

contemporary new homes

Private lives

These bold, modern residences open up to the outdoors one way but are screened from public view from another



Sound of water

This lakeside home is shaped by its tricky site, the views and a quest for airy living spaces

A verse form with strict style constraints will often bring out the best in a poet. And for an architect, tight environmental restrictions can also inspire a particularly imaginative response.

Such was the case with this new home, by architect John DeForest. The owners had looked at several properties in the area before settling on a long, relatively narrow site which offered spectacular outlooks to the lake and mountains, says DeForest.

“The quite tight property fronted directly onto the lake in one direction and was bordered by a busy public laneway on the other.”

“The owners naturally wanted their home to offer privacy on the laneway side and open up to the views on the other. They also requested that the residence be modern, but warm and welcoming, and have strong indoor-outdoor connections.”

With the existing house on the site razed, DeForest designed a generous, double-height residence to fit neatly into the available space.

“The issue of privacy from the laneway was addressed in several ways,” says the architect. “First there are levels of separation between the street and the large pivoting front door.”



Preceding pages: This dramatic great room forms part of a lakeside residence and features full-height stacking doors that retract to make the indoors and outdoors one.

Above: As the house is edged by a busy laneway, architect John deForest created a wood wall and entry patio to act as a buffer.

Left: A glass-walled home office and a gymnasium have views over the water.





Preceding pages: Green channel glass above the large pivot entry door provides privacy but filters natural light into the home. The soffit under the entry canopy is cedar.

Far right: The home's orientation was tweaked to optimize views of a mature tree on the terrace in front of the outdoor living area. Suspending the ceiling from the steel structure has resulted in an open-plan space with few support beams.

"A row of plantings softens a staggered ipê wall and there's a large entry court behind that."

While the wall and courtyard buffer the laneway traffic, the exterior treatment of the house on this side adds to its tucked-away feel.

"Despite being two-story, the house strikes a low profile when viewed from the street. We emphasised horizontal lines in the design – seen in the fence, the wood siding and in the shape of the house itself.

"We selected siding with a thin profile, a more contemporary interpretation of the traditional boards seen on neighboring houses – the

multitude of slender lines also help further the horizontal emphasis.

"To optimize natural light and privacy we introduced a band of channel glass along the upper level of this side of the home. The translucent glass has a curved surface, so offers texture, and casts a lovely light on the interior. This glass also features transparent insulation."

The entry path runs alongside the courtyard to a solid swing door that opens to a double-height entry space.

Straight ahead is a dramatic great room that incorporates the kitchen, dining and living

spaces in one volume. Beyond is a series of waterfront entertaining spaces, including a contemporary glass-walled gymnasium and office. Stairs to the left lead up to the master suite and bedrooms, all pushed to the scenic side of the home, which opens out to a deck.

The impact of the great room is even greater for its absence of structural support columns.

"To keep the room uncluttered, the wood ceiling is suspended from the concealed steel framework above," DeForest says.

Floor-to-ceiling doors in the great room open to the entry patio and the lakefront terrace.



Above: Designer Nancy Burfiend chose clean-lined, low profile furniture, to avoid detracting from the outlooks. A neutral palette with an emphasis on textural fabrics enhances the connection to the natural environment. The fireplace was designed by the architect and combines two of the main construction materials – steel and wood. Large area rugs help demarcate areas and bring warmth to the stone floors.



Architect: DeForest Architects (Seattle, WA); project architect Ted Cameron; principal, John DeForest AIA, CORA
Interior designer: Nancy Burfiend IIDA, ASID, NB Design Group
Landscape designer: Randy Allworth, Allworth Design
Structural engineer: Harriott Valentine Engineers
Builder: Prestige Residential Construction
Siding: Custom profile drop cedar siding; Channel glass by Pilkington Profilit through Technical Glass Products, installed by Eastside Glass
Roofing: Standing seam Kynar-painted steel by Nucor, in Dark Bronze
Doors and windows: Weiland-clad fir sliding doors and windows; Sierra Pacific-clad fir windows and swing doors; solid-core flush rift-cut white oak interior doors, Emtek Hercules levers
Skylights: Velux
Flooring: Pine; Marley limestone by Exquisite Surfaces, laid by Michael Homchick Stoneworks, Dalle De France finish for interiors, Rustic for exteriors
Paints: White Dove by Benjamin Moore
Lighting: Juno recessed downlights, with Lutron RA2 controls
Heating: Triangle Tube, radiant in-floor
Furniture: Baker, Cameron Furniture, Plantation, Phoenix Day Lighting, Peter Alexander, Artemide Lighting, A Rudin, Altura, Meyer Wells, Bradley Hughes, Room & Board, custom upholstery by Village Interiors
Floor coverings: Rugs by Driscoll Robbins, Tamarian and Eric Lindstrom
Blinds: Lutron, motorized
Custom steelwork: Stair and railing with blackened finish and painted entry gate designed by DeForest Architects
Kitchen cabinetry: Rift-cut white oak with bookmatched veneer; plain sawn walnut at raised bar

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Right: Set at one end of the great room, the kitchen is in white oak, with the raised section on the outer island in walnut. The kitchen appears understated from the great room, but has a wealth of functionality that includes a second island, used for prepping. A butler's pantry, the appliances and a third counter are to one side of the space.



DeForest says addressing issues of heating and cooling was vital, given the extreme climate of the region.

"Pulled back, the large doors offer efficient cross ventilation in summer. In winter, in-floor heating and the centrally set, custom steel and wood fireplace keep the interiors warm and snug," says the architect.

While the house nestles demurely beside the lake, the choices of materials tie it even more closely into the natural setting.

The principal construction materials are wood, steel, glass and stone, but board-formed

concrete is seen outside the entry and behind the steel and wood stair. The raw, industrial look of the concrete contrasts the smooth polish of the wood finishes.

"The generous use of wood seen on the front wall and siding is continued on the interior. A variety of species is used for textural interest – the ceiling is fir, for example, and the kitchen cabinetry and fireplace are in rich-grained walnut," says DeForest. "Other natural materials include the limestone floors which feature throughout, with the exception of the entry passage, which has a walnut floor."

The great room's expansive volume offers subtle separations of its different areas of use.

"The large fireplace buffers the living spaces from the dining area and a tall island screens kitchen clutter from the adjacent dining table. The L-shaped kitchen has a second island to the rear for food prep. A large pantry and most appliances are to one side, out of sight.

Interior designer Nancy Burfiend says low profile furniture with clean lines was selected to avoid detracting from the views.

"Warm wood tones, a neutral palette, and textural fabrics foster the connection to nature."

Above: An expansive deck that opens off the master suite is built on the roof of the gymnasium below. Walnut and steel on the custom fireplace is continued from the public spaces. The bathroom beyond has a spa-like ambiance. Clerestory windows throughout the house provide efficient cooling by venting hot air in the summer months.

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