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Country Comfort

**Plus: Ranches, Barns,
Lake Houses, Aspen Resort
and AD's Oscar Greenroom**



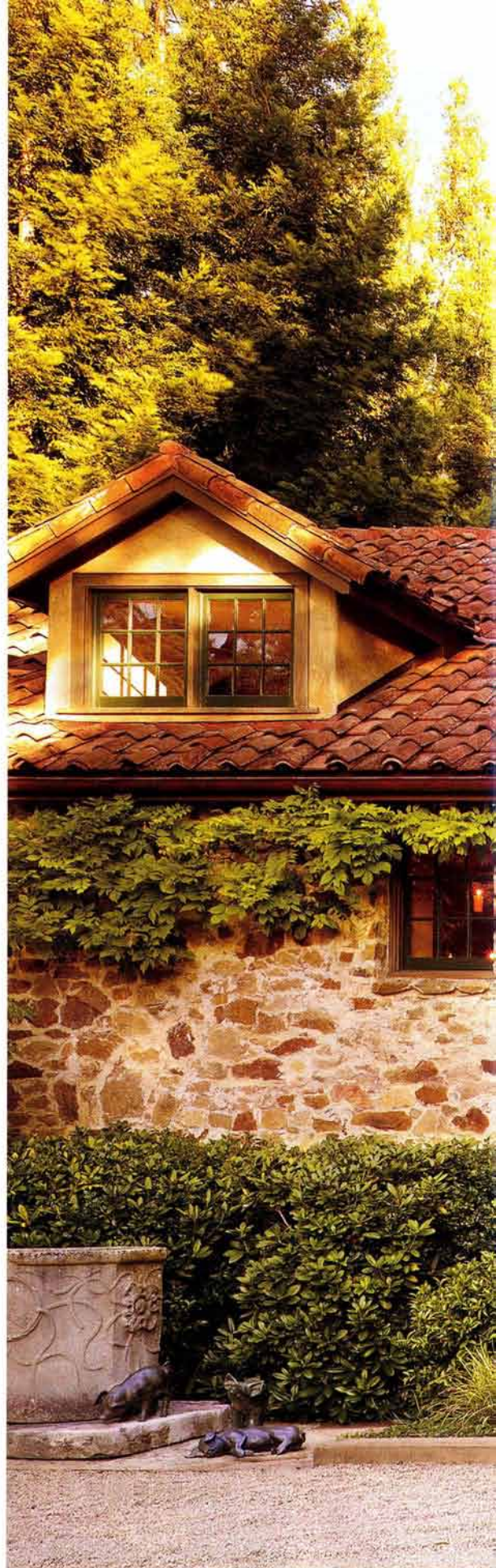
Second Look

A FORMER SILICON VALLEY WINERY IS
WARMLY RECAST AS A RESIDENCE

Architecture by J. E. Caldwell | Interior Design by Suzanne Tucker, ASID
Landscape Architecture by Todd R. Cole
of Suzman & Cole Design Associates
Text by Jeff Turrentine | Photography by Matthew Millman



On a lush oasis in Silicon Valley, designer Suzanne Tucker and architect J. E. Caldwell remodeled an early-20th-century stone winery into a 2,300-square-foot residence (right). ABOVE: Paintings by Joe Draegert adorn the living room walls, along with an 18th-century Danish curio shelf, antique wine pitchers from France's Beaujolais region and a Khotan carpet. A stairway leads to the new second story.





"This is the house I was meant to do," declares Tucker. In the living room, a 1925 wrought iron Edgar Brandt fire screen echoes the forms in a large contemporary work by Tom Holland.





A *l di là* means you're far above me, very far *Al di là*, as distant as the lovely evening star."

"Al Di Là," a chestnut of Italian popular song, tells of flowers that bloom in the wake of the singer's beloved, of gloom that turns to sunshine with a single smile. It may not be Shakespeare, but as far as three-minute celebrations of otherworldly beauty go, it's hard to beat.

