

At Home in the Wine Country

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN IN THE CALIFORNIA VINEYARDS



Heather Sandy Hebert & Chase Reynolds Ewald

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Introduction

The California wine country is a region

without distinct edges, which seems only appropriate given its global influence. From the northern tip of San Francisco Bay up the length of the Napa Valley and beyond, arcing over to the Russian River Valley to the fog-draped coastal Sonoma hills, then down the coast to the Carmel Valley and continuing south to Santa Barbara County, California's wine country eschews definition as it continues to expand and evolve.

In recent decades, the region has come to be defined by its lifestyle as much as its wines. It has developed its own ethos, one whose contemporary expression is creative, sustainability minded, art-filled and bathed in light. Highly refined yet without pretense, it has a youthful attitude and a decided sense of fun. Central to California living is the indoor-outdoor experience; today's homes seamlessly integrate the region's sublime scenery and climate with its cuisine and lifestyle.

Each in our own way, we were destined to explore it. Heather was raised within the architecture community of Northern California, and went on to craft a career focused on translating the magic of architecture and design into words, both as the longtime marketing director for an international architecture practice and as a freelance writer. Chase came to the West Coast as a graduate student, in part to discover her fourth-generation California roots, and stayed to document the history, design, cuisine and art of the American West.

When we met, we were both at work on books exploring different facets of the West's vibrant architecture and design community. But one can't live in the Bay Area without encountering a steady stream of wine country news, outings, cultural references and, yes, design. We were both keenly aware of the extent to which wine country architecture had evolved in recent decades, and we were drawn together in our wish to showcase the wine country's unique lifestyle and sense of community. Indeed, as residents of the northern Bay Area, we are part of that community.

Life in the wine country is a unique blending of agriculture and sophistication, lived outdoors amidst surroundings of prodigious beauty. Those drawn to make their home—or second home—in the wine country are often linked to the growing of grapes or the making of wine, but not always. Some simply bring with them a love of wine and the vitality of community it engenders. Indeed, the wine country is a small world, close-knit and supportive, where a pace of life more attuned to the land and seasons allows its residents to form deep bonds. This is a place where new residents rub elbows with families who have cultivated the land for generations.

Nothing has illustrated that spirit more than the response to the fires that have increasingly become a part of the cycle of life in California, burning in the wine country again and again. In each instance, people banded together, supporting one another in a way that only a truly connected community can do, and illustrating for us the resiliency that can come only from a deep connection to the land and its people.

Here, time is measured in seasons, and the notion of renewal is integral to understanding the sense of place. Some vineyards have been in place for over a hundred years, drawing nutrients from roots plunged deep into the sometimes difficult soil. But each year brings new growth, a new crop and new possibilities. So it goes with the people of the wine country, a blending of old and new, sharing an entrenched love of the land and the lifestyle. This likely explains why so many who establish second homes in the wine country tend to spend more and more time here, until the wine country becomes home and their more urban residence becomes a place to visit.

At Home in the Wine Country showcases work from many of the region's top architects and designers. This virtual tour documents a native, terroir-derived style that has evolved dramatically since the days when the region looked to European chateaux for inspiration. The residences featured here comprise just a sample of the extraordinary breadth and depth of work being done today in the wine countries of northern and central California. From refined rustic to updated agrarian to unapologetically modern, the range of styles—as well as the varied approaches to managing environmental factors—is broad. While each project is the result of careful consideration of client, program and site, its starting point is always place.

Set within landscapes of extraordinary beauty, these homes also exist within a fragile environment. Since many dwellings are sited on hillsides within the wildland-urban interface, architects have become well-versed in design principles and practices that minimize impact on the existing environment and increase the structures' resistance to fire. While several homes in our book were threatened by the most recent fires of 2020, all have survived thanks not only to the courage of first responders and community residents, but also to design and building practices that increased their resilience.

Seventeen homes—plus four unique auxiliary structures, including a pool house, a party barn, and a dining pavilion with production gardens—laud wine-country living in an atmosphere of understated, family-focused hospitality.

For one retiree, a sustainable structure with rammed-earth walls within an 18,000-acre eco-development near Carmel is a nature-focused forever home. Further

north in Glen Ellen, a simple farmhouse-style weekend retreat represents the culmination of one designer's career interpreting wine-country style as a transplant from the UK. In the hills overlooking Sonoma, a collection of boxes juxtaposes geometric black-and-white forms with disappearing walls against a verdant landscape. Set amid the vines on the floor of the Napa Valley, a cluster of buildings expresses California's agrarian traditions while deftly incorporating a subtle nod to the architectural legacy of the famed Sea Ranch. On a forested hillside, a thoroughly contemporary abode is built as a transparent envelope from which to experience nature, and becomes an expression of the soul of both its place and its owners. A historic bungalow in downtown Sonoma retains its original charm while embracing an exuberantly modern addition for owners of a wine business. Perched on a hillside not far from downtown Napa, a simply rendered house overlooks vineyards with a sweeping view of the valley below, the result of one man's lifelong passion for the work of East Coast icon Hugh Newell Jacobsen.

