



BOLD EMBRACE



A Los Gatos couple breaks with their traditional roots and builds a modern dream home.

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Nestled in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains, the town of Los Gatos has charmed generations of residents and visitors. The village-like center vibrant with shops and restaurants beckoned Larry and Audrey Fox. “Our kids are grown and off at college,” related Larry. “We’ve dreamed about our next chapter (the chapter after the family-friendly cul-de-sac) and those dreams led us here (to a corner lot within walking distance of everything).” Larry beams as he tells this tale. His pride and joy surrounds us. This is a man at home in the dream home that he and his wife meticulously and painstakingly built.

As Larry likes to say, he’s in the trade. The owner of the award-winning Valet Custom Closets and Cabinets, Larry knows what he’s talking about when it comes to building. It’s no wonder that his first order of business after finding the perfect lot was to assemble a dream team of professionals to execute the vision he and Audrey shared.

“Our last house was traditional,” he recalls, “and we were ready for a change.” At first Larry wondered how contemporary Audrey would be willing to go, but she dove right in and embraced the clean, modern aesthetic. Together they worked with the team at Studio 3 Design architecture, Zicovich Builders, and renowned interior designer Pamela Pennington to craft a sophisticated residence that lends itself to entertaining.

Glass, stone, steel, and hardwoods are expertly mixed throughout the residence. As visitors enter through a massive pivot door the eye is drawn through the heart of the home and straight out the contemporary courtyard garden to the right is a home office outfitted with a built-in wrap-around desk that conceals everything from computer cords to the printer. On the opposite side of the entry is the master suite with a stunning master bath and, of course showplace of a closet sure to make fashionistas swoon.

Back in the entry a wonderfully textured

wall of stone is enhanced by a dramatic staircase with glass railing that leads to two-bedrooms and baths with decidedly European flair. "When the kids are home they can really have their own space," says Larry. Designer Pamela Pennington adds, "The Foxes wanted the baths to be distinct in each room, but also to have an overall connection." To that end Pennington selected classic white tiles with pops of Scandinavian-inspired orange and yellow. "The color is unexpected," she notes. "But classic."

On the ground floor the great room is a massive space with cerused hardwood floors and a crisp charcoal and white palette. Pennington added punches of sapphire blue, saffron, and plum, echoing the sky at sunset and mountains beyond the wall of windows. In the formal dining area, leather chairs from San Francisco's Nido Living surround a lengthy table. Eschewing a traditional chandelier, Pennington opted for a series of glass globes by Bocci. To add interest to the wall, she added Shiborino Giardini paper from Sloan Miyasato. The breakfast nook features a mid-century classic table and chairs by Saarinen from Design Within Reach and a bench covered in Brentano fabric. A translucent screen with Kauri pattern from Lumicor defines an entry space—offering the Foxes a spot to set down groceries, coats, and keys when entering from the garage through the courtyard garden.

A sprawling sectional from Bo Concept and a pair of swivel chairs from Nido Living help define the living room area while a monolithic fireplace clad in stone emphasizes the great room's impressive ceiling height.

The kitchen and its cabinetry are a particular favorite of the Foxes. "Our team at Valet Custom Closets and Cabinetry doesn't really work on kitchens. Our business is focused on closets, home offices, studies, and garage cabinetry, but we had to make an exception here," smiles Larry. The sleek cabinets open upward, as if by magic, at a single touch of the hand. The central island is topped in quartzite from All Natural Stone and illuminated by a Vibia light fixture that doubles as a hanging work of art from Nido Living.

The result is a home that is as functional as it is beautiful. Notes Larry, "We just couldn't be happier—it's a dream house in every way." ♦



