





Home Highlight

Santa Fe Meets Modern

by Alana Grimstad

For a long time, the term “Santa Fe style” had a generally agreed upon meaning. But like many things right now, the air is charged with change, and a style that once defined a great many homes in our city is now evolving. Designers and artists are excited about it. They’re experimenting with creative ideas and intertwining modern notions into their classic design plans. New meets old, as these thrilling contemporary concepts mingle with a deep history of style and space.

When Debra and Paul walked into their home for the first time, they knew this was the one. (To maintain their privacy, the homeowners requested their last name not be used.) Debra recalls immediately falling in love with the house, especially the windows and the views. That was seventeen years ago. Paul first discovered Santa Fe while attending a photography course, and he enthusiastically encouraged his wife to come back with him. The couple, who are both in the medical profession, hadn’t planned to buy a home here, but this particular house off Hyde Park Road was a game changer. At the time, Debra says, contemporary design didn’t have much of a place in Santa Fe. So, like most other homeowners, they veered towards Southwestern colors and materials in their stucco home. But they eventually tired of it and recently decided to do a complete remodel.

“After this remodel and modernization, the home feels really clean, really Zen, really calm. It’s day and night: there’s absolutely no comparison,” says Debra. “Modern doesn’t mean

Floor-to-ceiling windows offer beautiful views and flood the dining room with natural light. The metal-and-glass pendant light fixture, by Sonneman, is from Allbright & Lockwood in Santa Fe.

stark. It's still really warm. I absolutely love being here now." While the couple's home certainly doesn't shout Santa Fe style in the traditional sense of wooden vigas and kiva fireplaces, it has the unmistakable signature of being a home in Santa Fe and a collaboration of many talented Santa Feans.

One of this home's undeniable Santa Fe trademarks is its nearly 360-degree views, now brought inside with floor-to-ceiling glass windows and doors. Shane Woods of Woods Design Builders, general contractor for the project, says, "We have some of the most elegant sunsets in the country. I don't think there are many places that have the open skies and open views like we do." He explains, "When starting any house, the first thing we do is figure out the views from our clients' lots. That dictates everything, from how natural light fills the home to the overall design plan."

The homeowners had not taken advantage of those gorgeous views before interior designer Heather Van Luchene brought new life to the previously neglected outdoor space. Now it's an extension of the indoor living room and constantly enjoyed. By selecting earth tones and natural materials, Van Luchene created that connection between the residence and the dramatic landscape surrounding it. "This home fits beautifully in Santa Fe, from the richness of the textures to the calmness of the color palette," says Van Luchene. "Instead of exclusively draping homes with Southwestern patterns

and pottery, the design community in this town is broadly interpreting what a Santa Fe home can look like."

Van Luchene says when she first evaluated the meandering, multi-level home, she found it dated and its rooms disjointed. Previous piecemeal renovations had left the home feeling choppy. Her objective in the comprehensive remodel was to unify the spaces while still maintaining each room's individual identity. She accomplished that with a highly curated selection of neutral colors and materials. Interesting textures add dimension and depth without competing with the extensive and prized art collection, a paramount concern of the couple. The collection includes Paul's black-and-white cityscape photography.

Each room segues to the next. There are common threads and a natural flow from one end of the house to the other," says Van Luchene. For instance, metal is used extensively throughout the house, yet used differently in each room so it does not feel repetitive or formulaic. The custom work is fresh and exciting each place you find it, including the front doors, handrails, end tables, the sleek powder room vanity and the chimney, where it is juxtaposed against the original flagstone fireplace. "The steel material adds such interest and intrigue to the house," Van Luchene says. "The patina we used is soft and elegant. It's not harsh, but rather rich and provides such an interesting color."

Gabe Rippel is the metal master who brought Van



Artist Will Clift's lyrical, custom, carbon fiber composite sculpture soars above the wet bar.