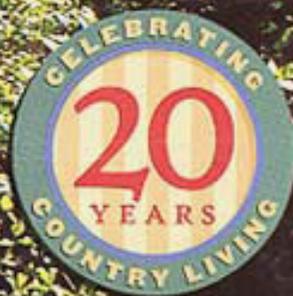


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# Mountain Haven

*On a hillside in Southern California, two visions unite in a personal interpretation of country style*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLAUDIO SANTINI

**W**HEN A COUPLE SETS OUT TO DESIGN A HOME OF THEIR own, they must not only fix a budget and find solid ground on which to build, but also seek out a common ground to bridge disparate design preferences. Constructed in sections throughout the 1980s, this hillside retreat made of logs and corrugated steel reflects the diverse sensibilities of Nicholas Paul Walker and Wendy Walker. Nicholas, who grew up in Paris in a house designed by master architect Le Corbusier (1887–1965), leans toward a modern aesthetic, while Wendy favors a more traditional American country look. With the help of architect Melinda Gray, Nicholas and Wendy built a Southern California home that keeps interior spaces large, light, and open. Enduring building materials—wood, stone, and steel—contribute to a look that complements contemporary pieces and classic collectibles alike.

**Above:** Built in three distinct units, the hillside house features a variety of roof styles, all fashioned of steel. The exterior suggests the rugged spirit of a pioneer log cabin melded with the materials and angles of contemporary architecture.

**Right:** In the main living unit, dubbed the “adult house,” Western red-cedar logs and Southern pine floors provide a

rustic backdrop for Wendy’s cherished antiques. A collection of Staffordshire plates and a handcarved wooden cherub are displayed above the slate fireplace, which has been outfitted with a new mantel modeled after classic architectural moldings. Well suited for rooms where music is pursued, the domed ceiling enhances acoustics.

ARCHITECT: MELINDA GRAY, A.J.A. FOR RESOURCES, SEE ADDRESS INDEX.



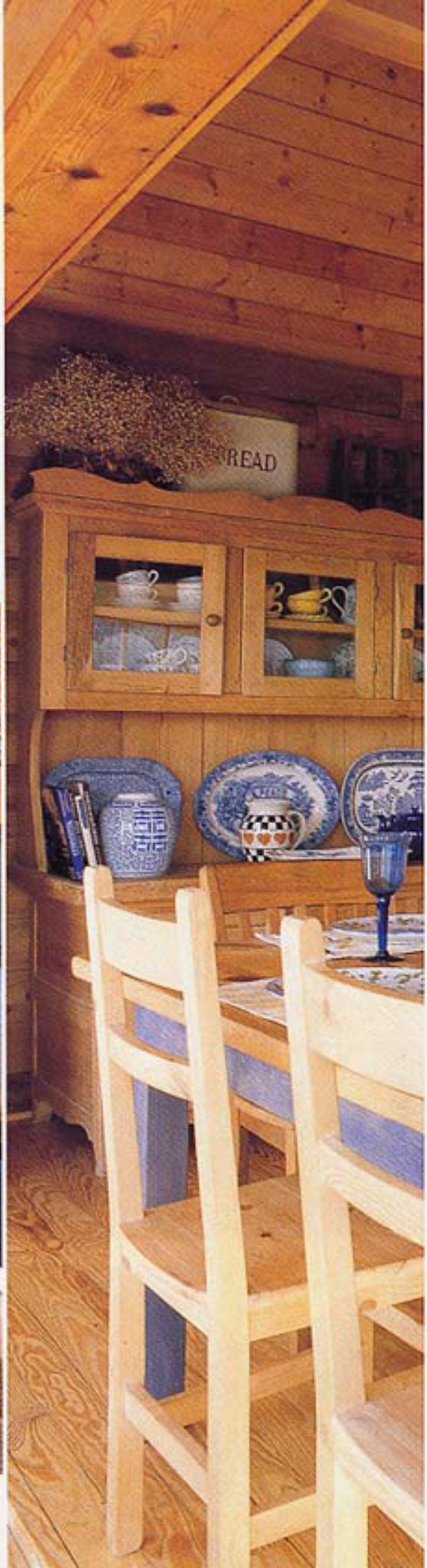


*Below:* "I wanted a kitchen that allowed for movement and conversation, so that I could cook and still be part of the party," says Nicholas. To facilitate his concept of casual entertaining, a spacious two-sided hearth unit was situated at the heart of this home, incorporating both cooking and dining areas.

*Right:* Separated from the cook's domain by the slate fireplace, the welcoming dining area is furnished with sturdy pieces that hold their own against the room's strong architectural elements. For a time, the Douglas fir tabletop served as the home's front door; design alterations brought it to its present site.

*"I wanted a kitchen that allowed for movement and conversation, so that I could cook and still be part of the party."*

—homeowner Nicholas Paul Walker







Fresh white linens stand out against the dramatic cedar-log walls of the master suite, one of three bedrooms located in the log home's dormitory unit. An extra length of fabric suspended above the bed echoes the line of the vaulted spruce ceiling.

Four decks were an integral part of the design concept, intended to enable family and friends to take full advantage of the warm Southern California climate and the spectacular scenery. With both mountain and ocean views—and the moon and stars at night—the three-and-a-half-acre property seeks to offer the best of all worlds.

