

Destination

BIG SKY

Live the Adventure

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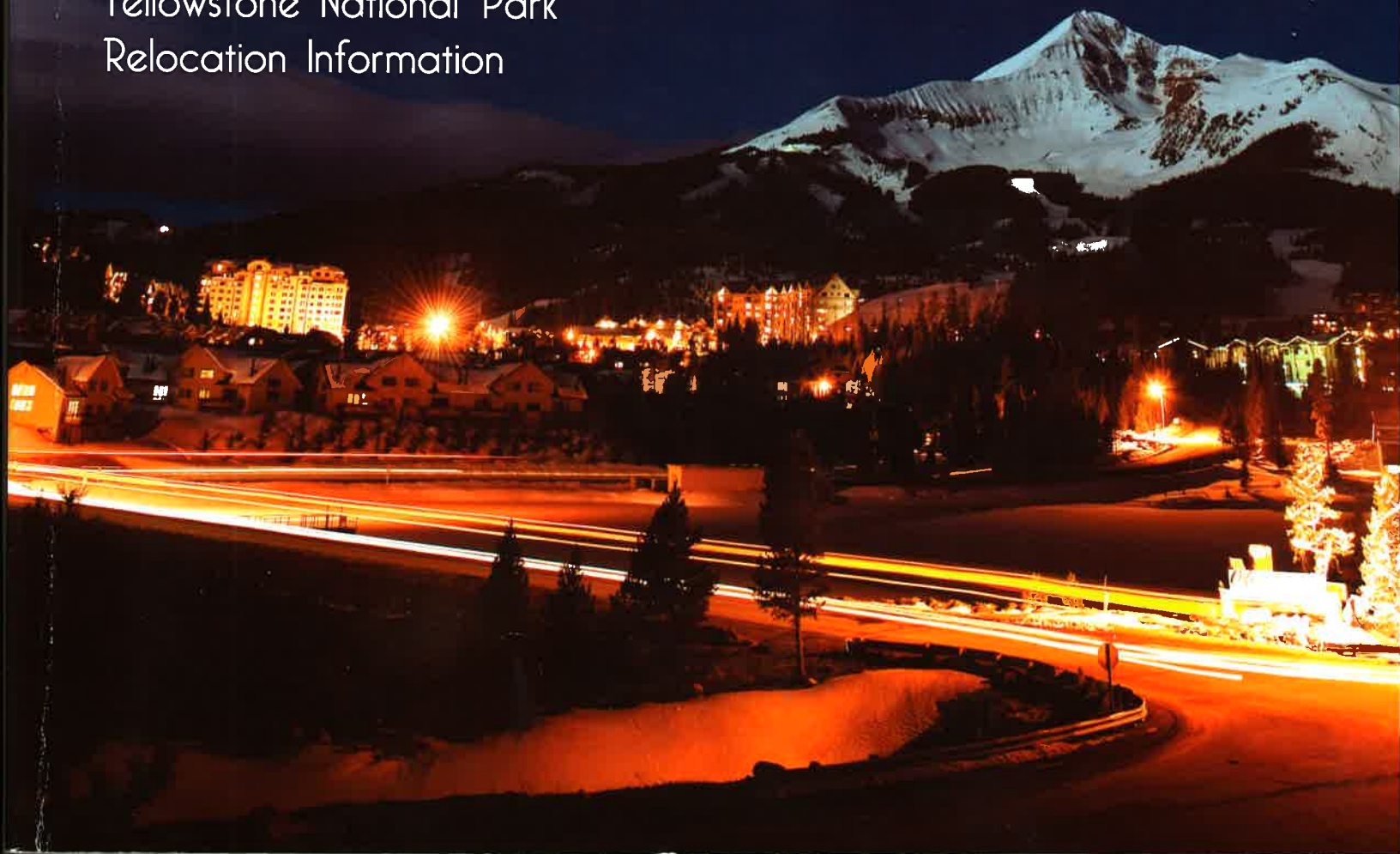
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LARRY PEARSON: A Stylistic Diversion

Bozeman Architect Larry Pearson has known Big Sky through many seasons. His firm, Pearson Design Group, located in Bozeman, has been designing homes across Montana since 1997. Big Sky's sloping terrain offers opportunity and challenges that Pearson finds exciting and artistically interesting. "Seismically, you're building on the edge of the Yellowstone Caldera," Pearson notes, which presents technical issues, along with the aesthetic challenge of siting a home so that it's integrated into the natural landscape, rather than overpowering it.

Pearson describes himself as "creatively restless," and loves transitioning between architectural styles. Known for his rustic western architecture, a distinct style that incorporates ranch language into residential architecture by engaging regional materials, such as hewn beams, reclaimed wood, and stone, he is one of those rare alchemists who manage to fuse past and present, elegance and comfort into a blend that feels fresh and timeless.

