

# EUROPEAN WARMTH, COLORADO VIEWS

Sophisticated yet comfortable is the mantra of this  
9,000-square-foot Avon home.

BY BETH BUEHLER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID MARLOW

## GRAND ENTRANCE

The main entrance is notable for a Tuscan-style stone facade with a custom-designed front door by Heartwood Custom Woodworks. The exterior decorative lighting is by Paul Ferrante, and Shannon Murphy Landscape Architecture did the iron and stone runnels.



▼  
**GREAT ROOM**

The antique entry stone and French antique wood floors are from Cavendish Grey, Los Angeles. The artwork to the right of the front door is by Christian de Laubadere, and to the left is a Picasso lithograph. The chandeliers are from Paul Ferrante. The area rugs are from Beauvais Carpets, New York. Great Plains fabric covers the Donghia chairs near the entry. The red glass sculpture on the Gregorius I Pineo table is by Dale Chihuly, and the blue glass pieces behind it are by Dante Mariano. The tall cabinet “dry bar” is from Dennis & Leen as is the sofa, covered in Rogers & Goffigon fabric with pillows from Loro Piana. The custom-monogrammed club chairs are by Kathleen Spiegelman, Los Angeles. Behind them, the leather game table and chairs are by Marjorie Shushan, artwork above them is by Ralph Rucci.



**C**arter and Barbara Strauss first envisioned building a log cabin on the Avon vacation property they purchased in 1994, but the couple dramatically changed their minds before finally breaking ground nearly 15 years later. Their main home, located in the panhandle of West Virginia, is modern, and they sought something entirely different for their Colorado getaway.

“We wanted a Tuscan feel with the warmth of wood and stone and incorporated older pieces, such as the powder room sink and fireplace in the living room,” says Barbara, noting they have frequented the Vail Valley since the 1980s.

The Strausses worked closely with Beck Building Company and architects Ned Gwathmey and Scott Lindall, who were then part of what is now GPSL Architects; both companies are based in the Vail Valley. They also hired interior designer Lynni Hutton of Carbondale. Of primary importance to everyone involved was to make sure that nothing about the home conflicted with the amazing views that reach 50 miles. Strategic placement of the 9,000-square-foot residence on the three-acre Mountain Star lot also maximized the natural landscaping and privacy.

A palette of taupe, brown, cream and pale blue runs throughout, and a more dramatic burnt red is incorporated in the kitchen area, which includes a small sitting area with an Alexander Calder painting over the fireplace that delivers a visual pop, as do other original works of art throughout the residence. “It looks like the home features a lifelong collection of items built over years, but they were all purchased new,” Hutton says.

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**WARM HEARTH**

The antique limestone fireplace is Louis XIV from Cavendish Grey, and the wall sconces are by Gregorius I Pineo. The iron basket to the right of the fireplace and the coffee table are by Formations. Draperies are from Carleton V (overdrapes) and Great Plains (sheers). Floor lamps are by Kathleen Spiegelman. The work over the fireplace is a Matisse, and the piece on the far wall is by Ralph Rucci.



#### ◀ A COOK'S KITCHEN

The cabinets are by Cooper Kitchens, Los Angeles, and the pendant lights are from Paul Ferrante. The tile medallion and backsplash are by Walker Zanger, Los Angeles, and the limestone countertops are by Aspen Tile and Stone. The farmhouse sink is by Shaw, and the hammered metal round bar sink is by Link-a-Sink. Fittings are by Waterworks. The fabric for the Roman shades is from Carleton V. Chairs are by Gregorius I Pineo.

An elevator and a stairway graced with an art installation featuring 300 metal butterflies provides access to the lower level, featuring a family room with a kitchen, gym, laundry room and three bedrooms, along with an exquisite 1,200-bottle wine cellar that features intricate patterns of stone, including a herringbone ceiling.