Al Di Là is also the name bestowed upon a homestead in a lushly wooded sliver of Silicon Valley, anchored by a stone building that does indeed seem to possess magical properties. Erected more than 100 years ago, it became the headquarters of a successful winery that survived the physical devastation of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and the economic devastation of Prohibition. Shortly after ceasing operation as a winery, the building and surrounding land were purchased and turned into a home.

Roughly half a century later, a married couple from the Bay Area acquired the property and embarked on a three-year endeavor to transform a modest cottage into a delightful sylvan hideaway. Then they asked a friend and previous collabora-

tor, designer Suzanne Tucker of the San Francisco-based firm Tucker & Marks, if she'd be willing to help them renovate.

Tucker, who worked for many years alongside the legendary California designer Michael Taylor, was interested. Her interest blossomed into full-blown enthusiasm with a single word from her client: "As soon as she said 'stone,' I got chills. I had always wanted to do a stone house; I'd always said that I would one day."

Bronze statues—of attentive deer, a grazing horse, even a giant snail—surround the stone house, as if drawn ineluctably to its charms. Human visitors are pulled in much the same way to the front door, guarded by a pair of 19th-century Italian stone putti and illuminated by iron lantern sconces whose tops echo the roof of reclaimed Italian terra-cotta tiles.

When the single, undivided space of the original stone building was converted into a house in the 1960s, it was broken up into three volumes, the largest of which Tucker and architect J. E. Caldwell turned into a great room. Although its 24-foot ceilings and contemporary cast-stone fireplace may come as a surprise to anyone who has just entered via the rustic front door,

"We completely reorganized the interior of the building," says Caldwell. ABOVE: The family room, where the ceiling was lowered, shares a space with the dining area (below).





it's easy enough to return to rusticity by walking into the adjacent family room and dining area, where antique beams and the small, circular dining table surrounded by wicker-backed chairs affirm the farmhouse feel.

Above this area is the new master bedroom, carved out of thin air when Tucker and Caldwell halved the family room/dining room volume and put in a stairwell leading up to it, creating a second story. Painted a warm cinnamon, it rests se-

renely up in the house's eaves, taking full architectural advantage of the pronounced angles afforded by the roofline.

Other clients and designers might have insisted on expanding the original house, which would have detracted from the intimacy that makes it so special in the first place. "There's always the *trompe l'oeil* effect that you can usually get away with as a designer," says Tucker. "But if you just play the hand that you've been dealt as far as scale and form go, you oftentimes

get something better. I try to appreciate space for what it is, not regret what it isn't." The solution came in the form of two new, freestanding structures that Caldwell and Tucker designed. One of them is the art studio/sitting room, where a magnificent arch of climbing hydrangeas frames the doorway. The other is the guesthouse, whose two bedrooms open onto a generous terrace and whose small sitting room—with its fireplace, denim-upholstered chairs and 19th-century Pyre-



LEFT: The new master bedroom was carved out under the eaves. A 1967 landscape by Wayne Thiebaud hangs among antique furniture. Cowtan & Tout floral bed drapery fabric. Bench stripe, Clarence House.

ABOVE: Old oak beams were added to the master bedroom. Glant chenille on chair and ottoman cushions. **BELOW:** A sunset by Caldwell decorates a bedroom in a new guesthouse that opens onto the clay tennis court.



nean pine chest called into service as a low table—is the quintessence of cozy.

"If I were to use one word to describe this house, it would have to be *enchanted*," says Tucker. Its namesake tune carries the theme: "*Al di là*, I wondered, as I drifted, where you were/*Al di là*, the fog around me lifted, there you were." When the famous Bay Area fog burns off to reveal a house like this one, festooned with flora and bur-nished by 100 years of history, it's hard not to hear a song in your heart. □





LEFT: Todd R. Cole landscaped the property with mature trees and created gardens for entertaining all year-round. Perennials fabric on chair cushions. **TOP:** The house was reroofed with antique Italian tiles. **ABOVE:** The new art studio can also accommodate guests. Lee Jofa chair fabric. Sofa pillow fabric, Clarence House.