35-acre property, known as El Rancho Feliz, enchants another type of general, Disney Music President Chris Montan. Montan and his philanthropist wife Barbara enlisted Jennifer MacDonald of Jennifer Robin Interiors and the architectural firm Wade Design Architects to create a pastoral Sonoma retreat far away from Hollywood's glitter. The team transformed Arnold's dark 2,000 square foot rambler into an airy 4,785 square foot wine country farmhouse.

The couple enjoys entertaining. In the white foyer the host's ebony baby grand Bösendorfer greets guests. A French styled settee upholstered in a bold neutral stripe from Romo gives visitors a place to pause before entering the vaulted great room. MacDonald designed the space with open site lines allowing the Montans to communicate in sign language with their grown sons, one hearing, and the other deaf. A pair of black iron chandeliers delineates the living area from the dining. Gregorious Pineo's Crescent upholstery covered in pale Nobilis linen softens the living room while a pair of



RIGHT In the tranquil master bedroom, MacDonald placed a seating group at the end of the bed. She upholstered the pair of lounge chairs and ottoman from Lee Industries in a pale linen blend from Hodsoll McKenzie.



ABOVE For a bedside table vignette the designer contrasted an abstracted nude in motion by Gina Jacupke with a classically shaped alabaster lamp. She sourced the luxurious bed linens from Leontine Linens.



LEFT In the Master Bath, MacDonald selected a damask wall covering to echo the pattern of the Master Bedroom's headboard and bed skirt. Throughout the home the designer combined European style with country casual. **OPPOSITE** A spacious widow seat allows Mrs. Montan to draw the drapery panel and read at night without disturbing her husband. Over the stone fireplace a pair of black metal sconces flank a gilded circular mirror.

wing chairs in a hand printed fabric adds structure.

MacDonald commissioned Statsky Design to build a rustic racetrack dining table in reclaimed wood. She juxtaposed this by upholstering the outside backs of the dining benches with gaufraged suede from Edelman Leather. The Wicker Works rattan Mendocino dining chairs provide additional seating. Mr. Montan loves to cook when not serenading company. A pair of hanging bell jars illuminates the central kitchen island of Calcutta Gold marble. Perpendicular to this a walnut table serves as a decorative buffet. When not entertaining the couple withdraws to an adjacent morning room with their two Havanese dogs. There a grid patterned area rug from Elizabeth Eakins grounds a sectional sofa upholstered in forgiving outdoor fabric.

Upstairs in the master suite carved alabaster urn lamps cast a warm glow. MacDonald selected sky blue damask from Rogers & Goffigon for the square upholstered headboard and tailored bed skirt while dressing the bed in ivory hand made bed linens. Oly Studio's Beverly side chair in antiqued silver metal adds a sculptural note to the bedside table. In addition to the main house's guest room, the Montans built a 638-foot quest house for friends seeking to escape the madding crowd of Los Angeles for the tranquil peace of Happy Ranch." **CH**

