

A-PLUS

A Vintage A-Frame in Steamboat Springs
Is Reimagined as a Light-Filled Retreat



STORY CHASE REYNOLDS EWALD
PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID PATTERSON
ARCHITECTURE/BUILDER GERBER BEREND DESIGN BUILD
INTERIOR DESIGNER INTO THE WEST



OPPOSITE: A ski home
in Steamboat Springs
celebrates the iconic shape
of a classic A-frame. THIS
PAGE: A new addition al-
lowed for a modern kitchen
with a ski-mountain view.



A New Hampshire couple had been coming to Steamboat Springs for over 30 years with their children and grandchildren and were ready now to create a Colorado vacation home to share with their extended family. “We had a vision to create a more lasting place to be together as a family,” the homeowner says. When they stumbled upon an A-frame nestled in the woods, they recognized it as a hidden gem.

Other architects had recommended they demolish and start fresh, but Gerber Berend Design Build shared the couple’s vision to re-create the home. Jeff Gerber and Tanya Lillehoff appreciated their clients’ ability to see past the original design’s limitations. The clients not only saw the A-frame’s potential but committed to celebrating its ethos.

Though roomy for an A-frame, with three stories and access to the outdoors on two levels, the structure had issues. Original finishes leaned orange; interiors were dark. The lack of entry and mudroom was a problem, as was the cramped kitchen in a tacked-on addition. “But there was something magical about the A-frame,” the homeowner says. “We saw the potential to reinterpret it in a European contemporary style.”

Today the structure is light-filled and imbued with drama. “We reinvented it,” explains Gerber “first by relocating built-in-intensive spaces such as kitchen and mudroom outside the A-frame, leaving its classic shape intact. And second, by introducing contemporary steel and glass detailing in the hanging glass box, kitchen shelving, banquet table and sleek modern finishes and fixtures.” >>

Gerber Berend Design Build embraced the qualities of a 1970s-era A-frame. Its three-story design offers outdoor access on two levels. A simple cross-gable addition created opportunity for a light-filled kitchen, mudroom and dedicated entry.



The biggest transformation was the cross-gable addition which houses the laundry, bath, mechanical room and mudroom on the lower floor. Previously, guests entered directly into a narrow galley kitchen; now they pass through a shed-roofed entry into a vaulted space where steel windows extend to the apex of the steeply sloped ceiling, framing the ski mountain. A copper-clad bump-out with a leather banquette and steel table overlooks the valley view. Light-toned wood ceilings, gleaming countertops, minimalist shelving, and lighting fixtures imagined as eggshell-like orbs contribute to the unexpectedly airy aesthetic.

The heart of the original A-frame is its great room. The architects extended it toward the valley view, stained the ceiling, and built a sleek deck to expand the living space. The rough stone fireplace was preserved for vintage appeal. Two bedrooms tuck into the back side, while the lower level of the A-frame houses two bunk rooms, a full bath, a rec room and deck with hot tub. The upstairs master suite features the second "big move" of the project. Gerber designed a glass corner, supported by hanging >>

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Designer Kim Romick of Into the West helped select furnishings that speak to the region, including antler accents and a Jace Romick photograph called "Blanco 2." Sleek cabinets, custom open shelves and egg-like chandeliers give the kitchen an airy feel.



A glass corner, supported by exposed steel beams, has intricate steel details, a language picked up in other areas of the home. The owners kept the original stone fireplace.

“WE WANTED TO MAINTAIN THAT FEELING OF THE A-FRAME TUCKED AWAY IN THE WOODS.”

—THE HOMEOWNER



tension rods and steel beams and including custom steel detailing, that dramatically protrudes into the living room. That steel language carries into lighting and kitchen details.

For Gerber, the project was a singular opportunity. “These clients were open to reinventing and contrasting this historic building type with a more contemporary vision. To me, the way in which this project reinvents this iconic typology with a more contemporary and sophisticated material palette and expression is its greatest strength.”

Designer Kim Romick of Into the West helped execute the vintage-yet-contemporary European ski lodge vibe through crisp interiors with cozy moments using leather, velvet, wool plaids and fur—with the end result delighting the homeowners. “We wanted to maintain the feeling of the A-frame tucked away in the woods, while creating a family house that worked for the different generations,” the homeowner says. “We walk through the house now and remember how a certain family member contributed to each space. We feel so fortunate to have this place to gather, to be reminded of loved ones, and to create new family memories.” ○

OPPOSITE: Cabinetry tucked under the sloping walls takes advantage of the A-frame’s inherent attributes. Wool plaid fabric makes for a cozy headboard. **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** Glass walls create an extension of interior space to the outdoors. Consistent materials and custom details create a crafted feel. A well-designed mudroom has nooks and crannies for every mitten and helmet.

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