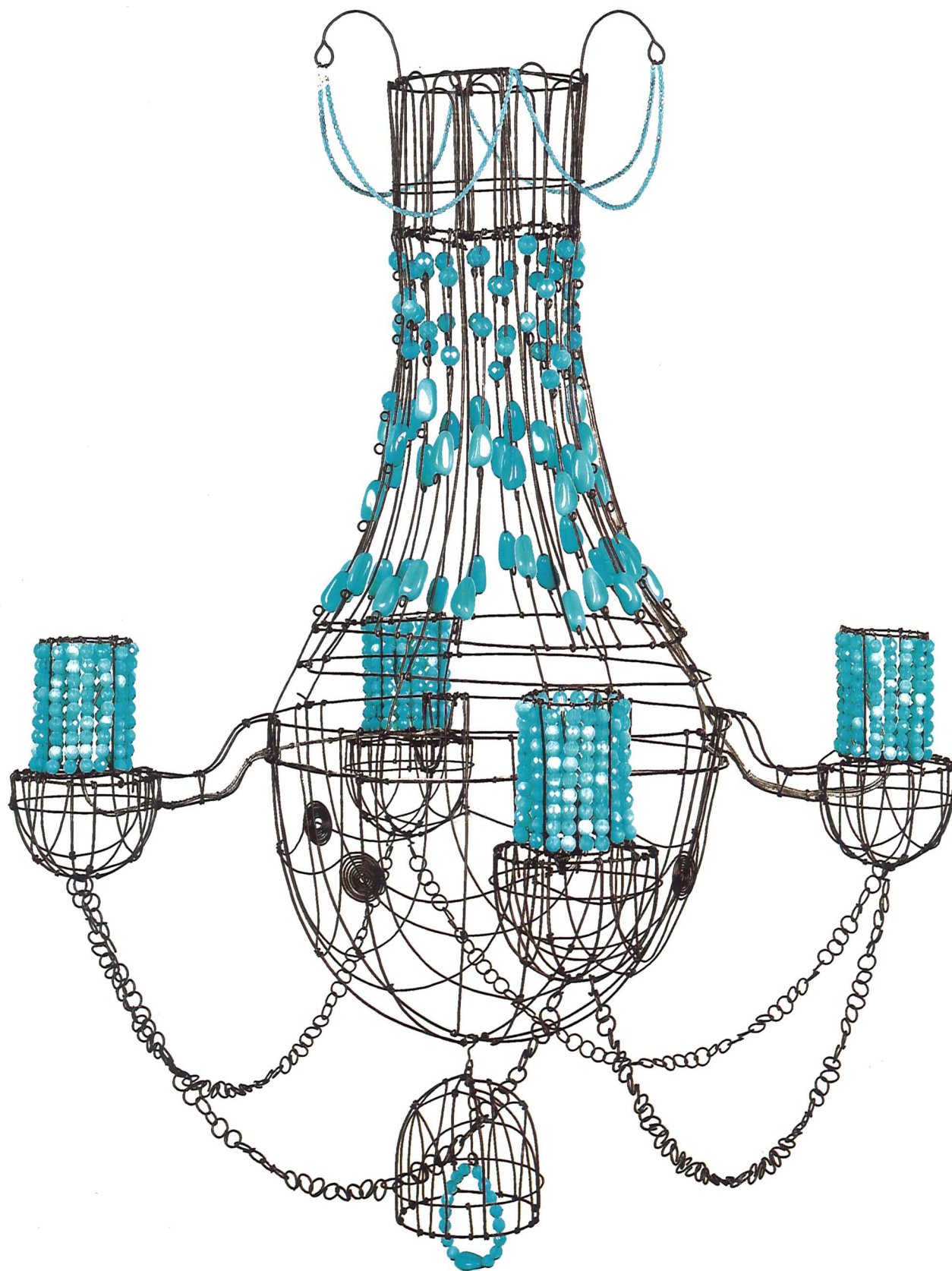


LUXE

THE COLORADO HOME REDEFINED™



\$ 6.95 A SANDOW MEDIA PUBLICATION

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DOUBLE VISION

WRITTEN BY PATRICK SORAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID O. MARLOW AND NICK TININENKO

EVERY OWNER AND ARCHITECT WHO BUILD A HOME TOGETHER AIM FOR A COMMON TARGET: THE OWNER'S DOMESTIC BLISS. By his own admission, the owner of this Aspen home is a frustrated architect, and the architect is a creative perfectionist. "Every house is an adventure taken by the owner and the designer together," says principal architect Charles Cuniffe of Aspen-based Charles Cuniffe Architects. "With this one, the owner was so passionate and knowledgeable that working together was more like a continuous dialogue about design."

