

BIG SKY JOURNAL HOME

Mountain Living and Architectural Design

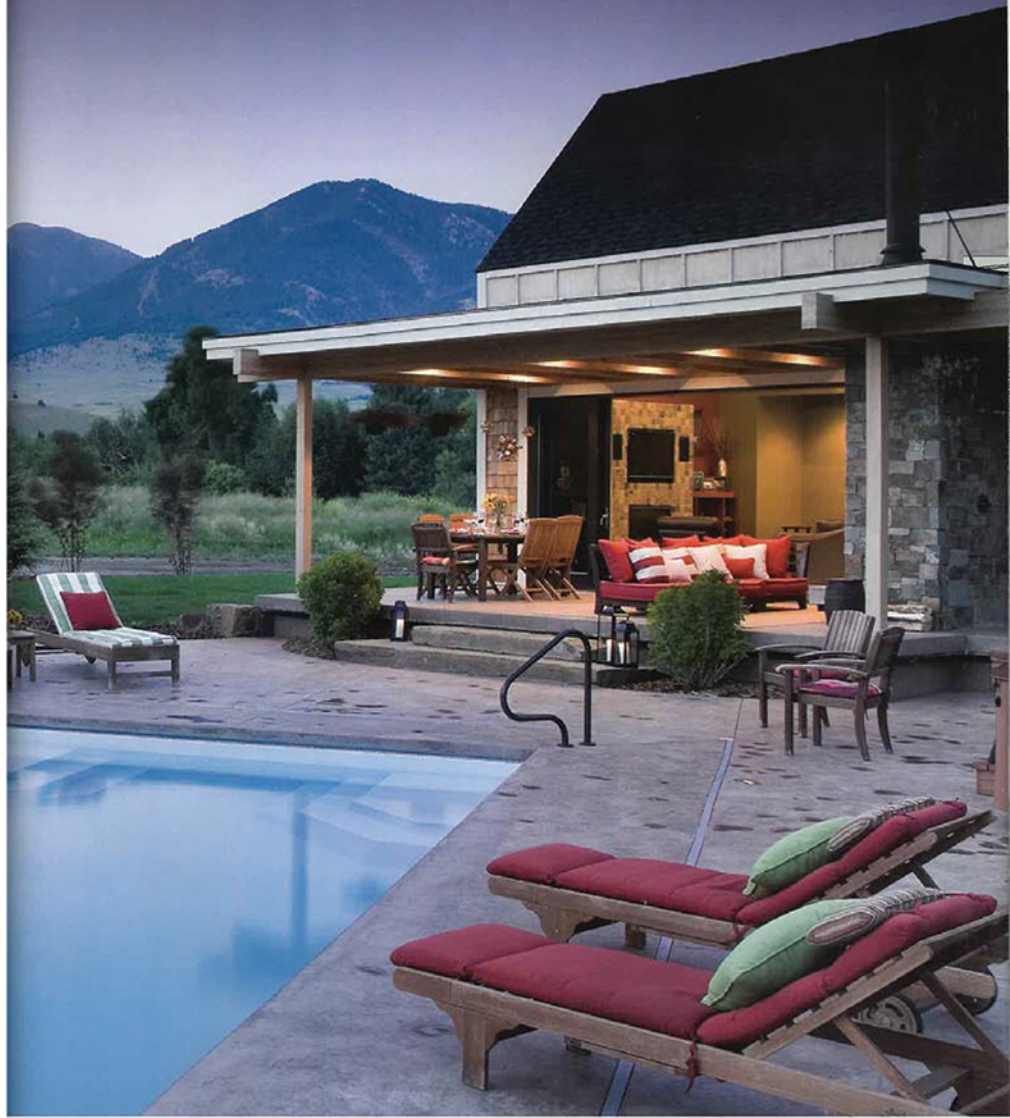


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From the Inside Out

ARCHITECT VAN BRYAN BRINGS
PHILOSOPHY TO LIFE IN HIS
FAMILY'S BOZEMAN HOME

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Opening page: The lap pool and patio are a natural extension of both the main residence and the casita-inspired guest quarters, all of which reflect the family's love of being outdoors. **Clockwise from right:** The three gables of the main residence allow for lofty space — and 14-foot ceilings even upstairs — in the master suite, the children's rooms, and a bonus room. The contemporary flat roof links the three, and the casita was designed to seamlessly blend with the existing form. The exterior shingles and geometrical siding serve to emphasize the graceful forms even more with strong vertical and horizontal lines. • A cozy bedroom loft in the guest quarters provides privacy for visitors, while the openness of the downstairs affords ideal gathering space in the bar/kitchenette, game room and covered patio. • Expansive glass doors open to ease and enhance the circulation between the inside and outside living spaces. Infra-red lights installed in the ceiling keep the patio warm well into the cold season, and a fireplace creates wonderful ambience.



Set in the Headlands, at the mouth of Bridger Canyon, architect Van Bryan's home makes an effortless transition from the urban grid of downtown Bozeman to a more pastoral setting. The timeless gabled form, exterior woodwork and shingles allow the house to blend with its surroundings. But the flat roof that links the gables, the expansive walls of glass that face the hills and the myriad skylights — all atypical of classic Montana style — give the structure a decidedly contemporary look.

In his living room, with the verdant Story Hills cascading into the room like sunlight, Bryan talks about his philosophy with unassuming ease, interrupting himself to introduce Scout, the family's 12-year-old golden retriever who could be easily confused for Bryan's shadow. Every home, every structure should enrich the human spirit, he says, in a voice barely louder than a whisper. With wood and glass, graceful lines and a daring imagination, Bryan created his own home as the structural embodiment of that personal tenet.

"This house was something of a testing ground," explains Bryan, the founding principal of Studio Architects and the architect behind dozens of the region's most



EVERY CORNER OF THE HOME OPENS ITSELF TO THE OUTDOORS: WALLS OF FLOOR-TO-CEILING WINDOWS BRING THE FURROWED STORY HILLS INSIDE, SKYLIGHTS REVEAL CLOUDS AND STARS, AND CLERESTORY WINDOWS PERFECTLY FRAME THE BRIDGERS.

inspired homes. "I played with and implemented some different ideas," he says.

Four years after completion, the home has more than lived up to Bryan's expectations. "I'm really pleased with the way we've lived into it," he says. Bryan's wife Wallis, who designed the elegant interiors and rich color palate, agrees with Van's estimation. "Though some of the architectural elements were, on paper, difficult to see, I had complete trust that it would be nothing short of spectacular. And it is. It's an artistic home but it is also one amazingly comfortable home," she says.

In fact, the home is sublimely comfortable, open and inviting in a way that nearly defies explanation. The heart of the home — the living room, dining room and kitchen — is

open, airy and simultaneously cozy. The clean lines of the epicurean kitchen balance plush furnishings in the living room. The kitchen's granite countertops, stainless steel and vibrant green walls counter the dark wood, deep green and purple of the dining room.

"Some nights the four of us will sit down to dinner and find ourselves still at the table two hours later," explains Bryan with obvious sentiment. The younger of the couple's two children will start college this fall. "That is a wonderful byproduct of the comfort of this house that I never anticipated."

In keeping with the openness and lack of pretense that the couple envisioned, Bryan designed a glass entryway so that guests can almost look through the house as they approach. That transparency continues throughout the home in both the

Left: The family's living room is enfolded by windows that bring the outside in. Black-stained concrete floors are thermally advantageous and offer a striking contrast to the floating tamarindo floors in the adjacent kitchen and dining room. The concrete bench in front of the fireplace has special meaning; Bryan and his son poured it together.



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