

Tucked into a forest of trees near Lake Tahoe, this modern mountain farmhouse features dark brown wood siding and a black, standing-seam metal roof. Despite its size, the house seems to disappear into its setting. Architect Clare Walton designed it that way, allowing the home to live large in terms of square footage but also to maintain a quiet presence on the mountainside, thanks to dramatic walls of windows that lend a sense of transparency—and reflection.



NATURE MADE

A MOUNTAIN HOUSE IN LAKE TAHOE PRACTICALLY
DISAPPEARS INTO THE WOODED LANDSCAPE THAT
INSPIRED EVERY DESIGN DETAIL INSIDE.

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OPPOSITE AND ABOVE The client envisioned the great-room space—a long, narrow room with soaring 20-foot ceilings and 15-foot window walls—as a combo library and living room. To outfit the large space, designer Matt O’Dorisio created a custom bookshelf that wraps around the sofa and becomes its side tables. “This is the first room that you see when you walk into the house, and we didn’t want to look at the back of a big sofa,” he says. “The bookshelves solved that for us.” Everything sits comfortably on a large Swedish rug whose palette ties together the rest of the space. “We went with a lot of plaids and stripes in here, but it doesn’t feel too noisy. It just feels layered,” O’Dorisio says. **LEFT** “The exterior soffits extend inside as the interior ceilings,” O’Dorisio says. “Everything inside the house talks to the outside of the house, so there is a seamless connection between the two.” A swinging daybed beside the front door relaxes the grandeur of the architecture and gives a welcoming first impression.

“QUIET” WAS THE WORD THAT REVERBERATED IN ARCHITECT CLARE WALTON’S MIND

when she was drawing the plans for this family home near Lake Tahoe, California. Set on a rocky hillside studded with massive pines, the structure is large in scale but seems to disappear into the very landscape that inspired its design. And that’s just the way Walton imagined it.

“The goal was to create a quiet form of architecture that blends into the environment,” says Walton, who designed the home in three distinct sections—one for the public spaces, one for the private sleeping quarters, and one for the home office and garage. “Each section of the house is oriented toward a different view, and the great-room wing and the sleeping wing are connected by a bridge that celebrates the character of the sloping terrain beneath it,” she says.



ABOVE One of O’Dorisio’s favorite rooms in the house is the kitchen. “The first thing we found for the space was this incredible piece of naturally occurring quartzite that was dark charcoal gray with white veining for the counters,” he says. “We paired it with lighter wood for the tongue-and-groove cabinets and a dark navy fireclay tile for the entire backsplash wall.” The steel hood was finished to look like bronze. **BELOW** O’Dorisio designed an open shelf in the same quartzite to extend across the tile and pass-through, which opens to the terrace’s grilling area. **OPPOSITE** To create a sense of intimacy in the voluminous kitchen, architect Clare Walton designed a breakfast nook defined by a lower ceiling and windows on three sides. A table by Nickey Kehoe tucks into the banquette; the cushions wear a Peter Dunham fabric protected with vinyl since the family has small children. Tailored Roman shades introduce a pattern that further sets apart the space.



The terrain certainly inspired the building materials: Western red cedar siding stained a dark charcoal brown echoes the pine tree trunks; a stone chimney nods to nearby boulders; and plenty of glass lets in all the tree views. “The clients were interested in a farmhouse aesthetic, but one that felt modern and appropriate for the mountain setting,” Walton says. Designer Matt O’Dorisio worked closely with Walton to outfit every space with its setting in mind, starting with a forest-inspired palette of deep blues, forest greens, warm neutrals, and accents of aubergine. “The clients wanted the interiors to fit into the setting, but they wanted a subtle version of mountainy,” O’Dorisio says. “So rather than go super dark inside, we opted for lighter reclaimed wood for the walls, floors, and furnishings.” He grounded lighter elements with darker ones like the charcoal gray quartzite counters in the kitchen, or the dark green fireclay tiles in the primary bath. “It was a balancing act, marrying the darker elements in the house with lighter ones, but I think we got it just right,” he says. “I’m most proud of the cohesiveness of this house. I feel like every space has its own personality, but the rooms all speak to each other—and to the landscape too.”