No work of this type is possible without a legion of architects, interior designers, contractors, landscape architects, engineers, sustainability consultants, lighting designers, art experts, artists and photographers. Without their creativity, passion, institutional knowledge and hard work, projects of this quality would never come to fruition. And none of it would appear in formats like this without homeowners willing to share their most intimate spaces. These are the places to which they retreat to rejuvenate, entertain and make memories, the places in which they can most be themselves. Yet they invite readers in so that these homes—beautiful, unique, responsibly designed and carefully crafted—can be seen, providing us all with pleasure and inspiration.

We couldn't have created this book without their generosity of spirit and their respect for craft, nor could we do what we do without the editors, graphic designers and visionaries at Gibbs Smith Publisher. For that shared vision we are grateful.

At Home in the Wine Country pays homage to a world and a lifestyle that is ever innovating, adapting and evolving. As is often the case with projects like this, the more we explore, the more we find. We are in awe of the talent and artistry assembled within these pages. We're honored to be able to showcase these uniquely sophisticated place-based expressions of home in the wine country.

HEATHER SANDY HEBERT Chase Reynolds Ewald

Garden to Table

"There's a balance of formality and casualness, with a real rigor in that it feels casual but is grounded in its place in the landscape." — ANDREW MANN

A weekend retreat in Sonoma County for a dual-career couple with young children had at its heart a desire to connect with the landscape through food and cooking. An existing home with pool, pool house, vineyards and an orchard was the starting point for a project that modernized the 1970s-era dwellings, integrated them more fully with the outdoors and celebrated the property's garden-to-table ethos with a new open-air kitchen, dining and potting shed pavilion.

Built on the site of an old arbor set within a fruit orchard a short distance from the house, the simple shed-roof volume opens out toward curvilinear raised beds and cutting gardens which are terraced into the sloping hillside below. Architect Andrew Mann, landscape designer Christa Moné and Sawyer Construction worked closely with the owners to conceive its materiality, functionality and form. Western red cedar, poured concrete floors, a full kitchen with appliances and a pizza oven, and walk-in spaces for cooking gear and gardening tools tucked behind sliding barn doors are set within a structure that references the region's agricultural heritage.

The pavilion serves as an on-property destination for family meals and entertaining, and for the homeowners, who are ardent gardeners and cooks. Twice a year, Moné collaborates with the clients to refresh cut flower beds designed by theme and to update production gardens with a changing array of vegetables such as broccolini, eggplant and Lacinato kale. "Each bed is purposefully designed to be productive and drop-dead gorgeous," she says. Special touches include an espaliered tomato patch cultivated to climb up hog wire panels and dwarf citrus containers filled with herbs.

The pavilion and garden are perfectly integrated into the pastoral site. Explains architect Andrew Mann, "It's designed to be formal in plan while working with existing contours to create defined spaces. There's a balance of formality and casualness, with a real rigor in that it feels casual but is grounded in its place in the landscape. It's very much about California living and the quality of life."





For a young family seeking to connect to the land through cooking and gardening, architect Andrew Mann created an open-air pavilion with wood-fired oven, cooking facilities and a built-in potting shed. Christa Moné designed the garden, which she updates twice a year. The owners chose the furnishings for the space, including Room & Board's cheerful Caprice chairs and a custom table.

The Teams

AGRARIAN SPIRIT

Vineyard's Edge, CALISTOGA

Architecture: WADE DESIGN ARCHITECTS
Interior Design: GEREMIA DESIGN
Landscape Design: GROUND STUDIO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Construction: TOTAL CONCEPTS
Photography: SUZANNA SCOTT PHOTOGRAPHY

Modern Agrarian, RUTHERFORD

Architecture: PFAU LONG ARCHITECTURE
Interior Design: PFAU LONG ARCHITECTURE
Landscape Design: LUTSKO ASSOCIATES
Construction: GRASSI & ASSOCIATES
Photography: ART GRAY PHOTOGRAPHY

Woodland Farmhouse, VALLEY OF THE MOON, SONOMA

Architecture: NICHOLAS LEE ARCHITECTS
Design: ROSSI SCOTT
Construction: EAMES CONSTRUCTION
Photography: ADAM POTTS PHOTOGRAPHY

Rustic Estate, CALISTOGA

Architecture: AMY A. ALPER, ARCHITECT
Interior Design: JENNIFER ROBIN INTERIORS
Landscape Design: MERGE STUDIO, INC.
Construction: TOTAL CONCEPTS
Photography: JOHN MERKL PHOTOGRAPHY

Nestled in Nature, SONOMA

Architecture: MICHAEL GUTHRIE & COMPANY ARCHITECTS
Interior Design: JEFF SCHLARB DESIGN STUDIO
Landscape Design: ROCHE + ROCHE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Construction: REITER FINE HOME BUILDING
Photography: AUBRIE PICK PHOTOGRAPHY, MARION BRENNER PHOTOGRAPHY

Refined Farmhouse, CALISTOGA

Architecture: POLSKY PERLSTEIN ARCHITECTS
Interior Design: PAULINA PERRAULT INTERIORS
Landscape Design: LUCAS & LUCAS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE; OWNERS
Construction: ARMADA BUILDERS & INTERIORS
Photography: LAURA REOCH, SEPTEMBER-DAYS PHOTOGRAPHY

