

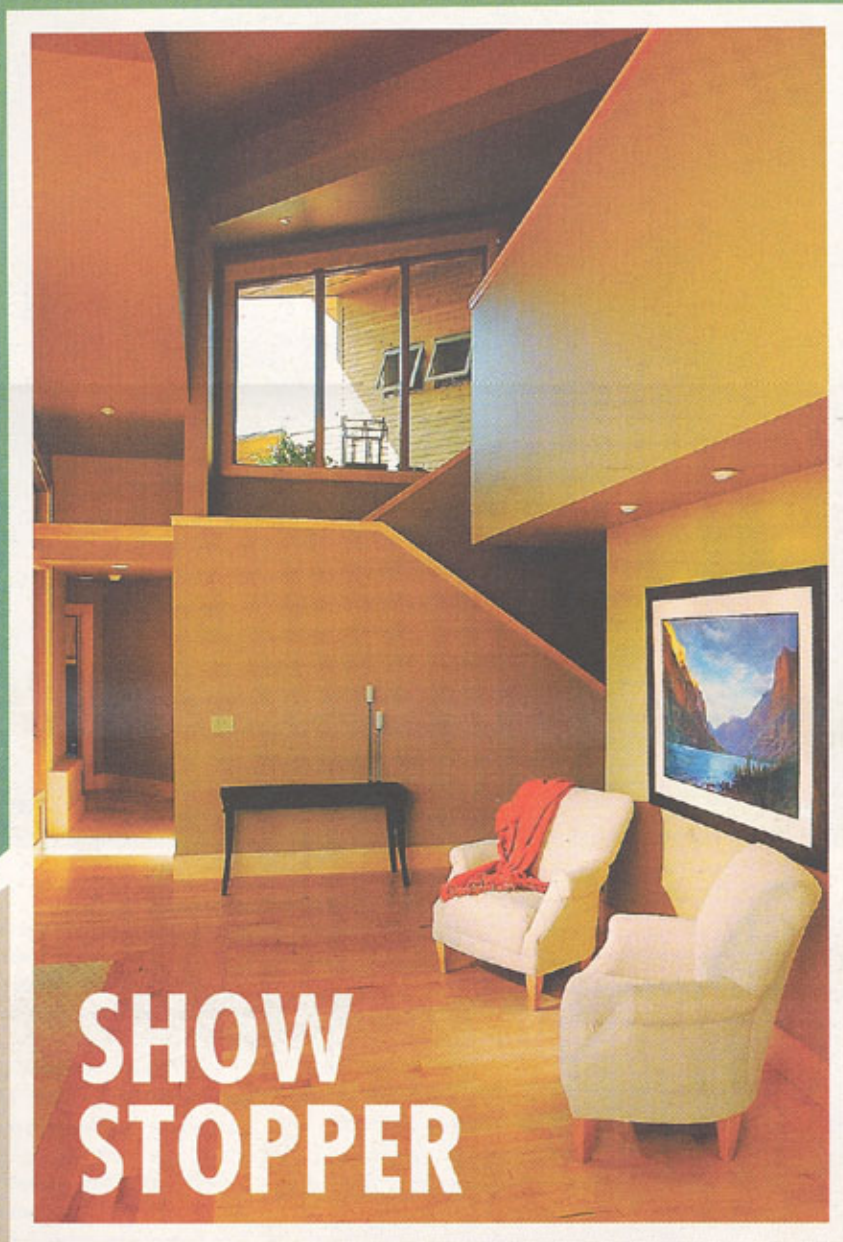
at home

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SHOW STOPPER

Triple Tree home a highlight of upcoming Parade

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Parade home offers a different take on western design

SHOW STOPPER

IN the Triple Tree Subdivision south of Bozeman, rolling hills rise like waves, and the scattering of homes seem to float in an ocean of grass. Views of Gallatin Valley, the Spanish Peaks, Bridgers, Horse Shoe Mountains and beyond are staples for residents here. The development includes an extensive trail system and abuts Gallatin National Forest along its

BY SEABRING DAVIS

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY THOMAS LEE



Above, the home's great room is elegant yet comfortable, a testament to the work of the architect and the builder. On the opening page, dynamic lines are a prominent component to the home's modern design.

