Modern With Memory

New architecture meets generations of family history in Central Oregon

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By many standards, the house clinging to a steep slope in Eagle Crest could be considered a show home, but that wasn't Marcie and Rick Gwins' intention. After a recent family gathering, Marcie exclaimed, "The house was completely destroyed." Instead of hiring cleaners, they stuck to their usual routine. Marcie dusted and wiped counters; Rick vacuumed. On a typical day, Marcie cooks and Rick does dishes—a workable solution for half a century together.

After 46 years of marriage and two custom homes, the Gwins knew what they wanted from their next chapter: a warm, inviting place for family and friends to be together. They chose a lot on the southwestern edge of Eagle Crest Resort where they built a mountain-modern house with views framing the Cascade Range, from Mount Bachelor to Mount Jefferson and, on clear days, even Mount Hood. Inside, family heirlooms and artful touches mingle with a color palette inspired by the Central Oregon landscape.

Approaching the house is a heady experience. A steep driveway winds up the hillside before making a tight turn into the east-facing courtyard. "We wanted guests to see through the architecture from the east side to the Cascades as they get out of their car and breathe a sigh of relief," said home designer Darrin Hollyman. Arrival offers a first glimpse of the majesty at the heart of Hollyman's vision.

The two-level, 4,097-square-foot home offers a view from nearly every room, including some unexpected ones. Entering from the garage, the owners glimpse the mountains through the butler's pantry. From the terrace, they get another intriguing sight: car headlights winding down the east side of Santiam Pass toward Sisters at night.

STRONG OREGON TIES

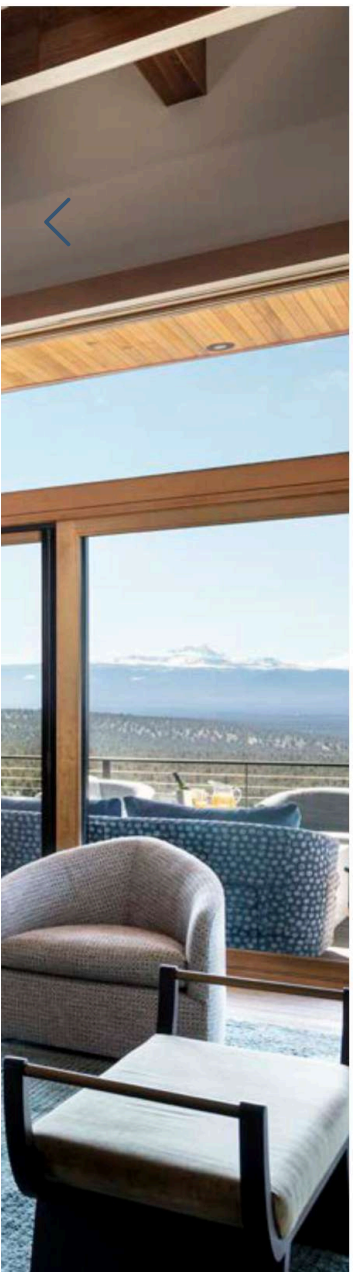
The Gwins grew up in Vernonia and were high school sweethearts. They raised a family while operating a family-owned logging company, now run by their son, Cody. Their daughter, Nikki, and her family live in Redmond. The Gwins' family history became part of the home's design.

Marcie trusted Jennifer Leonard, principal of Nifelle Design in Portland, to bring the feeling they were after to life. Marking a third collaboration, the project was a welcome return home for Leonard, a Bend native with a long history of designing in Central Oregon and partnering with local artisans. For the new build, Nifelle Design worked on everything from custom elevations, cabinetry and lighting plans to the final furnishings, textiles and accessories.









Hollyman and Redmond's Wittmer Construction teamed up with Leonard on the hillside home the couple would ultimately fill with treasures collected over decades. Family heirlooms mingle with travel mementos and original and antique art curated by Leonard. Wood is woven throughout, a natural connection to the Gwins' Oregon logging roots.

A TOUR OF DISCOVERY

The open floor plan integrates black-walnut-wrapped beams in the kitchen for a more intimate feeling, while a higher coffered ceiling in the living room creates space for a fireplace surrounded by Venetian plaster. Layered by artisan Tom Hickey of Cacafuego Arts & Decoration, the creamy plaster contrasts with the room's dark, heavy beams. The fireplace wall displays shed antlers in a simple "V" pattern. An antique saddle that Marcie found in Aurora—which Rick secretly bought for her birthday—stands in a living room corner, a little piece of the West brought indoors.

Leonard created custom furnishings that don't compete with the "insane natural beauty outside," she said. "The color of the great room's silk rug is the same shade as juniper berries, the kitchen's Illusion stone has the chalky slate blue-green of juniper mixed with sagebrush, and the burnt-sienna mohair sofa mirrors the warm glow of a high-desert sunset."

Rather than standard stair railings, Leonard designed a handcrafted red oak divider reminiscent of a Frank Lloyd Wright screen, running from the ceiling to the lower level and masterfully executed by local woodworker Nathan Wismer. On the stairwell, two Lawson Glass crystal and hand-poured bronze gazelle horns poke fun at passersby. Across from the staircase, the powder room's glazed smoky taupe walls, also by Hickey, feature Portland artist April Coppini's charcoal drawing of two hummingbirds in flight. Her work appears throughout the home.

Nearby, the couple's shared office is rich with history. Each has an old chair that belonged to a parent. John Clayson, a Bend craftsman, created custom built-ins from Nifelle Design



OPPOSITE PAGE: Spaces made for easy entertaining.

THIS: The powder room.

BELOW: The kitchen features blue-green Illusion stone.





PHOTO BY SARAH JEAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Marcie and Rick Gwin



and "brought Marcie's leather wraparound desk to life," Leonard said. The hallway features a built-in bench with bookcases flanking the family photo gallery.

FILLED WITH LIFE

To enhance the interplay between interior and exterior space, Hollyman incorporated terraces and 8-foot cantilevered, covered roof extensions off the great room, primary suite and front entry. The same is true in the lower level, where visitors gather to watch TV in the large family room, chat at the bar while Rick mixes drinks or step outside to breathe in the desert's earthy, aromatic notes.

Each terrace offers seating, including a fire pit off the front room and an outdoor kitchen equipped with a barbecue. "It's wonderful when the wind isn't blowing," Rick said with a laugh, admitting he sometimes barbecues in the garage for protection.

While Rick handles the grill, he gives Marcie full credit for many of the design choices. Walking through the home, she highlights details she adores, such as a favorite photograph, a dramatic light fixture, a hand-cut quartz onyx dining centerpiece and grass-cloth wallpaper.

The best proof that the couple and their design team got it right comes after the Gwins have been away. No matter where they travel, they're eager to return to the

