

NY/CO

NEW YORK'S MODERN STYLE
INFLUENCES A COLORADO
TRANSFORMATION

*by Connie Steiert
Brent Bingham Photography*



High above Singletree, where sagebrush, juniper and wildflowers romp over rolling hills, and deer and fox roam freely, is a prevalence of warm stucco and adobe homes, thoughtfully suited for this sun-drenched mountain terrain. In their midst, sits another home. True, it is unlike the southwestern-style homes that rule this lofty neighborhood. Instead, Karen Rosenbach and Tom Daniel's home is a wonderful anomaly; a beautiful testament to how vision and passion can make a contemporary home work both seamlessly and enviably in a stucco neighborhood.





Tom Daniels and Karen Rosenbach moved to Colorado three years ago from New York. They were looking for a change of lifestyle for their two teenage children. They honed in on Singletree because of its year-round community. Yet, Karen, who manages a global executive search firm specializing in fashion, beauty, retail and home décor, and Tom, a retired banking and real estate executive, brought with them strong design sensibilities and cosmopolitan visions. "We always knew we wanted something modern," says Karen.

Using a Singletree rental home as base, the couple spent months looking at dozens of homes. One day, Karen spotted an ad online. True the home was stucco, but it was white, with strong lines. "It looked like it might have the bones of something more modern," recalls Karen. Sitting at the very top of Singletree, the home had panoramic views that spanned Game Creek Bowl, Beaver Creek, Arrowhead, Cordillera and beyond. Better still, neighborhood height restrictions and an uphill location backed by miles of BLM land protected these views for perpetuity. Situated on a duplex lot, the single-family home had ample room to grow into what Karen and Tom envisioned. But, Karen recalls pondering,

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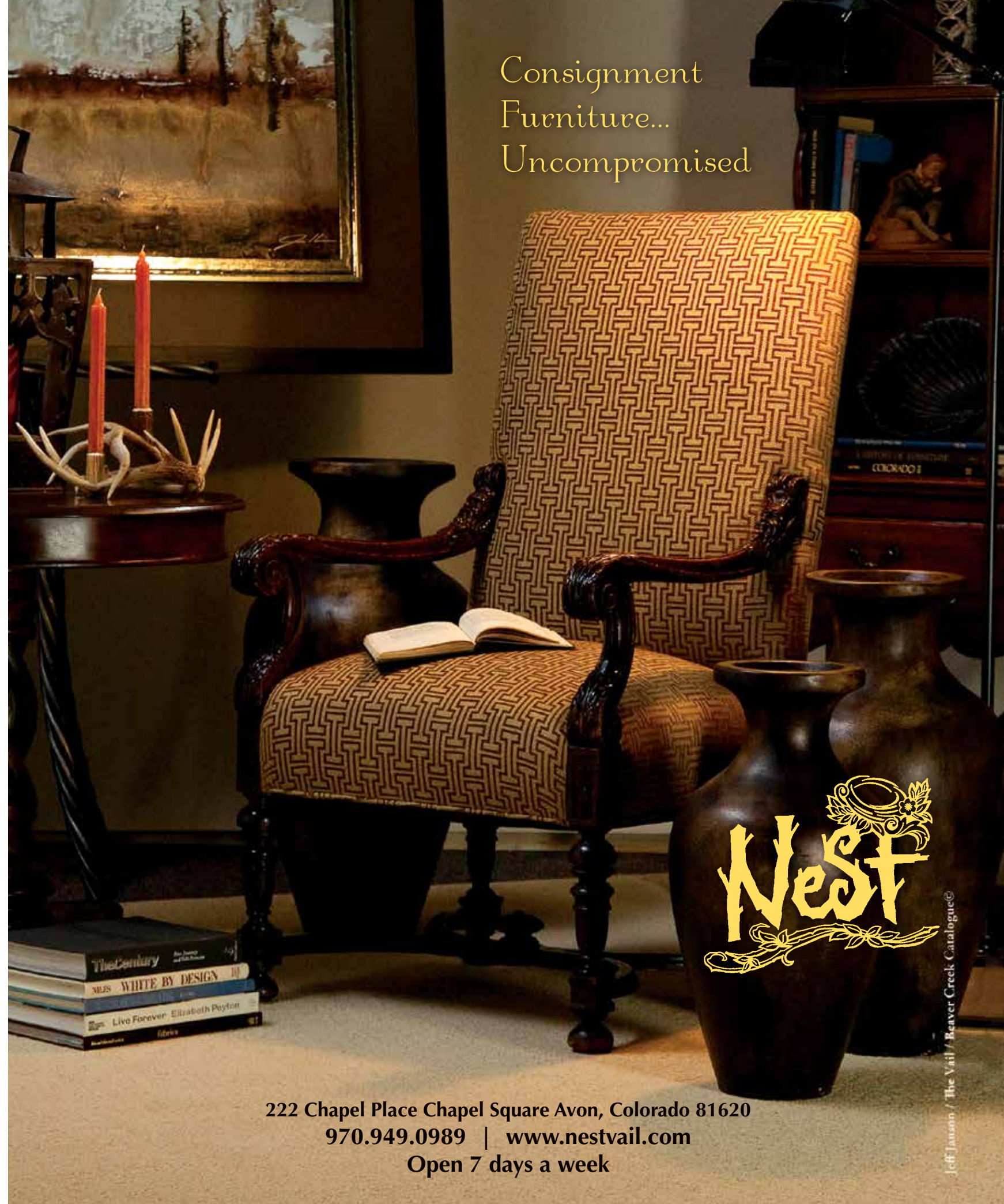