Show Stopper

southern border. These amenities inspired builder Jack Spiess of Spiess Construction and architect Brendon Beyers of Westering Design to build their own version of the quintessential western home.

"A home doesn't have to be made of logs and it doesn't have to be rustic to be a western house," explained Spiess, "Our idea of western architecture and design is one that takes advantage of views and gives the feeling of a connection with the outdoors no matter where you are in the house."

Along this premise the two partners purchased a one-acre lot in Triple Tree and began work on a custom home for the upcoming Gallatin Valley Parade of Homes. They had their own self-imposed rules for the project: the house had to be functional and take advantage of the lot's unique topographical features. And one more thing: it could not be a 'starter castle.'

The result is an unusual combination of brick, cedar siding, stone and timber-frame accents. With clean modern lines and an open floor plan, the 5,200-square-foot home is livable and practical. Priced at

\$1.295 million, it's comparable to the range of other homes here, but clearly with a more subdued style. Sunken into the hillside, contouring to the lot, this house doesn't strive so much for visibility as it does subtlety.

"With each house I do I try to blend in with the landscape," Beyers said. "I like to think of it as earth integration architecture, considering the site and light orientation as essential to the design."

Beyers' connection with the land is evident from the moment you step onto the walkway of this Triple Tree home. The exterior paint is the color of wheat and soil, mirroring the land. The winding sidewalk is ensconced within the cool shade of the house's overhanging roof, leading to a sheltering berm that nearly conceals the front entrance of the house. The sound of running water surprises the senses just footsteps from the front door, where lichen-covered stones carry a trickle of a fountain.

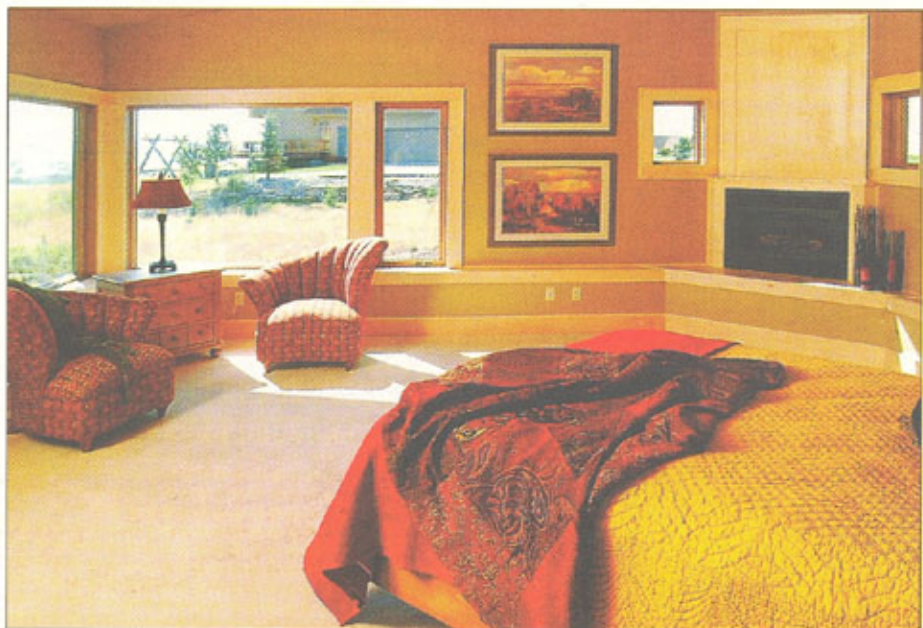
Across the threshold, the ceiling hangs low, but light from the great room beckons you to explore. But from here the foyer also pinwheels to other areas of the



house. A few steps toward the vast, open living room there's a glimpse of the kitchen to the left, another hallway on the right and a stairway in front. The house sparks a certain intrigue that makes you want to turn the corner.

