

MODERN LUXURY

ASPEN

MAGAZINE

MIDSUMMER 2015

THE ASPEN AESTHETIC

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SILVER ANNIVERSARY: 25 YEARS
OF JAZZ ASPEN SNOWMASS

PLUS

25 INDULGENT WAYS
TO SAVOR SUMMER

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ON THE COVER

PHOTOGRAPHY: Ric Stovall
DESIGNER: Hans Berglund

ALL COLORADO

THE ULTIMATE DO-OVER

How do you transform a dated condo into a welcoming, modern refuge? We found three inspiring examples.

By Naomi Havlen

If there's a theme to living in the mountains, it might be one of abundance—an abundance of grandiose vistas, fresh air, craggy peaks, and clear rivers and streams teeming with freshwater fish. It's no wonder people flock here, seeking tranquility, recreation and a respite from everyday life.

But mountain communities also specialize in another kind of abundance: condominiums built in the 1970s, '80s and '90s that now have outdated aesthetics in desperate need of an overhaul. While grand mansions may dominate real estate fantasies, the reality is that the majority of local sales and design projects focus on such condos, which are not only more plentiful but can offer better value, as well as great design potential. Many designers consider the option of renovating a decades-old condo the perfect launching pad for personalized style.

"There is still such a huge inventory of condos that haven't been touched since they've been built, which makes a great opportunity for someone to go in and make the space their own," says interior designer Kathy Kroger Dupps of Aspen. Kyle Webb, principal of KH Webb Architects in Vail, notes that a condominium overhaul can sometimes be as simple as redoing finishes, but that occasionally homeowners relish the chance for reinvention, tearing out walls and treating the condo like a blank slate. "A lot of these places were built [with] smaller doors, lower ceiling heights or smaller windows because they just weren't making glass that was as big as they do today," he says.

Such condos might not include the vast square footage that some second homeowners seek for their mountain getaways, but easily lend themselves to renovation, especially for homeowners with the courage to direct an architect or designer to tear an older space asunder.



ENLIGHTENED THINKING

Designer Anne Grice says dated condos often don't include much ceiling lighting, so plenty was added in this Snowmass Village townhouse, and all are on dimmers.



PHOTO BY DEREK SKALKO



“THERE ARE LOTS OF LITTLE TRICKS WE CAN USE TO FIT EVERYTHING IN.”

— ANNE GRICE, INTERIOR DESIGNER

A Remodeler’s Dream, Aspen

Just a couple of blocks off Aspen’s commercial core, one building of condominiums erected in the early ’70s included all the hallmarks of the era, from an oversize space hog of a rock fireplace to wall-to-wall brown shag carpeting that even traveled into the bathroom. Dupps took a tour of the original condo with a local couple who purchased it, intent on turning it into an inviting pied-a-terre for visiting guests.

“It was a remodeler’s dream,” she says. “It didn’t really matter what we did to it—it was going to turn out much better than it was before.”

Given free rein to transform the space into something “sweet, bright and happy,” Dupps and architect Barry Gereb opened up the floor plan, which included removing a wall in the entryway that made the apartment feel cramped and reconfiguring the kitchen to maximize space and light. The bedroom was expanded to fit a king-size bed, and better storage was built for tucking away skis and boots—an important element in any mountain town.

In the living room, the hulking rock fireplace was replaced with a tidy facade of bricks painted white and arranged in a unique herringbone pattern, with the fireplace insert flush to the wall. Custom kitchen cabinetry, including a new pantry, designed by Scott Doherty of New Castle optimizes use of the small space. Shelving tucked here and there throughout the condo provides extra storage, so the one-bedroom, one-bath residence makes the most use of every one of its 775 square feet.

Dupps didn’t want to end up with a “typical spec condo” that’s been staged for sale with muted colors; she sought out a look that was full of personality without cutting corners, choosing finishes she hasn’t seen in other condo remodels. She focused on warm, welcoming textures combined with geometric patterns that echo shapes in the surrounding mountains. The end result speaks volumes about the potential for updating style.

“In Aspen you pay a premium for a condo, and



then the cost of building and remodeling always surprises people,” Dupps says. “But this is one of the safest real estate markets, so if you can afford to put money into your place, it’s always worth it.”

Raising the Roof, Snowmass Village

A marvelous view of Hanging Valley and the Cirque at Snowmass ski area was visible from the dining room and adjacent kitchen in a Snowmass Village townhouse that interior designer Anne Grice helped remodel—but to admire it you had to stand right up next to the window. An angled ceiling in the living room stretched into the dining area, effectively blocking the view for most of the room.

“Our builder told the owners we’d be able to raise the roof in the dining room and kitchen over that window by two feet, and it made such a significant difference,” Grice says. Now the great room and combined kitchen and dining room capture inspiring views of the mountain ridge that made the home’s location so picturesque in the first place.

The townhouse included dated elements like a rough rock fireplace, and Grice was tasked with creating a contemporary look for CONTINUED...

REVITALIZED SPACES

From left: Clean lines and strong graphics lighten up the dining area of an updated pied-a-terre in Aspen; a gracious dining nook at the top of the stairs in a Snowmass Village townhouse emphasizes the remodel’s modern vibe.

LIVING ROOM AND DINING AREA PHOTOS BY AUBREE DALLAS, VIGNETTE PHOTO BY DEREK SKAIKO

GETTING GRAPHIC
The pied-a-terre gets its style boost from modern patterns on the throw pillows, artwork, rugs—even the bricks on the fireplace



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