

# WESTERN Interiors & DESIGN

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Natural materials. Rich textures. Abundant light. New thinking. Interior design in the West has moved beyond the easy labels of the past. Wherever you live, we hope these pages inspire you with design ideas, fresh resources and unusual beauty.





# ASPEN

DESIGN IDEA: WHY NOT BRIGHTEN UP THE MOUNTAIN LOOK WITH LUMINOUS FABRICS AND AN UNEXPECTED MIX OF FURNISHINGS THAT STILL HAVE A LOT OF TEXTURE?

# ALIGHT

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JONN COOLIDGE / TEXT BY CAREN KURLANDER





opening page: A pivoting door, custom-made by Andre Joyau of end-cut wood tiles, marks the entrance to an Aspen, Colorado, house designed by Emily Summers. The hardware is from Gulassa. **these pages:** Two seating arrangements, illuminated by Gulassa chandeliers, give the great room versatility. Summers chose sheer wool from Coraggio Textiles for the understated draperies, and linen from Henry Calvin covers kilismo-style chairs and the long sofa in front of the window. A Chris Lebrecke daybed from Ralph Pucci International is upholstered with the reverse side of Donghia's Mala fabric for a subtler appearance, and Great Plains leather was used for the bolsters. The floor lamp is by Christian Llaigre for Holly Hunt.





left: One sitting area in the great room is near the fireplace, which was reconfigured in limestone. A Baker sofa, its frame upholstered with Great Plains leather and its cushions wrapped in linen from Bergamo, is paired with an ebonized-oak low table from Gulassa. The bookcase is iron and brass. opposite: The dark-and-light palette of the dining room is established by the custom striped rug from Cristina Grajales. Summers designed a table that could seat twelve people and surrounded it with wood-and-leather chairs from Henry Beguelin. *Peace Sign*, an acrylic work on mirrored glass by Robert Loughlin, sits atop a floating credenza from BDDW. The goose-feather pendant was designed by Heike Buchfelder and found at Moss.

**I** THINK SECOND HOMES IN PARTICULAR SHOULD BE COMFORTABLE AND fun and a little off the wall," says designer Emily Summers, who achieved just such an environment for a young family's vacation house in Aspen, Colorado. Summers, known for creating refined interiors with a contemporary bent, started her firm in Dallas close to thirty years ago after five years of graduate studies in art history and working under Stanley Marcus in Neiman Marcus's fashion office. She credits her aesthetic to those early influences as well as to what she considers Texas's relative freedom from architectural and design constraints. "We aren't tied to prewar buildings in Dallas," she explains. "We're in a community that's open to all types of architecture, both traditional and contemporary." Because of that, she approaches her projects from a unique perspective. "You start out a little differently here. You think differently," she says. "I guess living in Dallas leaves you a little more open to all possibilities."

This mind-set provided her with a fresh outlook on designing the family's house, which sits across from Aspen's North Star Nature Preserve and the Roaring Fork River. She became involved with the project shortly after the house was purchased but before construction was finished, which allowed her the opportunity to make critical changes to the interior envelope. "Everything was simplified," she says. "The floors were darkened, the walls were lightened, and we worked on every finish, changed every tile and redid the bathrooms and kitchen. We wanted to add depth and age to the otherwise new construction." But Summers was careful to integrate some regional references into the pared-down canvas. Huge rough-hewn timbers







left: "The owners love to cook and wanted a clutter-free kitchen," says Summers, who accented Modern Kitchen Center cabinets with knobs and pulls from Rocky Mountain Hardware. Waterworks Farmhouse sinks are partnered with faucets from KWC, and marble countertops add a clean surface to the space. opposite: The EM table and Standard chairs, both by Jean Prouvé from Vitra, furnish the high-traffic breakfast area off the kitchen. "They're sophisticated but sturdy enough for the kids to use," notes Summers. The light fixture is by David Weeks from Ralph Pucci International. Summers covered a Walter Knoll sectional sofa with Osborne & Little fabric in the adjoining family room.

framing the ceilings of the public rooms were left untouched, and the fireplaces throughout the house were reconfigured with dry-stacked limestone. "That works for Aspen," she says. "In my work experience, there's not much of that going on in Dallas."