Other key features in the home, Hutton says, are custom interior and exterior light fixtures by Paul Ferrante of Los Angeles and the extensive use of mosaic tiles in the kitchen, on fireplaces and in most bathrooms—with an especially intricate design found in the master bath.

The exquisite woodwork used for doors, trim and crown molding required an eight-step finishing process, and some of the custom cabinetry has an earthy touch of birch bark. Building on a very rocky site also required expert knowledge, especially when excavating for a stainless steel spa on the edge of the back patio and hitting a massive cavity that required 40 yards of slow-fill concrete, Boylan says.

The home's exterior walls are stone veneer with western red cedar trim, complemented by an all-copper roof. All of the stone, inside and out, is reclaimed limestone from Europe.

Although most of the couple's West Virginia neighbors head to Florida or Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, for vacation, the Strausses prefer the Centennial State. "It is a younger and different mind-set in Colorado," Barbara says. "This home will be our primary residence eventually, probably eight months per year. That is what we had in mind when setting out to design it." ✚



#### ▲ POP A CORK

The door to the wine cellar features a custom grill by Geoffrey Newton. Pendant lights are by Paul Ferrante. Antique terra cotta ceiling and floor tiles are by Cavendish Grey.

The first key piece the couple acquired was a marble sink for the main floor powder room that is more than 200 years old and engraved with "Love Conquers All" in Latin. The Louis XIV stone fireplace from France, one of four fireplaces in the house, dates back more than two centuries. It was shipped in 40 pieces and was like a jigsaw puzzle to reconstruct, says Robyn Boylan, who served as project manager for Beck Building Company.

Hutton describes the home as "very eclectic" and a "sophisticated yet comfortable" oasis for the Strauss family, which also includes two grown children and five grandchildren. The main floor is devoted to the living room, a spacious kitchen and pantries, an office and the master suite.

A bridge with a stone arch entrance and pathway of windows is the connecting point to the master suite and provides glimpses of both the front and back yards and any wildlife that ambles by, such as a young bear that Barbara observed cooling off one afternoon in the water element that starts at the front of the house and continues in the back. The water feature helps unify the landscaping designed by Shannon Murphy Landscape Architects in Basalt and creates a peaceful waterfall sound.

## RESOURCES

**Builder:** Beck Building Company, 780 Nottingham Road, Avon, 970.949.1800, beckbuilds.com

**Interiors:** Lynni Hutton Inc., 50 Arlian Road, Carbondale, 970.704.1201

**Architects:** GPSL Architects, P.C., 953 South Frontage Road West, Vail, 970.476.1147, gpslarchitects.com

**Landscape Architect:** Shannon Murphy Landscape Architects, 231 Midland Ave., Basalt, 970.927.2889



### BE OUR GUEST ▲

The guest master features Carpets by Stark. The custom millwork was designed by Lynni Hutton and fabricated by Heartwood Custom Woodworks. Draperies are by Raoul Textiles (overdrapes) and Rogers & Goffigon (sheers). Hutton also reupholstered the clients' existing sofa with Calvin fabrics and a club chair with a textile from Rose Tarlow. The cocktail table and desk chair are from Dennis & Leen. The desk is from Woodland Furniture. The pendant light is from Ironware, and the bedside lamp is from Kathleen Spiegelman. The linens are from Frette.

### SERENE SPACE ►

The custom cabinetry in the master bath was designed by Lynni Hutton and fabricated by Heartwood Custom Woodworks. Wall sconces are from Reborn Antiques, Los Angeles. The antique French chandelier is from Lynni Hutton. The Roman shade fabric is from Loro Piana. The tub is by Waterworks. The custom mosaic flooring is by Country Floors and was installed by Aspen Tile & Stone.





**WATCH FOR WILDLIFE**

On the lower patio, the continuous iron runnels are by Shannon Murphy Landscape Architects. The chaises and the umbrella are from Giati Designs, and the stone bench is by Dessin Fournir.