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MOUNTAIN HOME AWARDS

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A Martis Camp home strikes a balance between alpine and industrial

Written by Vangela Wightman • Photography by Vance Fox

Roughly 2,740 miles separate tiny Davis Creek, California, from New York City. One is a global center for the world's finance, fashion and artistic endeavors. The other has a population "of at least 100" per Wikipedia. The Northern California hamlet is also the home of ranch buildings serving alpine meadows pocketed among stands of trees. But somewhere between the physical and conceptual offerings of these vastly different environments came part of the answer to the question: *How do you put a warehouse in the mountains?*



The directive from a young, artful family (who prefers anonymity) to architect Clare Walton was to design their Martis Camp home to have an urban loft aesthetic. “We wanted something with a lot of character that felt like it had been there a long time,” says the owner, a professional living full time in Davis with his wife and twin ten-year-old sons. “Our vision was a loft conversion that looks like you’d find it in the meat-packing district of a big city.” Answering the warehouse-in-the-mountains question became central to the design.

Wood and metal saturated with decades of sun, weather and history bring the essence of time to their new locale.

Using reclaimed materials framed an easy gateway to achieving the goal. Wood and metal saturated with decades of sun, weather and history bring the essence of time to their new locale and the intangible qualities fused in old materials give a sense of richness to the structure that is difficult to achieve with fresh, new finishes.

In the process of sourcing reclaimed materials, general con-



PREVIOUS SPREAD: With foldaway doors and an expansive deck, this Martis Camp warehouse-inspired home truly celebrates indoor-outdoor living. **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Mountain design meets NYC loft with chic animal prints and an industrial feel | Red brick from a warehouse in St. Louis was re-used throughout the house to lend an industrial feel | On the exterior, wood reclaimed from a Northern California barn blends with rustic materials like rusted COR-TEN steel for a chic look. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Pivot windows in the dining room invite fresh air in.



THIS PAGE: Steel details accent the garage. **OPPOSITE PAGE, FROM TOP:** An outdoor dining area is adjacent to a board-formed concrete-surrounded fireplace for chilly nights | Parts of two barns were used for the exterior wood.



tractor Seamus Gallagher ran across three agricultural buildings in Davis Creek slated to be dismantled due to insurance issues. Sitting on a 26,000-acre ranch at California's very northern edge, the buildings were typical utilitarian structures—timber construction, wood siding, corrugated metal roofing. One of the sheds functioned as an apple stand offering fresh fruit to Highway 395 travelers.

Wood reclaimed from these buildings now serves as interior and exterior siding, trim and decking. Timbers that kept the ranch structures vertical for decades were milled into planks and now rest as warm, character-rich flooring. Old corrugated metal, complete with rusty patches and dents, found multiple uses including as interior and exterior soffit material. The result is an open, airy great room space that exudes 'urban loft.'

Also salvaged for reuse, red brick originally from a St. Louis

warehouse was strategically re-laid among a collage of reclaimed wood and steel, exposed structure, board-formed concrete and massive walls of glass. This rough and ready palette is juxtaposed with patterned fabrics, contrasting textures and rich, sophisticated finishes including Venetian plaster and zinc cladding, creating the time-laden, funky vibe the owners were seeking.

The signature gridded windows (96 to be exact, per Gallagher) in the lofty living and dining areas are steel frames sourced from New York company Hope's Windows and were glazed on-site after installation. "The windows create a style in the space with more of an industrial feel and with the rest of the finishes and furnishings, it creates an industrial chic," says Jennifer Loving. A Chicago native with a degree in interior architecture, Loving has been part of Walton's team since 2008 and headed up the interiors on the project. "The windows have a huge impact in creating

The windows create a style in the space with more of an industrial feel and with the rest of the finishes and furnishings, it creates an industrial chic. -Jennifer Loving

the urban warehouse appearance.”

A major component of the home’s success beyond the unmistakable loft-esque personality is the partially covered courtyard space created between the two main building forms. “It’s the heart of the house,” offers Walton. Use of the same salvaged and utilitarian materials throughout the project blend the courtyard seamlessly with the home’s interior. “It’s a really special space,” says Walton. “You get so much privacy and the house lives much larger than it really is.”

Gallagher refers to the courtyard as a “total home run” and lauded its application as a brilliant way to solve the challenges of a constrained, tightly packed building envelope. Building in the Tahoe/Truckee area since 2003 (with 27 projects in Martis Camp alone), Gallagher built the owner’s previous Martis Camp home and refers to the family as some of his favorite clients. “They are very particular, in the best possible way,” says Gallagher. “Their enthusiasm for the details and genuine appreciation of the results made the

whole experience really fun.”

The homeowner is clearly thrilled with the outcome, offering unabashed kudos in the successful achievement of the family’s very specific vision. “The quality of work and talent of the entire team is unbelievable,” he says. “They treated the project like it was their own. Clare and Seamus are world class.”

It turns out that in the hands of a committed design and construction team, spurred on by creative and adventuresome clients, all you really need is a few old barns and an apple stand to successfully transplant a warehouse into an alpine environment. **10**

