



**OPEN HOUSE**  
This 15,000-square-foot home's exterior comes off as comfortable, not cavernous, due to varied rooflines and an appealing mix of rustic materials, including sandstone, shingles and plank siding.

## SLEIGHT OF HAND

THANKS TO CLEVER DESIGN AND A BLEND OF TRADITIONAL AND CONTEMPORARY AESTHETICS, A LARGE ASPEN HOME HIDES ITS SIZE WELL.

By Drew Limsky  
Photography by Brands & Kribbs Architectural Photography

What happens when a client wants a home with substantial square footage to accommodate guests comfortably, but doesn't want it to feel cavernous inside or look like a mountain fortress from the outside? For one local couple, it meant calling on Aspen-based Brewster McLeod Architects.

Jamie L. Brewster McLeod, AIA, the firm's president and founder, knows what homeowners in the West want, having built a career specializing in high-end custom homes in Aspen, Telluride and San Francisco. For this more-than-ample-size home on 5.7 acres in Pyramid Point Estates at the Maroon Creek Club, McLeod approached the design from the outside in for her own interpretation of mountain modern.

"When you drive up to the house, we didn't want you to feel like this was a three-story home," she says. (Actually, four stories: There's a subgrade level as well.) That was no easy trick, given that the home is 15,000 square feet with six bedrooms. At the same time, it's not out of character with the neighborhood. "This is the last house in that development," McLeod says. "It's on probably the best of the five lots—and they all contain 11,000- to

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**LIGHT TOUCH**

Clockwise from top: Windows in the great room frame the view of Pyramid Peak; a glass border along the stairs adds an unexpectedly airy element; statement-making pendants anchor the kitchen.



...CONTINUED 13,500-square-foot homes.”

Rustic materials and varied rooflines help disguise the house’s size. “We used hand-cut Oklahoma stone and sandstone,” McLeod says, while noting that the same stone may have different names depending on location. The texture of the Oklahoma sandstone wall was achieved by random-laid dry stack; McLeod also used horizontal 2-by-14 plank siding to the right of the entryway and on the back of the house, and added shake singles above the garage. The roof consists of class-A DaVinci synthetic slate tiles, accented with metal. They’re still fire-resistant, but weigh less and are easier to maintain than natural slate.

The effect of the different textures and setbacks did a lot to allay the homeowners’

concerns about appearance. “Even in photos, this doesn’t look like a 15,000-square-foot house,” McLeod says. “That was really key for them. It has the appearance of a one- or a one-and-a-half-story house as you approach.” Guests are not overwhelmed by the space when they see the exterior, and once inside, they’re drawn to its openness. “When you walk through the front door, you actually see down the hallway, through the great room and to Pyramid Peak,” says McLeod. “That was the effect they wanted: ‘Wow, look at this amazing view.’”

A trick of perspective also welcomes in visitors. “People walk into a small space that rises as they find their way to the great room,” McLeod explains. “We raised the roof for a feeling of grandeur.” CONTINUED...



“The clients wanted the outside of the house to be mountain and the inside contemporary—but not in a way that’s jarring,” McLeod explains.



#### LUXE LOUNGING

Clockwise from top: The upper-level master bedroom with sitting area looks out to Pyramid Peak; a lap pool with retractable walls perfectly blends indoors and out; amply sized his and hers baths, filled with natural light, are part of the master suite.

...CONTINUED Rich materials do their part to connect inside and out, such as fir timbers that have a natural oil to them. Inside, the same Oklahoma sandstone that was used for the exterior appears on the great room fireplace. Luxe gas fireplaces from Town and Country and durable bleached walnut flooring also accent the interior.

The sleek, glass-bordered staircase that goes to the master suite also reflects the interiors’ modern aesthetic. “The clients wanted the outside of the house to be mountain and the inside contemporary—but not in a way that’s jarring,” McLeod explains.

In terms of light, the homeowners desired it to be as natural as possible. That meant no chandeliers and a day-lit pool area. “A lot of times we put pools where there’s no natural light, but this client is a huge swimmer. She swims every day,” McLeod says. “So we put in a 42-foot wall of doors, stackable and operable by a button.” Limestone in the pool surround also contributes to a light, airy feel.

In the rest of the house, the homeowners opted

for soft lighting, provided by ample table lamps and recessed lighting cans. (One notable exception is the trio of oversize pendants above the kitchen island.)

The main floor, especially, was carefully conceived for convenience, both for today and for the future. It includes the kitchen, dining room, great room and an office, as well as a guest master suite, which McLeod installed for practical reasons. “I always like to put a guest master on the main level, so that clients don’t need to go up and down stairs as they age,” she says.

But until that inevitability occurs, the homeowners can ascend the commanding staircase that leads to an upper level containing only the primary master suite, which includes a sitting area, hot tub, his and her bathrooms with separate closets, and a bedroom that looks out on 14,018-foot-high Pyramid Peak. “The clients really wanted to have their own spaces, so when they have 20 guests, they don’t feel like there are people living on top of them,” says McLeod. Thus, a zone of cozy was achieved within a (sometimes) full house. **A**