Architect Clare Walton Interior Designer Matt O’Dorisio



defining the style
**SWEDISH
MOUNTAIN
AESTHETIC**

Designer Matt O'Dorisio gets the look by combining light wood finishes on modern or sculptural furnishings. Pair those forms with darker stones and plush fabrics for a perfect modern + rustic harmony.



OPPOSITE Separated from the kitchen by a shiplap-covered partition, the dining room features a long trestle table and bleached-wood ladder-back chairs. "The house has plenty of dark moments, so we used a lot of blonde wood furniture wherever we could to lighten it up," says O'Dorisio, who aimed for a subtle, Swedish mountain aesthetic for the home. **LEFT** Walton added a fun moment on the stairs that lead to the home office when she designed a custom bookshelf in the wall just above the railing. **ABOVE** There is nothing sterile about the home office, which has a cozy vibe thanks to a fuzzy wool rug and paneling across the walls and ceiling. O'Dorisio designed a window seat cushion that runs the length of the window, which he dressed in curtains made from a favorite Zak+Fox fabric.

• THE PERFECT PANEL •

WALL TREATMENTS CAN ADD A LAYER OF ALL-IMPORTANT TEXTURE. HERE'S A RUNDOWN OF POPULAR OPTIONS:

SHIPLAP

These wide, often horizontal planks are laid with thin rabbets, or channels, in between. Shiplap can fit rustic or contemporary spaces, making it the modern farmhouse style standard-bearer.

BOARD-AND-BATTEN

Wide boards usually hung vertically with thin strips, or battens, over the seams give an extra dose of texture. Frequently used indoors to add the illusion of extra height, board-and-batten is also found outside to boost curb appeal. It can read a little more "country" than shiplap.

BEADED BOARD

For a slightly sweeter country or cottage style, go with beaded board—narrow vertical strips separated by thin beads. It can cover a full wall or is commonly used as wainscoting, paneling on just the lower portion of a wall.

REEDED SLAT WALL

Another vertical option, these narrow planks of wood are hung with small gaps between. Inspired by Art Deco styling, the effect is decidedly modern. Look for this on furnishings and accent walls.



THIS PAGE O'Dorisio used the same fireclay tile in the primary bath as in the kitchen—this time in a deep green with a brighter grout. He chose travertine for the vanity and a textural triangle tile for the floor. An architectural bump-out with a window seat creates extra storage and a snug lounge within the larger, light-filled room. **OPPOSITE** The carpet was the starting point for the primary bedroom. “The pattern has this mountainy quality to it, but it was light,” says O'Dorisio, who wanted the primary bedroom to have an ethereal feel. He chose a gray-green paint (Galveston Gray by Benjamin Moore) for the board-and-batten walls and upholstered the bed in a super-soft wool and cashmere plaid fabric. “My clients really like plaid as a pattern. It’s timeless and layers well with other patterns too,” O'Dorisio says.





ABOVE Built-in bunk beds include trundles, so the boys' room can sleep a crowd. A plaid gray wall-to-wall carpet softens the space, as do walls upholstered in a hunter green herringbone fabric by Phillip Jeffries. "It is the coziest, most wonderful space," says O'Dorisio, who opted to paint the window trim in this room dark green instead of staining it. **OPPOSITE TOP** The daughter's bedroom features two full-size beds upholstered in a stripe fabric that inspired the rest of the room's design. With its subdued pinks and purples, the pattern was something "she could grow into," O'Dorisio says. The grass cloth-covered chest with nailhead trim adds texture, as does the rope chandelier. **OPPOSITE BOTTOM** Another bathroom repeats many of the same materials as the primary bath. An extra-thick veined countertop is the centerpiece.