“how could we get what we wanted out of the home?” The answer proved surprisingly serendipitous when they happened to meet architect Kyle Webb, who drew the original designs for the home in 1994 for another firm, before starting his own firm KH Webb Architects, P.C., and had a hand in the design of another modern home in Singletree they’d been eyeing.

There was much the couple admired about the original home. For instance, the impressive brushed-steel front door and entry wall remains. “It was so cool,” says Karen. As were the three staggered columns outside the entry, repeated at the bottom of the drive, which made a unique contemporary statement.

Yet, much needed re-envisioning as well. With Webb at the helm, the house was basically doubled in size from its original 2,165 square feet. The couple had their hearts set on a stone-and-wood exterior, and had fallen for a blue stone slab they’d seen on a Forest Road home. But, Singletree was adamant the stucco exterior remain. Instead, Webb led the couple to an arresting compromise. The white adobe-style stucco was replaced with a flat

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gray stucco whose smooth appearance and wide-slab pattern, paired with Cortez plank stonework on the chimney and exterior accent walls transformed the southwestern exterior into a sleek urban showcase. Warmly contrasting burnt-finished cedar now wraps decks and roof overhangs, while the slotted redwood deck was expanded along the entire front of the house for ample entertainment space, creating a surprisingly symbiotic relationship with the airy mountain setting.



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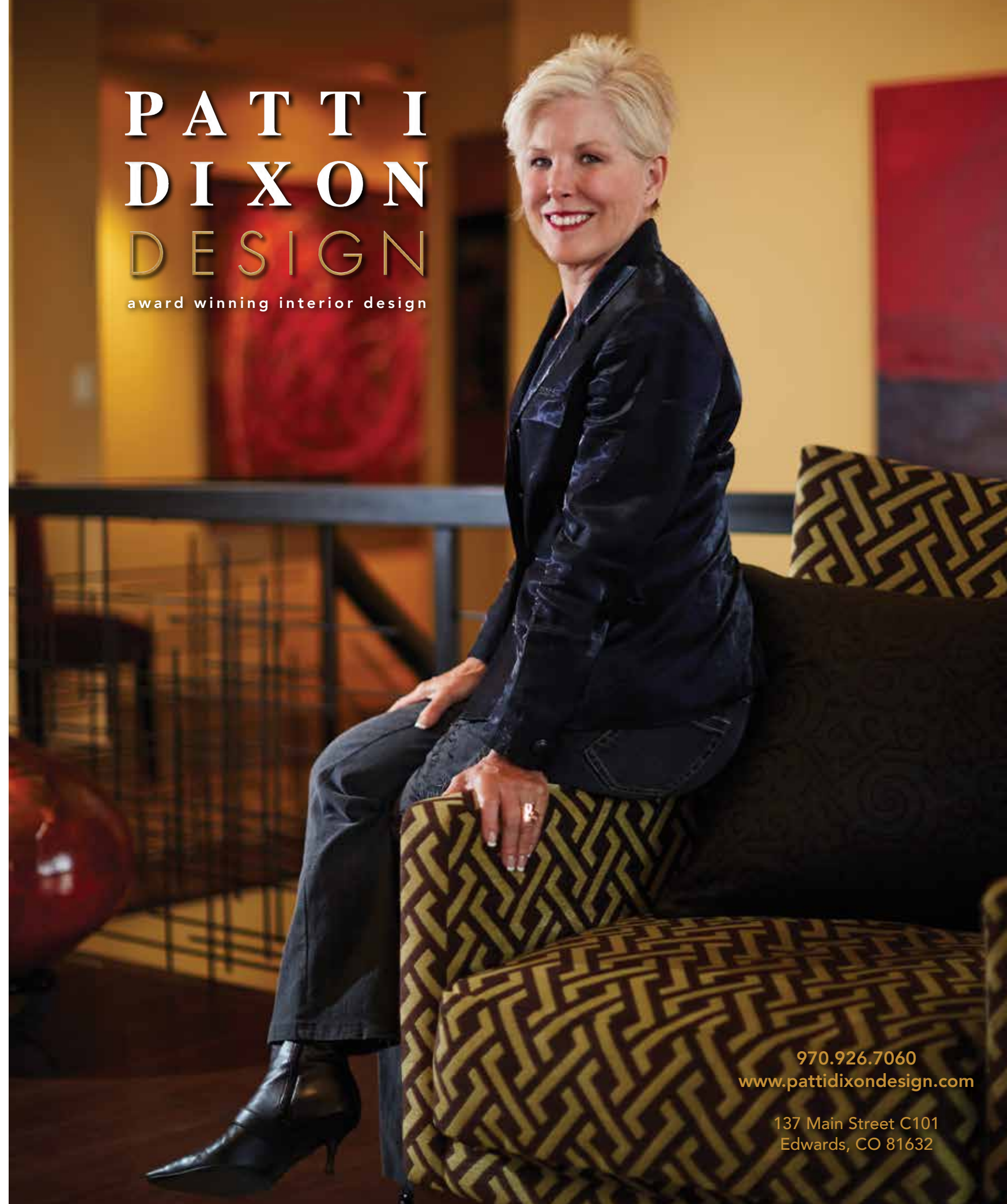