A Cottage Reborn, CALISTOGA

Architecture: BOHLIN CYWINSKI JACKSON
Interior Design: BOHLIN CYWINSKI JACKSON
Landscape Design: EINWILLERKUEHL LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Construction: FAIRWEATHER & ASSOCIATES
Photography: MATTHEW MILLMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Historic Meets Modern, SONOMA

Architecture: WADE DESIGN ARCHITECTS
Interior Design: JENNIFER ROBIN INTERIORS
Landscape Design: ROZANSKI DESIGN
Construction: EARTHTONE CONSTRUCTION
Photography: PAUL DYER PHOTOGRAPHY

The Bird House, OAKVILLE

Architecture: JACOBSEN ARCHITECTURE
Interior Design: JEFF ATLAS (OWNER)
Landscape Design: TERRE FERMA LANDSCAPES
Construction: CENTRIC GENERAL CONTRACTORS
Photography: ADAM POTTS PHOTOGRAPHY, DOUGLAS STERLING PHOTOGRAPHY

WINE COUNTRY CONTEMPORARY

Black Box House, LOVALL VALLEY

Architecture: BEVAN & ASSOCIATES
Interior Design: BEVAN & ASSOCIATES; OWNER
Landscape Design: LUCAS & LUCAS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Construction: TRAINOR BUILDERS
Photography: DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Vintner's View, DRY CREEK VALLEY

Architecture: SUTRO ARCHITECTS
Interior Design: ADEENI DESIGN GROUP
Landscape Design: ARTERRA LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
Construction: UPSCALE CONSTRUCTION
Photography: CHRISTOPHER STARK PHOTOGRAPHY

Winged Retreat, CARMEL VALLEY

Architecture: AIDLIN DARLING DESIGN
Interior Design: MCBRIDE DESIGN
Landscape Design: GROUND STUDIO LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Construction: CARROLL & STRONG BUILDERS
Photography: MATTHEW MILLMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Ridgeview House, VACA MOUNTAINS

Architecture: ZACK I DE VITO ARCHITECTURE + CONSTRUCTION
Interior Design: ZACK I DE VITO ARCHITECTURE + CONSTRUCTION, OWNER
Landscape Design: RANDY THUEME DESIGN
Construction: FAIRWEATHER & ASSOCIATES
Photography: CESAR RUBIO PHOTOGRAPHY

Sunrise Pavilion, RUSSIAN RIVER VALLEY

Architecture: FELDMAN ARCHITECTURE
Interior Design: STUDIO COLLINS WEIR
Landscape Design: ARTERRA LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS
Construction: CELLO & MAUDRU CONSTRUCTION
Photography: ADAM ROUSE PHOTOGRAPHY

Forest Aerie, HOWELL MOUNTAIN

Architecture: SIGNUM ARCHITECTURE
Interior Design: SHAWBACK DESIGN
Landscape Design: JACK CHANDLER DESIGN
Construction: CELLO & MAUDRU CONSTRUCTION
Photography: ADAM ROUSE PHOTOGRAPHY

Sustainable Sanctuary, CARMEL VALLEY

Architecture: FELDMAN ARCHITECTURE
Interior Design: JAY JEFFERS—THE STUDIO
Landscape Design: JONI L. JANECKI + ASSOCIATES
Construction: GROZA CONSTRUCTION
Photography: JOE FLETCHER PHOTOGRAPHY

Downtempo, FRANZ VALLEY

Architecture: SIGNUM ARCHITECTURE
Interior Design: ALISON DAMONTE DESIGN
Landscape Design: TERREMOTO
Construction: METHOD HOMES; FAIRWEATHER & ASSOCIATES
Photography: BRUCE DAMONTE PHOTOGRAPHY

RECREATION & RENEWAL

Zinfandel Barn, OAK KNOLL DISTRICT

Architecture: FIELD ARCHITECTURE
Interior Design: SHAWBACK DESIGN
Landscape Design: SURFACEDESIGN
Construction: GRASSI & ASSOCIATES
Photography: MATTHEW MILLMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Pool House in a Meadow, VICHY DISTRICT, NAPA

Architecture: BEVAN & ASSOCIATES
Landscape Design: LUCAS & LUCAS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
Construction: TRAINOR BUILDERS
Photography: ERIC RORER PHOTOGRAPHY

Garden to Table, SONOMA

Architecture: ANDREW MANN ARCHITECTURE
Garden Design: CHRISTA MONÉ
Construction: SAWYER CONSTRUCTION
Photography: DAVID WAKELY PHOTOGRAPHY

Inside-Outside Barn, NAPA

Architecture: WILLIAM DUFF ARCHITECTS
Interior Design: ROBERT WILLIAM DAILEY DESIGN & DECORATION
Landscape Design: STEVEN ARNS, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT
Construction: CENTRIC GENERAL CONTRACTORS
Photography: MATTHEW MILLMAN PHOTOGRAPHY