

# SCENIC RETREAT

*Montana getaway overlooks the Gallatin Valley*



BY DENISE GLASER MALLOY | PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY JACK RANERI



**S**tanding on the deck of Dennis and Anna Woods' home, it is easy to see why they chose this spot to build their Montana getaway. Looking out over the expanse of the Gallatin Valley, the Woods can see five mountain ranges and the river below. "We absolutely fell in love with this property," said Dennis. "It was just the place."

After finding the perfect homesite, which they dubbed the "Lazy W Ranch," the couple began their search for the person who could translate their dream home into a reality. They chose Jack Raneri to design their timeless home. "Jack created a home that works perfectly with the natural landscape," said Dennis. "He did an absolutely fantastic job for us."

But planning a home for this 40-acre site was no easy task. "The trick for this design was to get the home high enough to take advantage of the views," said Raneri. "It needed to have a vertical feel to provide a strong contrast to the landscape."

The result is a stunning 2,500-square-foot home that transcends the ordinary. Gently notched into the hillside, the steep pitched roof of the home accentuates the vertical elements of the design. Cedar shingles and copper accents used in the main house are repeated in the exterior of the bunkhouse, barn, gazebo and sauna by the pond creating a sense of unity. "It was a fun design that combined rustic western elements with what I would characterize as modified Victorian touches," said Raneri. The Woods then added unique touches of whimsy and



The home's walls are colorwashed in subtle colors, creating a feeling of nature throughout. Below, the home is notched into the hillside and is situated to take advantage of the stunning views. On the opening page, large windows in the kitchen add to the home's open feel.







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personality that are a natural for this design.

The decks are one of the show-stopping elements of this home. "Cliff decks" were designed by Raneri to give the illusion of just that, looking out from the edge of a cliff with nothing to obstruct the views. A barbecue and outdoor dining area are just a few steps away. A nearby hot tub is a secluded spot for relaxation while enjoying the breathtaking scenery.

From the deck, French doors lead inside to the living room, which is anchored by a welcoming stone and slate fireplace. In keeping with the vertical design elements of the home, the cathedral ceiling creates a light-filled living area. Oversized windows frame the views and blur the distinction between indoors and out. The Woods chose a rustic western theme for this room with hair-on-hide furnishings, custom pieces of furniture with patina finishes, and a bear skin rug.

The subtle paint colors were colorwashed to create the feeling of nature and the Montana sky. Using earth and pure mineral pigments, artist Loretta Domaszewski layered translucent colors which impart a luminous quality and sense of movement. "My goal was to suggest the essence of nature," she said. "The result is an atmospheric quality and a sculptural feel of the space. The layers of



A few stairs separate the living room and the gourmet kitchen, which with its 12-foot ceilings and walls of windows, is a favorite spot for the owners.



paint filter the light which creates a warm glow with a radiant feel."

The windows used throughout the home pay homage to the expansive scenery, but also artfully integrate light as part of the design. Intrinsically tied to mood, the use of light in this home creates an ambiance that flows with the daily rhythms of nature.

The colorwash hues of the living room are carried into the master bedroom where the illuminated colors suggest the feeling of a sunset. A unique log canopy bed is the focal point of this room. The master bath incorporates tree branches with the graceful lighting around the mirrors of the back-to-back sinks. These thoughtful details, so cleverly incorporated by the Woods, give this home a distinctly personal flair. The slate floors, with etched-in buffalo, continue the rustic ambiance and western feel.

South-facing windows flood the master bath with light and surround the soaker tub for a view that is only rivaled by those from the decks.

On the opposite side of the house and a few steps down from the living room is the gourmet kitchen. With 12-foot ceilings and walls of windows, it is a favorite spot for the Woods.

"The kitchen was designed with entertaining in mind," said Raneri. Knotty hickory cabinets and rustic maple flooring set the tone for an inviting, casual feel. Cabinets and professional grade appliances thoughtfully placed along one wall create an efficient and functional workspace. The island with slate countertops and the nearby walk-in pantry complete this stylish kitchen. A wall of windows opens to the east for spectacular views of the Bridgers. The rawhide and buffalo chandelier over the dining table adds a touch of western whimsy.

Each of the three guest bedrooms has a different theme. Loretta's colorwash painting in each of the rooms evokes a sense of movement, emotion and a touch of western imagery. "The Woods allowed me to take their ideas for each bedroom and express them in ways that best suited the space," she said.



The owners' decorating style adds to the home's sense of western imagery.

The home is designed so that the guest bedrooms are all on different levels not only for privacy but for thoughtful use of square footage.

"There aren't any halls for economy of space," said Raneri. The plans included the use of slate, hickory and wire-brushed doors to maintain the rustic feel throughout the home. "I like a house where the interior elements remain consistent," he said. "Hand troweled walls were also used throughout."

A theatre room is centrally located where the family and guests can gather in comfort.

Exterior design elements blend the outbuildings beautifully with the main house. The nearby bunkhouse is comfortable spot for guests. With a full east-facing covered porch, guests are treated to breathtaking

**Scenic Retreat** morning views of sunrise over the Bridgers. The barn, corral and pastures provide their horses plenty of room to roam.

The Woods particularly enjoy the serenity of the pond. With a sauna house and a deck that extends over the water, it is a tranquil spot. A floating horse sculpture was custom designed for display in the center of the pond. "It's a full-sized horse," said Dennis. "We had to get a raft and float it out there. We just love it."

An enclosed gazebo with a bar and French doors that open to the pond are yet another outdoor spot to relax and enjoy the pond and the scenery.

The Woods look forward to the time they spend at their scenic and peaceful retreat overlooking the valley. "Wherever you look, it's pretty," said Dennis. "The views of the mountains and the valley are just incredible." 📍

*Denise Glaser Malloy is At Home's managing editor.*



A sauna house, complete with deck, provides a tranquil space to enjoy a pond on the property.