

LAKESIDE STANCE

A NORTH GEORGIA MOUNTAIN HOME, BY DESIGNER JESSICA DAVIS AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNER RODOLFO CASTRO, MARRIES COMFORT AND SOPHISTICATION.

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Architecture: Rodolfo Castro, Castro Design Studio, LLC
Interior Design: Jessica Davis, Atelier Davis
Home Builder: Chad Muilenburg, Kasteel Custom Homes, LLC

Getting to know the North Georgia mountain retreat of designer Jessica Davis’ clients is a journey of discovery. With only its garage visible from the street, the house begins to gradually reveal itself down a sloped driveway, giving the initial impression of a one-story residence. Only once inside

does one see the abode for what it really is: an expansive two-story home with its primary living spaces located in the basement, looking out onto a lake.

The dwelling’s unusual layout was the brainchild of its owners, an Atlanta couple who had a clear vision of what they wanted prior to engaging Davis, architectural designer Rodolfo Castro and general contractor Chad Muilenburg to bring their idea to life. First, the structure had to be big enough to accommodate the couple’s immediate family, which includes two children, as well as visiting relatives. “My husband and I both come from large families,” the wife says, “so we wanted this to be the site of family reunions.”

Challenges presented by the property’s steep grade from the street down to the planned lakeside pool required careful consideration. To enjoy the pool and the lake meant adding a lower level to the house, but the wife was adamant about avoiding the hassle of redundant living spaces spread across multiple levels. “I told my husband and Rodolfo that I did not want the maintenance of two kitchens on different floors”—hence the idea of combining living, dining and cooking spaces into one large great room downstairs. The top floor, meanwhile, is largely dedicated to an airy, spacious entrance as well as some of the residence’s seven bedrooms. “It’s an upside-down house,” Castro adds with a laugh.

Although the home’s size is expansive, its material footprint is rather small—primarily stone, textured wood, metal and glass,

including a double-height expanse at the back of the structure that modernizes its appearance. “We were trying to bring some contemporary flavor to the idea of what a mountain house is supposed to be, so we made the outside rustic yet modern,” Castro says. Davis tailored her design accordingly. “We played with those exterior materials, bringing them into the interior,” she explains. “That’s where we started.” Take the great room, for example. Stone walls that bookend the room hew to the surrounding land, much like the natural woodwork that clads the ceiling and encompasses the recessed kitchen, which Davis describes as a “box within a box.” Even so, the cook space looks polished, courtesy of sleek quartzite slabs that cascade across dual islands and backdrop the area. “The stone is highly veined and natural, but it is still architectural and refined,” the designer notes. “We wanted it to feel modern and clean rather than overly rustic.”

The bathrooms, all eight of them, also diverge from the mountain norm. This is especially true of the primary bath, which is a knockout. A sleek black tub, framed by windows, and multiple vanities create a “luxury hotel moment.” But the real showstopper, Davis believes, is the lavishly marbled shower that could rival any found in a five-star retreat.

While the family may not be roughing it, they are certainly not missing the earthy touches that reflect the woodland setting. Deep green hues, pulled from the property’s trees, are a color theme throughout the residence, particularly in the bedrooms, where it acts as a comforting embrace. Shearling-like fabrics also radiate cozy warmth, but in their neutral colors, they feel good year-round.

Castro applauds his clients’ willingness to turn the idea of alpine living on its head. “This is not what you think a mountain house is going to look like, but it feels perfect. It’s not your grandparents’ mountain cabin.” ■

Opposite: Both kitchen islands are finished in quartzite from Marmi Natural Stone, which also supplied the room’s honed-stone flooring. A row of Grazia pendants by Four Hands illuminates the walnut finishes and millwork fabricated by Imperial Woodworking.

Previous page: Shearling swivel chairs and a coffee table, all by Four Hands, create a spot in the great room perfect for lounging or playing games. The dining area—opposed by a stacked-stone wall finish—is complete with Poliform’s Home Hotel table and leather chairs from Garza Marfa.





In the great room, the fireplace zone features Minotti's Horizonte sectional, a sling chair from Dixon Rye and CB2's sheepskin ottoman. A set of three nesting tables from Hancock Surface Studio rest on a Perennials rug.



Benjamin Moore's Boreal Forest envelops a guest bedroom, where a pair of Lulu and Georgia Nellie chairs accompany a West Elm bed. Roman shades by Wovn Home cap the windows, below which sits a built-in banquette with cushions covered in a Rose Uniacke textured wool.



Above: Crowned by a Visual Comfort & Co. chandelier, Concretti Designs' Maui tub draws the eye in the primary bathroom. The walnut vanity was constructed by Imperial Woodworking. A chair from Crate & Barrel joins Lulu and Georgia's Keziah rug.



Right: Arabescato Orobico marble from Marmi Natural Stone dramatizes the shower. "We wanted this bathroom to be impactful," designer Jessica Davis says of the luxurious space.