

A large, rustic living room with a stone fireplace, wooden beams, and a chandelier. The room features a high ceiling with exposed wooden rafters and a large stone fireplace with a wooden mantel. A chandelier hangs from the ceiling, and a wooden coffee table sits in front of a brown sofa. The room is filled with warm, natural wood tones and stone accents.

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WOODSY WELCOME

The great room houses multiple varieties of wood, from hickory floors to architecturally inspired arched redwood logs that comprise the frame of the room.

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KITCHEN COMFORTS

An open kitchen design is punctuated by a massive granite island featuring distressed, aged edges to add to the home's Old Tahoe feel.

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WHEN A HOME IS SITUATED ON SHORELINE within mere footsteps of North America's largest alpine lake, a potential design danger looms: The impact of the home's interior may be lost to the majesty of the outside view.

"But what we strived to accomplish is the perfect complement to Lake Tahoe," says Marcio Decker, lead decorator for the home located on Tahoe's West Shore in Tahoe City. Decker and his partner, Betty Scott, both of Aspen Leaf Interiors, sought to balance the stunning view with a warm and welcoming ambience.

The duo was dedicated to authentically reflecting the owners' overarching goal: to create the look and feel of an Old Tahoe lodge, one that had been around for nearly a century, but featuring plush and high-end amenities.

This was a difficult task to be sure, considering the designers were brought in on the project at groundbreaking (and were not, in fact, designing a home that had been around since the turn of the 20th century) and spent nearly 15 months conducting weekly site visits and meetings with the owners and contractors.

"We watched the house coming up," Decker says. "This has been one of the most intriguing and complex jobs we've worked on to date."

Playfully dubbed Laughing Bear Lodge, the vacation home encompasses more than 5,000 square feet of space with four bedrooms, 4.5 baths and a guest house. The home's log exterior prepares guests for the rustic interior, which is bathed in jewel tones, warm wood accents, and ample windows to frame the jaw-dropping view just beyond the far wall.

"It's like you're on a boat when you're in the great room — the lake is that close," Scott says.

"So our challenge," Decker adds, "was how to make a home that is so exposed to the outdoors, so well placed with this amazing lake view, into a gorgeous, comfortable home, without taking away from the setting."

The centerpiece of the home is the great room, an almost smoky retreat

accented in rich leather, deep hues and an expansive granite fireplace.

"The huge weight of the fireplace contrasts beautifully with the lake view," Decker says. "It's a very traditional setting with lots of collectibles from the 1900s and meaningful pieces throughout."

Decker notes that the owners wanted to pay homage to the many heirlooms they've collected over the years and those that had been passed down from other generations. They also

worked to incorporate the owner's passion for Native American elements, incorporating arrows into the ironwork of the balcony, for example, as a subtle nod to Western influences.

Adjacent to the great room is the versatile and accommodating kitchen, featuring playful elements like asymmetrical cabinetry and a mug cabinet housing mismatched mugs. "But everything feels very intentional," Scott adds, "like how the pounded copper hood echoes the 1900s pendant over the island."

One wing of the home is devoted to the master suite, another space with sweeping views of Tahoe just beyond a wall of glass, wood and luxurious draperies. Clean tones of blue and sage trickle into this space, seemingly flowing from the outdoors in. However, the subtle transition from majestic exterior to comfortable



THE GREAT ESCAPE

A fireplace and reading area make this part of the master suite, which overlooks the dazzling lake beyond, feel like a perfect retreat.

BRINGING THE OUTDOORS IN

Privacy inspired the master bathroom's etched glass, but the feature became a design hallmark of the space.



SUNKEN TREASURE

Two different shades of blue accent the master bath — a deeper shade surrounding the sunken tub — allowing the eye to follow the subtle flow between spaces.



interior also created the greatest challenge for Decker and Scott.

"When you're standing in the shower, essentially you can be seen from the beach," Decker said. "Etched glass provided a perfect privacy solution."

Pine trees are etched into the glass window in the shower, while the outdoorsy theme carries through to other glass surfaces within the master bath. As light reflects on a pair of sliding doors adjacent to the shower space, the observer can almost sense quaking leaves on etched aspens.

"It's such a beautiful, natural space," Scott says, adding that the space and setting inspired the choice of materials. "Rich Sapele wood cabinetry with alder inlay and trim work, coupled with walnut stained redwood ceilings and softly stained pine log beams, hint to the Old Tahoe architecture as the home appears from the exterior."

The sum of all pieces, both designers affirm, offers their clients a rustic getaway perched atop one of Lake Tahoe's most scenic pieces of shoreline.

"Our clients built this vacation home with a flair that gives every guest the feeling that it's been standing for generations," Scott says. "Everything works together to create a cohesive style that is authentic, yet modern."



MIRROR, MIRROR

A ribbon of etched glass frames mirrors in the master bath, adding a sense of depth to the space.

Designer Q&A:

MARCIO DECKER AND BETTY SCOTT
 ASPEN LEAF INTERIORS

Q: For those looking to accomplish a mountain/rustic look/feel, what is an interior design suggestion?

A: Betty Scott: Select materials that have a natural, organic feel, like raw woods and natural stone, as well as hand-forged irons and distressed materials.

Q: What was your favorite material/element to work with in this featured home?

A: Marcio Decker: This home's proximity to Lake Tahoe's water edge is spectacular, unique, and inspirational. Integrating the home to its natural settings was phenomenal.

Q: What are some design tips you'd offer to someone trying to frame a view?

A: Betty Scott: When the view is one of the main focal elements in a space, often framing it in deep, dark colors helps draw your eye to the outdoors. This can be done easily with paint or draperies.

Q: At what point in life did you know you wanted to be a designer, and what inspired this knowledge?

A: Marcio Decker: I had an early start. My favorite game to play as a child was to plan my parent's house remodel and present my ideas to them. Also rearranging the furniture for the holidays with my mother was my assignment. I have always been creative and loved art, design, and architecture.

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