As the interior architecture was conceived, the decor came along with it. "We liked the idea of using a lot of white to contrast with the chocolate-brown floors," says Summers, who also kept the palette understated and virtually pattern-free because "there's a lot to look at outside." This is especially true in the great room, which is marked by a sweeping arched picture window. "We wanted people to be drawn to the view, so we put a long, low-backed sofa in front of the window," she says. Across from that sofa are pairs of vintage rosewood armchairs and custom-embroidered klismos-style chairs, each pair near a table with a bronze base and a vintage parchment top high enough to be used for casual dining. "We wanted to keep that whole area versatile," says Summers, who created a second seating area by the fireplace in the large room. A Baker sofa, upholstered with linen and leather, is positioned near a circular Gulassa low table, and a floor lamp by Christian Liaigre for Holly Hunt stands between two armchairs. The low profile of a Chris Lehrecke daybed from Ralph Pucci International "doesn't block the center of the room," explains Summers, "and in a large crowd people can face either direction." Though the individual pieces are undeniably modern, the atmosphere feels comfortable and far from predictable. "It can look like a furniture store if you aren't careful," says Summers, who deliberately blended vintage and contemporary furnishings with custom-crafted pieces in a mix of tactile materials.

The mix continues in the dining room, which picks up the great room's high-contrast palette. "The room is not huge, and it wanted to be simple," says Summers, who designed an ebonized-oak-and-white-lacquer table and paired it with white-leather and dark-ash chairs from Aspen's Henry Beguelin shop. "With all the dark floors, I thought the white tabletop was the right way to go." A custom striped rug from Cristina Grajales softens the room, and a floating credenza by BDDW adds texture, but it's the hard-to-miss goose-feather pendant that defines the space. "We encourage risk taking," says Summers of the spherical fixture she considers functional art. "You might not put that in your main home, but how fun to do something unexpected in Aspen!" A large kitchen and its adjacent breakfast/family room provide another space for the family to congregate. "The children are young, and they want to be wherever the action is," says Summers. "In most homes it's in the kitchen." Just off the center island, a David Weeks light fixture from Ralph Pucci International hangs above Jean Prouvé's table and chairs, and a Walter Knoll sectional sofa in the family room faces the corner fireplace.







## A FOUR-POSTER IS HUNG WITH THE SAME SOFT-WHITE FABRIC USED FOR THE DRAPERIES.

above: Rogers & Goffigon wool—used for the draperies and for panels hung from the Ironies Bamboo Bed—adds softness to the master bedroom. A Poltrona Frau armchair stands in the corner, and the bedside lamps are vintage FontanaArte. opposite: Lulu DK florals mark the guest room, where a four-poster from Waldo's Designs is dressed with custom-embroidered linens. The lamp is from Paris Underground Antiques in Aspen.

Another fireplace warms a sitting area in the master bedroom, where Summers edited the furnishings down to the essentials. A four-poster from Ironies adds volume to the room and is hung with the same soft-white Rogers & Goffigon fabric used for the draperies. "The sheers extend the romantic quality of the bed and offer a little more texture," says Summers. Two custom linen-covered armchairs—detailed with embroidery—give the owners a place to read by the fire, and a Diane von Furstenberg zebra-patterned rug from The Rug Company lends punch to the otherwise tame space. For the guest room, the designer went in the opposite direction and used a liberal dose of colorful fabrics from Lulu DK. "We thought there should be one room that makes a big departure," she notes.

By punctuating the house's creamy palette with rough woods, textured stone and a few unconventional touches, Summers put her own sophisticated spin on mountain style. "Aspen is a beautiful town with a strong preservation ethic," she says. "But in the surrounding mountains the houses you see today are not just traditional. We're in the twenty-first century now, and it's okay to have contemporary homes. We don't all have to live in a Tudor or French Normandy house to be happy." +









above: Summers designed two armchairs, covered with embroidered Belgian linen, to sit near the master bedroom's fireplace. The low stool is from Henry Beguëlin, and the zebra-patterned rug is from The Rug Company. The study, just outside the room, is furnished with a desk from Antoine Proulx. opposite: "It was carved from a solid slab of marble and had to be brought into the room through the window," says Summers of the master-bath tub. The tub filler is from Waterworks. A Maarten Baas piece, *Where There's Smoke*, 2003, made from a burned Gerrit Rietveld Zig-Zag chair, "plays into the concept of this home," says Summers, "which is about adding depth and age to a modern piece."