Despite his well-known rustic oeuvre, Pearson admits that his first passion is modern architecture. In his early practice, he was



By creating an intimate connection between the interior and exterior, we can begin to eliminate the boundary between the two. (Larry Pearson)

Below: PDG's designs are orchestrated by light and the natural landscape, creating a harmony between the built and natural environment.

Left: An exceptional home can balance intimacy when expressed through beautiful detail juxtaposed against vivid views of the surrounding landscape.





A monolithic stone slab floating above the concrete floor supports the fireplace. Architecture becomes art.

captivated by the use of modern materials – steel, concrete, and glass, and has incorporated these elements in traditional western homes. In the future, Pearson envisions his work moving more in this direction, noting that clients are gaining an appreciation for more light and simpler execution.

Recently, he had the opportunity to return to his modern roots with the design of a Big Sky home. The design employs traditional rustic Montana materials, but is carried out with contemporary ideas, setting elemental materials of stone, wood, concrete, metal and glass, against spectacular views. By peeling away the traditional log and timber walls and replacing them with a curtain wall of glass, Pearson created a panoramic transparent facade that is spectacular. “While the design looks traditional, it moves beyond, into modern,” Pearson says, noting that the structure is carried outboard, the log support placed on the exterior so the eye follows outdoors. The kitchen, the social hub, is fully integrated into the living space and becomes part of the main floor living experience. Though the spaces are linked and experienced separately, they are not isolated. “This is one of the most dramatic

spaces we’ve ever created, but still keeping with a classic lodge design,” Pearson says. The style, which Pearson refers to as ‘indigenous modern,’ is dramatic and very successful in the mountains.

When working with traditional lodge designs, Pearson has had fun playing with the art of transparency. “Technology has allowed us to expand window systems in order to achieve greater natural lighting,” Pearson says. Many of Pearson’s homes carry ground source (geothermal) heat pumps and super insulated envelopes creating energy efficiency. The complimentary use of radiant heated floors with forced air augmentation makes it comfortable to live in these mountain homes year round when temperatures drop in the winter.

For Pearson, the evolution of the lodge style has not stopped, and he’s excited about the possibilities. When asked what inspires him, Pearson reflects a moment, and says that in addition to developing and improving ideas with his design group, it’s always the landscape and environment that inspires him most. “As architects, we have a sacred responsibility to be appropriate in scale, materials, and in the design and building of homes,” he says. Pearson’s inspirations also come from Europe, especially Italy, the seaside villas of Positano, and the breathtaking steps down to Vernazza in Cinque Terra. A few years ago, Pearson took his design group to Italy because he felt it was important that they understand the European lifestyle and architecture from a built environment and artist and craftsman tradition. “We’d all be better architects and stewards of the landscape if we understood why we do what we do from a 2,000 year history,” Pearson explains.

As for the future, we may see Pearson’s designs moving toward a modern contemporary style. “I work all over the U.S.,” Pearson says, “and I love being outdoors more than indoors. If I had my way, I’d push more toward Mediterranean ideas where the indoor spaces open to outdoor spaces.” Although he admits when temperatures reach 20 below in Montana, it’s a challenge to make a terrace feel comforting. But the creative flicker in his eye reveals everything – Pearson will call on all his past experiences – a terrace on the Amalfi coast, the wood grain on a door panel, a glass wall – and create a soulful outdoor space for every season in any climate, and it will be nothing short of a poetic work of art.

- Corinne Richardson

Mountain side home.





PEARSON DESIGN GROUP, INC.



BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY
ARCHITECTURE INTERIOR DESIGN

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AMERICAN HIGH

Architecture by Pearson Design Group
Interior Design by Charles de Lisle Workshop
Photography by Audrey Hall





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WENTY-FIVE FOOT TALL LOG CEILINGS AND AN EIGHTEEN FOOT STONE FIREPLACE PAY HOMAGE TO THE GREAT CAMPS OF THE WEST'S NATIONAL PARKS WHILE SHOWCASING THE SPECTACULAR HILLSIDE VIEW. RIGHT: A CLEAN LINED PEDESTAL DINING TABLE IS ILLUMINATED BY A VENETIAN GLASS INTERPRETATION OF THE CLASSIC ANTLER CHANDELIER.