One of the couple's foremost goals in the home's redesign was to create a seamless transition. "We wanted to bring the outside inside," states Karen. The flat stucco slab treatment, stone walls and metal finishes were wrapped inside the home's entrance and are repeated throughout the main level. With the insightful help of Vail Custom Builders, the interior is now a marvelous play of materials, colors, light and shadow. Rich, dark woods are surprisingly homogenous with the gray stucco, while the gray-and-cream Cortez stone is underscored by the subtle gray in the limed oak floors, made welcoming with colorful rugs by The Scarab.

"THE IMPORTANT THING WAS WE WANTED A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE CAN COME AND FEEL COMFORTABLE."

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The gray stucco slab proves a bold backdrop in the living room, with its surprising slice of glass housing a fireplace, inset with orderly rows of round stones waiting to spark to life. "We wanted a fireplace with a clean, modern look," explains Tom. The exterior walls to north and south are almost entirely glass, that gives the home a see-through feel, made private by curtains that close remotely. A soft gray sectional sofa pairs, invitingly, with fawn-draped chairs on steel legs and a stylized woven-and-wood coffee table. Just begging for the entertainment to begin, a baby grand piano waits elegantly to one side.

In a touch of brilliance to fulfill the couple's decree of bringing the outside in, the entire wall of expansive windows and glass doors to the rear of the room slide open – a giant pocket door disappears smoothly into an adjoining stucco wall. This creates a home truly open to the outside and the generous patio beyond, its sunny, private location backing up to BLM land. "From the front, you wouldn't even know this is here," notes Tom.

THE MASTER BATH HAS ITS OWN CAPTIVATING STYLE, WITH STEEL VANITIES, SLEEK WHITE COUNTERS, AND STRIKING HERRINGBONE-PATTERNED TILES ABOVE THE MIRRORS AND IN THE GLASSED-IN SHOWER.

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In the original home, the main areas were left entirely open. “The important thing was we wanted a place where people can come and feel comfortable,” explains Karen. But, adds, “We didn’t want lots of little rooms.” So, they added a wall off the kitchen, which delineates an elegant dining space, while enclosing space for laundry and pantry behind. Removing the large fireplace in one wall added a deep niche to showcase unique pieces or the couple’s dazzling ornamental glass collection. A sculpted slab of pale white-and-gray marble serves as the dining table and sits on an artistic steel frame – designed by the mayor of Red Cliff, Scott Burgess.

The kitchen remains open to the living room, both dramatic and welcoming in white slab counters with inspired steel trim. The walnut island, with its shiny chrome prep sink and accents, has a thick panel upheld by steel legs emerging from one side. Paired with Plexiglas chairs, it becomes the family’s casual dining space. “We knew we wanted the family eating area separate from the dining area,” explains Karen. Here, too, is the sink Karen always dreamed of under a window looking outdoors.

Cleverly hidden in the gray living room wall is another set of walnut pocket doors that open onto the newly created master suite. From the beginning,

explains Karen, they decided having a huge master bedroom was less important than having “a place to invite people over, and a place for the kids to go hang out with friends. We also wanted upstairs bedrooms.” Instead of using the original master in the older portion of the home, the couple created a smaller, but lovely and relaxing space. Pale walls and beautiful wood flooring pairs harmoniously with airy taupe fabrics and flowing muslin drapes echoing the natural color scheme of the home in soft, almost Zen-like hues. To bring warmth to the soaring ceilings, Webb’s team designed a hanging ceiling suspended from rods, adding both coziness and allure. One aspect of floor-to-ceiling windows and breezy mountain views the couple hadn’t contemplated was a place to mount a television. Not to worry. A custom walnut standing panel was designed at the foot of the bed where, now, one emerges as if called by a genie. The master bath has its own captivating style, with steel vanities, sleek white counters, and striking herringbone-patterned tiles above the mirrors and in the glassed-in shower.

Leading to the second floor, the original skylight remains, but the carpeted stairs have been replaced with open wooden steps and steel handrails. Upstairs, old and new combine for a perfectly private retreat for the couple’s two freshmen kids. Two spacious bedrooms with their series of high, punched-out windows and enviable baths open off a loft-like hangout created out of an original bedroom and now overlooks the living room below and the world beyond.

When Karen and Tom first moved to Eagle County, they were uncertain if this area would long remain home. Now, says Karen, “The reality is, we like this house so much, and have made such a wonderful life here, I can’t imagine anyone moving us out of here.”

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