

Cloud

In the heart of Napa Valley,
Russell Groves transforms
a humdrum, half-finished
house into a heavenly
retreat for longtime clients

TEXT BY **STEPHEN WALLIS**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DOUGLAS FRIEDMAN**

STYLED BY **CARLOS MOTA**



Nine

FOG BLANKETS LYDIA CALLAGHAN AND ADAM WEISS'S
NAPA VALLEY ESTATE, WHICH WAS DESIGNED BY
RUSSELL GROVES OF GROVES & CO. POOL CHAISES
BY CRATE AND BARREL. FOR DETAILS SEE SOURCES.



Adam Weiss likes to begin most days at his family's Napa Valley getaway with a stroll.

Perched high up in the Mayacamas Mountains, on the valley's western edge, the home enjoys stunning views in every direction. "You get this coastal fog that settles in at night," says Weiss. "After I wake up, I'll walk around the gardens and watch the mist burn off. When the sun breaks through those clouds, it's just spectacular."

If the mornings here are magical, the afternoons and evenings can be even more so, which is what drew Weiss and his wife, Lydia Callaghan, to the house. Their primary residence is two hours south, in Palo Alto, where he runs a hedge fund

and she recently launched Bouclier, a company that makes bicycle helmet visors designed to provide full-face sun protection. The couple and their twin preteen daughters come to Napa year-round, often with friends and extended family in tow. Days are spent playing on the tennis court, splashing in the infinity pool, or hiking down rugged trails to the creek that runs through the 250-acre property. Sunsets are frequently enjoyed with wine in hand, and star-filled skies and the occasional meteor put on nighttime shows. "In the summer, especially, we like to light a fire on the porch and make s'mores and play board games," Callaghan says.

The vision from the beginning, she explains, was to create a retreat that would be "rustic and fun and camplike." To do so, Callaghan and Weiss enlisted Russell Groves, the architect and designer who has done all of their homes and offices



ABOVE CALLAGHAN AND WEISS ON A TERRACE. **TOP** SUTHERLAND LOUNGE CHAIRS IN A PERENNIALS FABRIC BORDER THE FIRE PIT. **OPPOSITE** A ROBERT MANGOLD PAINTING PUNCTUATES THE LIVING ROOM, WHICH IS CROWNED BY A BESPOKE CHANDELIER OF GROVES'S DESIGN.

over the past 14 years—now seven projects in total. Certain they wanted a place in Napa, the couple initially eyed move-in-ready homes, until their broker insisted they look at this property. A developer was midway through building a house in a château style that, Groves recalls, was a bit too McMansion-esque.

But at 12,000 square feet, with eight bedrooms, including a two-bedroom guesthouse, it would allow for lots of visitors—and the setting was irresistible. “We thought, Wow, even if it’s going to be a major project, this place is so breathtaking,” says Callaghan. Adds Groves, “I don’t mean to deny our creativity, but you could have done practically nothing to this house and it would have been amazing because of its setting.”

In the end, however, Groves and his team spent more than two years on a gut renovation of the residence, which

Callaghan and Weiss now call Rancho. In addition to putting on a new standing-seam metal roof and recladding the exterior with gray cedar panels, Groves replaced generic wood windows and doors with larger, leaner ones in steel, dramatically bringing in more light. He also created unimpeded sight lines that extend from the front porch through the house and—thanks to a retractable glass wall—all the way out to the pool and beyond.

When that 70-foot-wide window wall is open, as it often is, the rear terrace and the double-height great room become one continuous space. “Merging indoors and outdoors was a top priority,” says Weiss. “We wanted the house to be the kind of place where everyone would feel relaxed and at home and in nature.”

Which is not to say the house is lacking in refinement. Oak paneling and

floorboards, stained in subtle shades of gray, and earthy Heath Ceramics tiles can be found throughout the rooms. The furnishings, meanwhile, are a sophisticated mix of midcentury-modern and bespoke pieces. In the great room, a showstopping table and set of chairs custom made by George Nakashima Woodworker anchor the dining area, while vintage Nakashima armchairs and ottomans accent the living area. And there's more Nakashima in the master suite, including the bed's headboard and built-in side tables.

When it comes to furniture, Weiss and Callaghan mostly defer to Groves, but it's a different story with art, which Weiss says is his real passion. He has

“Merging indoors and outdoors was a top priority,” says Weiss.

a particular affinity for postwar works by artists such as Richard Artschwager, Brice Marden, and Robert Mangold, whose shaped yellow canvas is given pride of place above the living area hearth. Across the room is one of Sol LeWitt's iconic white grid sculptures. “It's so mathematical, so geometric,” says Callaghan. “Everyone delights in that piece.”

Certainly Rancho is often buzzing with visitors. “This house is actually much bigger than one we would have built,” says Weiss, “but there are many times when it is completely full with family and friends.” Which is exactly how the couple wants it. “That's the magic of the place,” Weiss adds. “If I died next week, I would remember all the lovely times we've shared up here.” Easy to say, perhaps, when you've already got your own little bit of heaven. ▲





ABOVE THE MASTER BATH OPENS ONTO NATURE THANKS TO RECEDING POCKET DOORS. TUB FITTINGS BY DORNBRACHT.