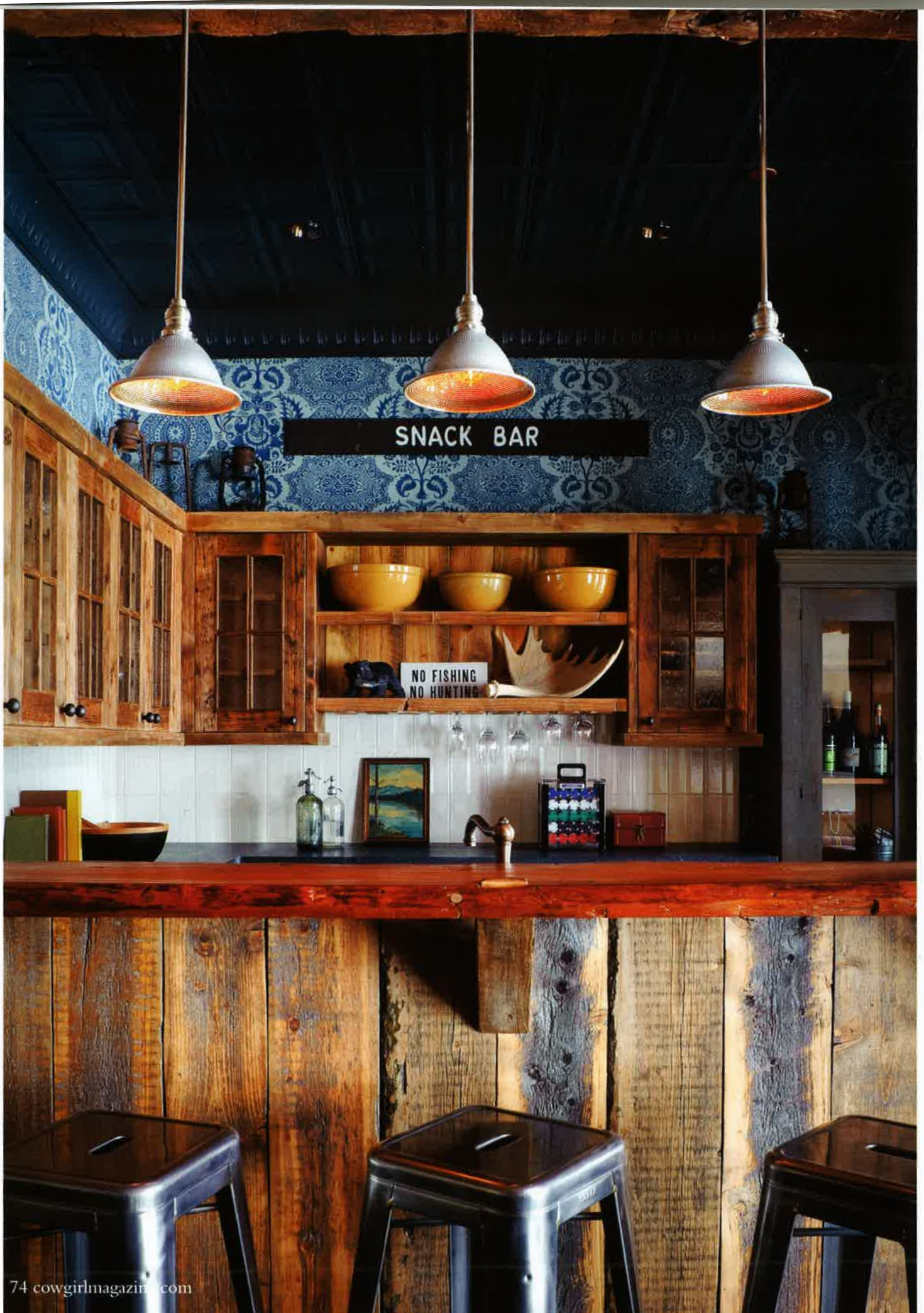


EACHES AND CREAM ADD AN ARISTOCRATIC FLOURISH TO THE STRONG, NATURAL BONES OF THIS BEDROOM. CRYSTAL LAMPS WITH BONE-COLORED SHADES ARE A BRILLIANT CONTRAST TO THE COWHIDE HEADBOARD.



A STUDY IN CONTRASTS. BRIGHT BLUE CHAIRS PUNCH UP THE FUN IN A CLASSIC MOUNTAIN LIBRARY, COMPLETE WITH AN OVERSIZED STONE HEARTH AND FLOOR TO CEILING BOOKCASES BRIMMING WITH VINTAGE TOMES AND FOUND OBJECTS.







P
RETTY IN PINK. A ROMANTIC, "SIMPLE" BEDROOM BELAYS THE SKILLFUL EDITING NECESSARY TO CREATE A BRIGHT, COZY AND EMOTIONALLY WELCOMING SPACE LEFT: COMPLETELY AT EASE. THE BAR'S CASUAL, FAMILIAR ELEMENTS, RETRO ACCENTS AND VINTAGE-INSPIRED WALLPAPER EVOKE THE SLOWER PACE OF BYGONE DAYS.