The site is a bit of land that became available when the old Aspen Club carved up some of its parking—rare acreage near the heart of town. The owner bought the property when it was under snow, thinking he could build a house to sell. But come spring, he and his wife realized that it would be perfect for their own mountain retreat. To make the deal sweeter, the lot lays out in such a way that careful planning would allow views of both Aspen Mountain and Independence Pass. "A great house reacts to how it is sited," says Cuniffe, "and responds to its larger setting in the world."

ARCHITECT Charles Cuniffe
HOME BUILDER John Olson
INTERIOR DESIGNER Charles Cuniffe
BEDROOMS 4 BATHROOMS 8 SQUARE FEET 6,614







TRUSSED UP

Scissor trusses bear up the steep roof. Light strips set into the top of each part of the truss make it appear almost weightless. Table and light fixture were handcrafted in Aspen.



STYLE SELECTION

An updated take on the traditional coffee table, this edgy version is upholstered in dark leather and finished with a nailhead trim. *York Table*, price available upon request; victoriahaganhome.com



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Indeed, setting and siting determined the layout of the entire home. Since the land is flat, Cuniffe put the living spaces—living and dining rooms, kitchen and deck—on the uppermost level. This raises them up to take better advantage of the views and allows for a more exciting exploration of the ceiling and roof forms. The living area, which Cuniffe calls the gathering room, is on a direct line of vision to Aspen Mountain. The views of Independence Pass are on a right angle, so he set the dining room on that axis and tied the two volumes together with roof forms that integrate high trusses and a more intimate lower ceiling.

Cuniffe placed the bedrooms and entertainment room on the lower level, along with a large walk-out space. Tucked under the kitchen deck, this nearly 700-square-foot outdoor room has a fireplace, upholstered seating and a connection to the kitchen deck via a spiral stair. It is heated with built-in radiant heating, meaning it can be used as an outdoor room in all but the bitterest weather. "It's one of many ways we connected the indoors and the outdoors," says Cuniffe.

OLIVE GARDEN

A screen wall made of rare olive wood displays sculpture obtained during travels. The screen is held above the floor on legs and under-lit so it appears to float.







ON AXIS

The dining table, crafted by Denver furniture maker Ethan Hutchinson, is aligned with Independence Pass to capture the incredible views.



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Another method is with the materials. Cuniffe and the owner decided on a color palette of subtle earth tones, and then selected building and finish materials that worked into that scheme. The stone was collected from several quarries. It shows up on both the exterior façades and the interior elevations. The gathering room's ceiling of clear Douglas fir seems to slip right through the glass walls, blending inner and outer spaces. The tile floor of the outdoor room appears to disintegrate into ribbons of grass.

Other materials are more refined—even rarified. Doors are horizontal-grain sustainable bamboo. Rarely used olive wood makes up several sculpture-displaying dividing walls. Column covers are patinated steel attached with custom-designed screws. Kitchen cabinets are carefully selected white oak. "We weren't interested in the usual mountain log kind of design," says the owner. "We wanted to ratchet up the sophistication a couple notches, while still responding to the setting."

KITCHEN MAGICIAN

The cabinetry is made of quarter-sawn white oak. A glass breakfast bar is held above the concrete counter on pairs of steel tubes.



PRETTY PATIO

Furniture from Restoration Hardware flanks the polished-concrete fireplace. The dry-stacked stone was gathered from several quarries and hand-picked to create the pattern.

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A similar strategy—merging Aspen’s rugged and refined sides—unites the furniture. The Italian bag and shoe master, Henry Beguelin, designed many of the pieces throughout. And the dining table and many of the built-ins made of American walnut and wenge wood were crafted by Denver furniture maker Ethan Hutchinson. All the furniture pieces are envisioned as sculpture, as is the floating, side-lit stairway created by Cuniffe and project architect Tim Stone.

“This home takes everyday elements of design, like scissor trusses or a stairway,” says Cuniffe, “and elevates them from mere construction into the realm of sculpture.” **L**