

INTO *the* WOODS

A RURAL PROPERTY WITH TOWERING OAKS INSPIRES
A STYLISH FAMILY HOME IN WOODSIDE.

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“THE HOME’S TRANSPARENCY AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND REFLECTS THE SITE’S EXPANSIVENESS.”

—MIKE MCCABE

Turning off a busy road in Woodside, a pair of house hunters drove over a bridge spanning a creek and discovered themselves a world away in a rural setting dotted with majestic oak trees. They were immediately enchanted and, as the husband says, “We felt like we were entering our own peaceful retreat, leaving the Silicon Valley hustle and bustle behind.” The decision to purchase the property and build a new home was an easy one.

With a 3-year-old son and twins on the way, they envisioned a casual, functional dwelling that met their growing family’s needs while allowing for entertaining on a large scale (their guest list for summer dinner parties can stretch to 150). They hired designer David Oldroyd and the team at Walker Warner Architects to create a fresh, modern home incorporating living spaces with the peaceful setting to offer seamless indoor-outdoor connections.

While the home’s clean lines and a restrained material palette of cedar, metal and concrete gracefully weave the new house to its site, its sloped roof references the property’s past life as a farm. “This is horse country, and we wanted the new home to look like it belonged here,” the husband says. “It’s a modern take on a farmhouse.”

The home is organized into public and private zones, with everyday living spaces easing into one another. “The back entry brings the family into the mudroom and the heart of the home—their home offices, the kitchen and the family room—which are adjacent to the pool and terrace,” says architect Mike McCabe. Meanwhile, the formal entry flows past an open staircase to the glass-lined dining area and living room. Upstairs is home to a family room and bedrooms, while the light-filled lower level is a “fun zone” with a rec room, playroom and bar. “The private parts of the house are about retreat

and family time, while the public parts allow the family to mingle with their guests and enjoy all the site has to offer,” McCabe explains. “The intent was to provide a home that lives small day to day for the family, but can expand to accommodate bigger gatherings.”

Designer David Oldroyd played with the architectural forms, at times choosing furniture and accessories to mimic the home’s crisp lines while also bringing in more organic shapes as a counterpoint. “Almost every piece of furniture has an angle or slope,” he says. “But more natural shapes—such as the curvy chair legs or pebble-shaped poufs—bring in some softness.” While the couple appreciates beautiful furnishings and textiles, livability was key. “I wanted our friends to come over and help themselves to the fridge and not feel uncomfortable putting their feet up on the sofa,” the wife says.

The home was designed with active kids in mind. To illustrate the point, the couple told the designer about a Tahoe vacation with friends where all of the children ended up in one room for a movie night. “Afterward, it looked as if a bunch of 4- to 6-year-olds had a wild party—furniture was overturned and juice boxes were strewn everywhere,” the wife remembers. She provided photos of the aftermath to Oldroyd to demonstrate what furniture might need to endure. His response, “I grew up in a family of five boys—I can do this!” He met the challenge with durable fabrics, such as wipeable vinyl upholstery on kitchen barstools.

When choosing colors, Oldroyd looked to the landscape. “The palette is inspired by what you see through the windows: earth tones, green grass and blue sky,” he says. At the wife’s request, bolder color pops were incorporated. “She likes lavender, and there’s lavender in the garden, so we brought that hue inside,” Oldroyd says. “The dining room chairs also have a lavender shade in them, as do the poufs in the entry. The shocking green banquette was a direct response to her request for color.”

The property borders an open preserve, so landscape designer Bernard Trainor gently transitioned the manmade garden into the natural surroundings to trick the eye, making the property appear to go on forever. As with the architecture, Trainor’s approach to design was to deftly “thread the needle” between the oaks. “Closer to the house, the hardscape and plantings reflect the house’s architectural shapes—more linear,” he says. “As you move farther away, into the oak woodland, they get wilder.”

Today, the family appreciates the quiet and convivial moments of magic the home and its setting offer. “When the sun streams through the windows, you’re wrapped in light that’s filtered by the surrounding oaks,” Oldroyd says. The wife adds, “The house works for both kids and adult gatherings—we just had 60 fifth graders in our pool and for my husband’s birthday, we had six couples over for a nice dinner. Our vision came to be.” ■

A daybed designed by David Oldroyd and fabricated by Julian Giuntoli Custom Furniture offers views of the landscape. The Suora floor lamp, designed by Carlo Molino in 1947, has whimsical lines that balance the strong architecture. The solid oak sculptures, from Kaspar Hamacher’s Monolith Series, are from Almond & Co.



The spacious living room demonstrates how the outdoors are very present inside this house. While the vintage lamps reflect the hue of a boxwood hedge in the yard, the mostly neutral color palette lets the views of nature shine. The vintage armchairs are by Philip Arctander and the wool area rug is by House of Tai Ping.





Above: In the dining room, Oldroyd designed a walnut credenza topped by an aubergine-colored lava stone with Julian Giuntoli Custom Furniture. It displays a collection of earthy ceramic vessels. The sepia-toned artwork, *Seascape 1* by Lee Seung Ha, is from Alexandre Gallery in New York City.

Right: Slatted sliding doors in the dining room control the light while making a design statement. The steel-framed pieces are crafted by Arc Wood & Timbers. A glass globe chandelier by Lindsey Adelman adds a sculptural element, and soft-gray Geiger chairs from CRI strike a softer note.





Opposite: The custom, lime-colored banquette brightens the breakfast nook in the kitchen. Durability is important in this family, so Architex vinyl fabric was selected for the seat. Inspired by the architecture, Oldroyd designed the table with an angular base.

Below: Oldroyd added a slatted, white-oak screen to define the entry and the living room. The cross-cut, elm-wood coffee table, designed by Oldroyd and crafted by MRCW, adds an organic element to the living room.



“THE PALETTE IS INSPIRED BY WHAT
YOU SEE THROUGH THE WINDOWS.”
—DAVID OLDROYD

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To differentiate the master bedroom from the rest of the house, the designer upholstered the walls in a sky blue linen fabric by Custom Weave. The lounge chair is by Craft Associates and the vintage Oushak rug is from Stark. The art, *Kiruna #2*, is by Ronnie Genotti.



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In the master bathroom, a freestanding Sabbia Boffi tub seems to float in the treetops thanks to floor-to-ceiling windows. The custom cabinetry is by Charles Marpet Fine Woodworks. The walls are clad in veined travertine from ABC Stone in Brooklyn.