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Elevated State

In Aspen's Elk Mountains, designer Elizabeth Stanley oversees a rustic-meets-refined getaway for her family that feels so right, they decide to call it home

By CELIA McGEE *Photography and Styling by* DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN

A ceiling of reclaimed oak provides a warm contrast to the steel, glass, and stone that wrap the living room of the Aspen, Colorado, home that architect Cristof Eigelberger created in collaboration with designer Elizabeth Stanley for her family. Nodding to classic Western style, moose antlers are mounted over the granite fireplace. Living Divani leather sectional sofas and a pair of 1950s Dutch modernist armchairs upholstered in sheepskin surround a reclaimed-oak cocktail table by Elizabeth Stanley Design. Accompanying the seating are an iron stool by Jérôme Abel Seguin, a trim antique French table, and a charred-wood table by Michael Wilson. The floor lamp is by Liaigre, and the rug is by Vanghent. For details see Sources.

The staircase, crafted in steel and reclaimed oak, wraps around pendants by Nendo. A painting by Mary Weatherford hangs on the wall, while a figurative sculpture by Stephen De Staebler and a ceramic by Yuji Ueda rest on the floor of black limestone flagstones. OPPOSITE: The residence is a cluster of rectilinear volumes, several of which are in charred wood.



Growing up in Austin, Texas, Elizabeth Stanley didn't just play with dollhouses—she saw firsthand

how real houses came to be. Her father, the founder of an esteemed home-building firm, often brought her along on jobsite visits, encouraging in her a passion for architecture and design as unavoidable as the sawdust tickling her nose. In 2008, she started an Austin firm of her own, and in the years since, Elizabeth Stanley Design has gained a reputation for enhancing residences with warmly pared-down interiors where elements new and old engagingly converse and natural materials are always front and center.

Equally at home in the outdoors, both she and her husband, private investor Aaron Stanley, are avid skiers, and several years ago they began to set their sights on Aspen, Colorado, as an ideal fit for a second home for their family. When they got wind of an 11-acre property on a southern slope in the Elk Mountains with permitted plans by Aspen architect Cristof Eigelberger attached, “we put it under contract sight unseen,” Stanley says. “Getting building permits in Aspen is almost impossible these days.”

The plans, for a 5,750-square-foot cluster of linked rectilinear volumes, were more sleekly modern than what Stanley had in mind, but, she says, “I knew I could work with Cristof on the existing design to make it more ours.” For his part, Eigelberger understood her desire for “a more character-driven home,” he says, noting their shared commitment to the idea that “everything should be about connecting back to the land.”



“I wanted this place as crusty and Rocky Mountain rustic as possible,” says designer Elizabeth Stanley

Three years of siting, construction, and landscaping later, the Stanleys and their three children were so enamored with the result and Aspen’s numerous year-round advantages that they decided to move there full-time. With its layered narrative and organic relationship to its setting, the four-bedroom house lives up to Stanley’s design edict: “I wanted this place as crusty and Rocky Mountain rustic as possible,” she says.

That starts with the exterior, where most of the walls are mountain ash granite, reinforcing a sense of continuity with its surroundings. The views, as compelling in summer as they are dramatic in winter, benefit from the expansive steel-framed windows Eigelberger installed throughout. The architect grew up in Aspen—“when it still had that Hunter S. Thompson, ski-bum, rock climber vibe,” as he puts it—so he knows “where the sunrise and sunset happen, and what that means for the play of light.”

A more spectral presence is the blackened shou sugi ban wood Stanley chose for portions of the exterior. A few miles up Castle Creek Valley lies Ashcroft, a silver-mining ghost town. “So much aged and weathered wood in Ashcroft resembles shou sugi ban,” she says, “and I was picking up on that history.”

Inside, Stanley and Eigelberger sourced oak fence boards for many walls and ceilings and salvaged 12-inch-wide farm threshing boards for some of the floors. Old oak also has its say in the steps of the sculptural blackened-steel central staircase.

More granite went into the living room’s monumental fireplace, its rough-hewn mantelpiece executed with finger stones. Elsewhere, Stanley finished the walls in a textured, soft gray plaster, echoing the hue of aspen tree bark. Further stitching together of indoors and outside happens underfoot, as fractured black flagstones extend from the entry through much of the living space and onto the terrace beyond.

True to her elevated ranchland aesthetic, Stanley devised the kitchen’s distinctively dovetailed oak cabinetry with open shelves that display earthy, hand-thrown ceramic dinnerware alongside her collection of vintage wooden bowls. “It was wonderful to watch Elizabeth bring an overall rusticity to the house,” Eigelberger says.

Balancing cattle-country affability with modernist flair, Stanley peppered the spaces with choice 20th-century furnishings while flavoring the fusion with works by such



An artwork by Adriana Varejão overlooks the custom oak dining table, which is bordered by vintage Charlotte Perriand chairs draped with sheepskins; the linen-covered end chair is by Verellen, and the pendant is vintage Poul Henningsen. OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: The kitchen features custom oak cabinetry with flamed basalt countertops, Gaggenau appliances, and Toni Copenhagen sink fittings; the counter stools are by BDDW. Abstract works by Catherine Lee play off the vivid patterns in the vintage Navajo blankets that cover the floor in the media room.



In the guest bedroom, a custom linen-upholstered bed flanked by BDDW nightstands bathes in the glow of a wall work by Gisela Colón; the pendant was designed by Isamu Noguchi. OPPOSITE: For the primary suite bath, Stanley customized a vanity with bronze-framed mirrors, reclaimed-oak cabinets, and a countertop in Belgian bluestone matching the material of the Studio Loho tub. The sink and tub fittings are by WatermarkFixtures, the small bronze tables are by Rick Owens, and a work by Ed Ruscha hangs on the plaster-finished wall. The outdoor furniture on the terrace is by Danao Living, with fabric and pillows by Vincent Van Duysen for Sutherland.

Architect Cristof Eigelberger says he and Stanley shared a commitment to the idea that “everything should be about connecting back to the land”



contemporary artists as Mary Weatherford, Ed Ruscha, and Adriana Varejão. In a home premised on dynamic dualities—rugged and refined, shadowy and bright, hard and soft—sheepskin’s fluffy allure adds warmth to floors and seating from one room to the next. Opposite the fireplace, 1950s Dutch modernist armchairs are reupholstered in fleece, while small Icelandic pelts are draped over the dining room’s vintage Charlotte Perriand chairs, and larger ones are ready for drops in temperature when the family eats outside.

Stanley loves to cook and entertain in all seasons, and the family takes advantage of the terrace’s Argentine-style grill and Rocky Mountain–scale firepit year-round. For a festive après-ski party on New Year’s Day, she says, “I piled snow on top of our outdoor dining table and filled it with Champagne and oysters and caviar.” There were around 75 guests, she figures. And she has room for lots more. □