

at home

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Simply Beautiful

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reflects an easy,
outdoor lifestyle

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Contemporary home reflects easy, outdoor lifestyle

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY
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If you're going to move to a brand new style of life, sometimes you need a brand new style of home. Roger and Joan, an Ohio couple, were ready to relocate to Bozeman to be close to their children and grandchildren. They were already enjoying summers here, in a small cabin on land they owned east of town.

When they began to think about building a larger home on the property, they realized they wanted something very different than the 100-year-old Tudor house they were leaving behind in the Midwest. "We wanted something easier to take care of, so we could spend time outdoors," said Joan.

They also wanted something that would take full advantage of the surroundings. "There's nothing prettier in Montana than the landscape," said Joan, "so we wanted something with pretty much 360-degree views."



Two-story windows fill the living room with natural light and provide sweeping views of the scenic landscape.



With these ideas in mind, Roger and Joan turned to architect Brendon Beyers, of Westering Design. "We liked his philosophy of a house that would blend into the landscape, rather than stand out," Joan explained.

They sent Brendon a two-page description of their general vision and goals for the house, but allowed him a lot of latitude for specific design decisions. "They gave me the best gift a client can give," said Brendon, "a lot of freedom."

The completed home is an angular, contemporary design that nonetheless fits perfectly

Artfully placed, oversized windows give a light and airy feel to the dining room.

Simply Beautiful into the remote, wild setting. The low pitch roof lines seem to grow out of the hillsides, and the colors and textures of the cedar siding and cultured stone exterior blend with the natural surroundings.

The landscaping around the house further complements the location. Working with Steven Wagner of Land-Escapes, Inc., the owners chose a variety of native plants that were also low maintenance. "One of our requirements was that we didn't have to own a lawn mower," joked Roger.

Visitors approach the 3,100-square-foot house from below, on a stairway of large, sandstone slabs from Harlowton. The front entrance foyer is also on a lower level than the rest of the house, and provides the first peek upward of what lies ahead. "I like to do houses where you come in low," said Brendon. "It's a nice, subtle way to transition between levels."

Climbing up to the main level, visitors' eyes are drawn to the floor-to-ceiling windows in the corner of the living room. "With that little bit of rise, the Bridgers pop back into view," Brendon noted.

The other focal point in the living room is the large soapstone,

Fused glass panels in the master bath add subtle color and maintain privacy. At right, a transom in fused glass above the master bedroom entry softly diffuses the light.





Tulikivi fireplace, which the owners soon found to be energy efficient. "It's not only aesthetic, it works a lot better than I had hoped," said Roger. "One fire in the morning heats the house all day."

The fireplace helps divide the main floor living areas, separating the living room, dining room and kitchen. "I like the way Brendon broke the spaces up," said Joan. "He created nice, intimate spaces."

In the dining room, the cozy atmosphere also comes from the long window seats along two walls. Built-in furniture is a recurring theme throughout the house. "We wanted a house that didn't need a lot of furniture — not a lot of clutter or things to care for," said Joan.

Some of the most unique built-ins are in the kitchen. Flower boxes are artfully placed within the countertops. The desk has a beautiful eucalyptus wood top, as do the benches of the kitchen table, which were integrated into a nook area.

With minimal furniture, much of the personality of the home comes from the couple's colorful and eclectic art collection, which ranges from hand-painted Spanish plates, to Japanese wood block prints, to a large animal totem created by students at Longfellow Elementary, where their grandchildren go to school. "With kids around, it's nice to have some things around that are whimsical and fun," said Joan.

A loft area overlooking the main floor provides a unique work space for Roger. "One of my requests was an office from which you could see in at least three

The streamlined kitchen is enhanced by the built-in breakfast nook and writing desk.

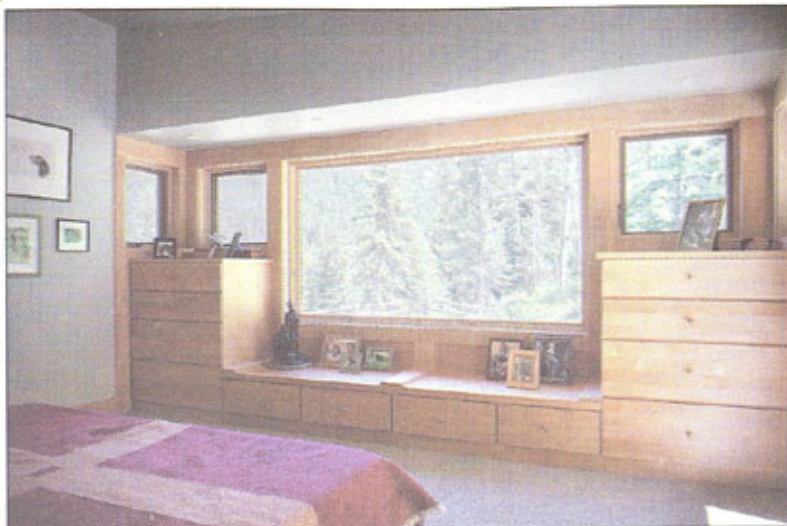
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directions," he said. Rows of windows along the ceiling lines provide several lovely views, and for a true panorama he can sneak out to the attached private deck. "From there, you can often watch elk on the hills," said Joan.

Views were also a primary consideration for the bedrooms. In the master bedroom, the custom wooden bed was constructed to face a large picture window looking to the east. "At sunset, the red light is reflected down off the mountains," said Joan. "Then in the evening the moon will rise right into our view." Roger agreed, adding that it is a favorite spot "to watch the phases of the moon."

The simple, free-standing tub in the master bath sits in front of its own large window — with no window coverings.

Built-ins maintain the seamless flow of this modern home.



"To me, it would defeat the purpose of having lovely views," laughed Joan. There is even a window within the shower, placed to brighten the bathroom with natural light every morning.

To reach the guest bedroom area, visitors descend a split-level staircase with an oversized window and window seat at the midpoint landing. "I like to think of stairways as another room," said Brendon. Apparently, Joan's grandchildren agree with him. "The kids like to take their toys there and play," she said. "The bench makes a great play table."

The lower level includes a guest bedroom and an adjoining sitting room that can convert to a sleeping space for additional visitors. Both rooms have lots of windows and higher than average ceilings, so that — as Brendon said — "it wouldn't feel like a basement." Eight-foot French doors offer access to private patios, and of course, more of those wonderful perspectives toward the landscape. "Everywhere you go in the house there are pretty views," said Joan. "It's fun to wander around the house and look for them."

Roger and Joan expect to explore their home and make fresh, delightful discoveries about it for years to come. "We've been in the house for over a year," Joan added, "and it still holds that enchantment for us." 📍

Carla Little is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to At Home.