But the great room is the natural step and once inside this light, airy space, the vista of farmland and mountains makes it difficult to move onto another room. The ochre-colored walls, maple floors and trim are artfully neutral against the sweep of Gallatin Valley and the promise of fantastic sunsets every evening.

Follow the daylight around the corner to a window-framed dining area and onto the semi-professional grade kitchen. Although it is small, a sensible work triangle makes it highly efficient. Granite counters contrast the light maple cabinets and stainless



Above, a semi-covered terrace to the home includes South American hardwood flooring. At right, the master bedroom offers mountain views and a raised fireplace.



With clean, modern lines, the Triple Tree home is priced at \$1.295 million. At right, a loft-inspired media room hovers over the living and dining area.



Show Stopper steel Kitchenaid appliances give it an edgy style. A working island fitted with a produce sink is offset by seating at a swanky bar made of recycled, New Zealand eucalyptus wood. Behind that is a useful walk-in pantry with a ribbed glass door.

Beyers' floor plan turns the kitchen and dining room to the east for morning sun. Skylights above allow more light into the house. The interesting angles of the ceiling act as light wells, catching and reflecting sunlight while adding depth to the overall design.

According to Beyers, he creates homes that are as practical as they are philosophical. Drawing inspiration from Frank Lloyd Wright's prairie school of design, Beyers favors post-modernist structures that suit a lifestyle with an appreciation of nature and the outdoors. Even his firm's name — Westering Design — alludes to his own connection with western history and a Jeffersonian pursuit of settling here. On the company Web site a quote from author John Steinbeck's classic novel, "The Red Pony," offers explanation for the firm's name, but also a notion of empathy toward a client's desire to put down roots in the New West:

"It wasn't the Indians that were important, nor adventures, nor even getting out here. It was a whole bunch of people made into one big crawling beast. And I was the head. It was Westering and Westering. Every man wanted something for himself, but the big beast that was all of them wanted only Westering... (But) Westering has died out of the people. Westering isn't a hunger any more..."

Literature and aesthetics aside, Beyers and Spiess choreographed a functional home with luxurious amenities but no frills. The idea was to make every part of the house useable.

Every room in the house has access to outside terraces. A home office, laundry/utility room and three-car garage are accessible on the main floor. Additionally, the master suite branches off from the great room onto a wing of its own.

Continuing spare structural lines from the main part of the house into the master bedroom, a maple-trimmed window seat takes advantage of more mountain views and privacy. A raised fireplace gives the room a cozy, intimate air. A walk-in closet features a center island for seating while dressing. The master bath is tiled with striking white travertine and filled with light from a glass wall that leads to a private deck and hot tub. Double vanity sinks, Jacuzzi bath and temperature controlled shower also add to the opulence here.

Upstairs, a loft-inspired media room hovers above the living and dining area. From here, three bedrooms and a potential exercise room branch off from the common area. But a clever built-in wet bar also leads to a semi-covered upper terrace, where dark South American hardwood flooring sends a message that it is more a patio for entertaining than simply a deck. Sheltered from wind and other weather, a trio of skylights brings afternoon sun to the area, and another row of floor-level windows from the house enhances the theme of indoor-outdoor living. Spiess envisions this as a three-season deck, where a family would likely use this space more than any other in the house.

"We wanted a design that would encourage the use of the whole house," Spiess said, "so we flowed the house with other useful rooms on the second level to spread out the actual living space."

As with the first level, the second floor is open and fluid. There is nothing formal or staid in this house, a testament to Spiess' and Beyers' ideal of building a livable, custom home.

"My clients are looking for a contemporary feel rather than a stereotypical western style," Beyers said. "I try to use the natural angles of the roof and the landscape to make each house I design as dynamic as I can." ☺

Seabring Davis is a freelance writer who contributes regularly to At Home and other regional publications.