

STYLISH LIVING IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

HOME

CAROLINA

+ GARDEN

SUMMER 2022

THE GRACIOUS SIDE OF GREEN

Home flourishes with custom mountain amenities

Lessons of the Learning Garden

Village Art & Craft Fair Turns 50

Baskets in Shades of Summer

Rock Solid

Woodsy sanctuary in the Ramble is here to stay

"We encourage our clients to focus generally on local quarries in Western North Carolina and East Tennessee," notes PLATT president Parker Platt. The firm and Morgan-Keefe Builders partnered with Steep Creek Stoneworks in Brevard for the timeless exterior of this home on a woodsy lot in The Ramble. "Vermont slate roofing and copper accents are just a few details that are unique on the exterior," adds Brandon Jamerson with Morgan-Keefe.

**By Catherine Brooke Eastman
Photos by Tzu Chen Photography**

More than half of North Carolina is covered in forest, and here, in the mountains, those millions of trees — unlike most high-elevation forests in the U.S. — are deciduous. It's a magic trick of the Southern Appalachians, and it means lush shade in the summer and a ton of sunlight streaming through bare branches in the winter.

This fairytale home, styled "The Ramble Retreat," sits on just such a wooded, sloping lot. Though it's a full-time residence, it is also a private sanctuary that affords its occupants the best of all seasons. "In the summer, the trees on the property protect the house from the sun," says architect Parker Platt, president of PLATT in Brevard.

And when the leaves drop and the days get shorter, "the house get more daylight just when light is most precious," Platt explains.

Despite the boost from nature, PLATT the firm has plenty of its own magic tricks. The 40-year-old company is well known for the innovative ways it brings natural light into an interior. Potential impediments such as gridded windows (required in some developments) or shaded topography are really just creative challenges for this crew.

"We are always trying to make a space as bright as we can," says the architect. In this case, a central, skylighted loft sited over the great room lifts the scheme, bringing a feel of airiness despite the copious use of wood and stone inside and out. The homeowner, a full-time homemaker who sews and paints, also mentions PLATT's addition of an airy breezeway ("dog trot" in traditional Appalachian parlance). "It creates a kind of natural air conditioning ... a perfect connection between our garage and rear entry into the house," she says.

The husband is a retired CFO, and his wife reveals that, before moving from Atlanta, they'd lived in the same home for more than 30 years, raising their now-grown children there. That level of solidity is answered by an unquestionable durability of material. Assistant Project Manager Brandon Jamerson with Morgan-Keefe Builders lists local Cumberland Mountain and Hoopers Creek stone, Vermont slate roofing, and copper accents on the exterior. Inside, it's all about



Arched trusses give the great room light and flow while visually supporting a loft that runs the full length of the space. Elegant timbering and inset paneling is repeated throughout the home, constructed with old-world craftsmanship by Morgan-Keefe Builders (no drywall was used in the home). Architecture and interiors by PLATT. Interior trim by Square Peg Construction.



the wood, including extensive oak timbering and pine paneling on the walls and ceilings.

"David and Leslie Humphrey from Square Peg Construction did a phenomenal job with all the interior trim," says Jamerson. ... "The craftsmanship associated with installing [solid-wood paneling] and making sure all corners and joints align properly is not only arduous physically but mentally, as well."

Interior designer Katie Jackson of PLATT had a sophisticated tonal whitewash applied to all key walls, freshening the rustic look while allowing the wood grain to show through. The kitchen, administered by Celesta Thompson — PLATT's architectural interior designer — is a tableau of large chevron subway tile, a

coffered white ceiling, and quartzite countertops; these combine to set off rich alder cabinetry.

Jackson helped place the homeowners' collected furniture, much of it made in North Carolina, and antique textiles framed as art. "We had several generations of quilters in the family," remarks the lady of the house. "I've made a few myself. My grandmother's pedal Singer sewing machine is used as a side table in one of the bedrooms."

Jamerson muses on the home's "old-fashioned feel" that nevertheless "sets a new trend for interior finishes." He elaborates, "Having whitewashed wood next to dark-stained oak timbers adds a visual element that is unmatched with a traditional drywall installation."



A velvet sofa from PLATT's interior-design store PLATT Home adds to the rich, traditional textures of the great room.

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PLATT Interior Designer Katie Jackson sourced the custom dining-room chairs from PLATT Home, the architectural firm's retail store. Table by Holland MacRae (Atlanta).



Stirring Up Contrast

In the handsome kitchen, Celesta Thompson, PLATT's architectural interior designer, appointed stained-alder cabinetry that contrasts strikingly with quartzite countertops (Mountain Marble). Chevron subway tile (Crossville Studios) and a farmhouse sink further establish the blended color scheme, but the white coffered ceiling and custom island lighting add the most dramatic texture to the timeless room.



For the Trees

This bedroom is painted a compelling deep green, giving a jewel-like overtone to a traditional rustic shade. Custom upholstered bed from Holland MacRae of Atlanta. The draperies are from PLATT Home via Katie Jackson, who also notes the room's solid board paneling. (The project is a rare example of a home created without the use of drywall.) Interior trim by Square Peg Construction. Rug from Togar.



A rug from Togar and loveseat and custom drapes from PLATT Home set the local tone in this bedroom. The meticulous interior trim was accomplished by Square Peg Construction of Asheville.



One of PLATT's signatures is tall-and-handsome windows, even here, in the master bath of this home on a woody parcel in The Ramble. The firm's Architectural Interior Designer Celesta Thompson chose a marble surround for the wood-trimmed soaking tub and vanity.

Inside, it's all about the wood, including extensive oak timbering and pine paneling on the walls and ceilings.



Pulling the Pieces Together

The multi-purpose loft distills the home's signature mix of elements. Here, substantial white-oak ceiling beams are complemented by two handsome walnut built-ins, one for books and another for travel mementoes and other family keepsakes. The bespoke whitewash used on the walls and dormer paneling looks at once fresh and antique. A vintage framed quilt from the homeowner's collection hangs on the wall.



Table Settings in Stone

Architect Parker Platt notes that "the house seems to grow out of stone," and that sentiment is richly accounted for in this exalted outdoor dining area, another hallmark of PLATT design. Local stone from Steep Creek Stoneworks. Much of the homeowners' collected furniture was handmade in North Carolina.

RESOURCES

Architect: PLATT (Brevard)

Interior Designer: Katie Jackson with PLATT

Architectural Interior Designer: Celesta Thompson with PLATT

Builder: Morgan-Keefe Builders (Arden)

Interior Trim: Square Peg Construction (Asheville)

Countertops: Mountain Marble (Asheville)

Furniture: PLATT Home (Brevard)

Textiles (rugs): Togar Rugs (Arden)

Flooring: The HeartPine Company (Charlottesville, Va.)

Landscaping: Berrier Select Landscapes (Asheville)

Tile: Crossville Studios (Fletcher)

Stonework: Steep Creek Stoneworks (Brevard)