

FEBRUARY 2013

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# Green Dream

BLENDING INDOORS AND OUTDOORS IN BOULDER'S HILLS

ARTICLE MARSHA AUSTIN  
PHOTOGRAPHY BRADEN GUNEM

**T**WO YEARS AGO CAROL DINEEN FELL IN LOVE WITH A GORGEOUS PIECE of Boulder County property covered in Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir and giant moss-rocks. So she walked next door to the new house that was under construction, met the neighbors and got their recommendation for an architect and builder. Today she is standing in the stunning kitchen of her own dream home.

Up a gracefully winding road, nestled in a forested hillside glade, her stone and stucco home sits with a quiet confidence. The team that created Dineen's house, Scott Rodwin and Brandon David of the design/build firm Rodwin Architecture/Skycastle Homes, are here to lead a tour. We walk in through the grand arched wood and glass doors, set into an old-world stone wall, and into the Great Room. As we step inside, it still feels as if we're outside.



"That was one of Carol's first requests," says Rodwin. "To be able to immediately and constantly connect to the site."

Inside the Great Room, giant windows, oversized French doors and 12-foot ceilings frame a 360-degree view of trees, sky and plains. The sunny Great Room, kitchen and dining room blend elegantly together with an open floor plan to create a perfect social flow, while still maintaining a cozy feel. All of these rooms lead out to a large buff flagstone patio that rings the house and further blurs the line between inside and out. A wood fireplace anchors one of the patios; it's a perfect place to watch the twinkling city lights below.

Rodwin leads us into the kitchen, and it's hard not to get a little envious. The clean modern lines, dark wood and glass cabinets, elegant granite counter and beautiful appliances would make any chef drool. The kitchen and dining room each have exquisite hand-blown glass pendants, clean white walls and a restrained polished concrete floor. It's a calm, sophisticated palette, nicely complemented by the rough texture and warm color of the natural stone fireplace and accent walls.

"That was one of the most interesting and challenging things that Carol asked for," Rodwin says about pairing modern and old world design, "to blend those two qualities in a balanced and elegant way."

David, who leads the firm's construction arm, Skycastle Homes, adds, "A great house needs a strong design and an intelligent layout, but what makes it great is the follow-through into the details. The feel of a handrail, the craftsmanship of the stonework, and the translation of the big ideas into the little ones the client interacts with every day."

For that, the Rodwin & Skycastle team relied on Site Supervisor



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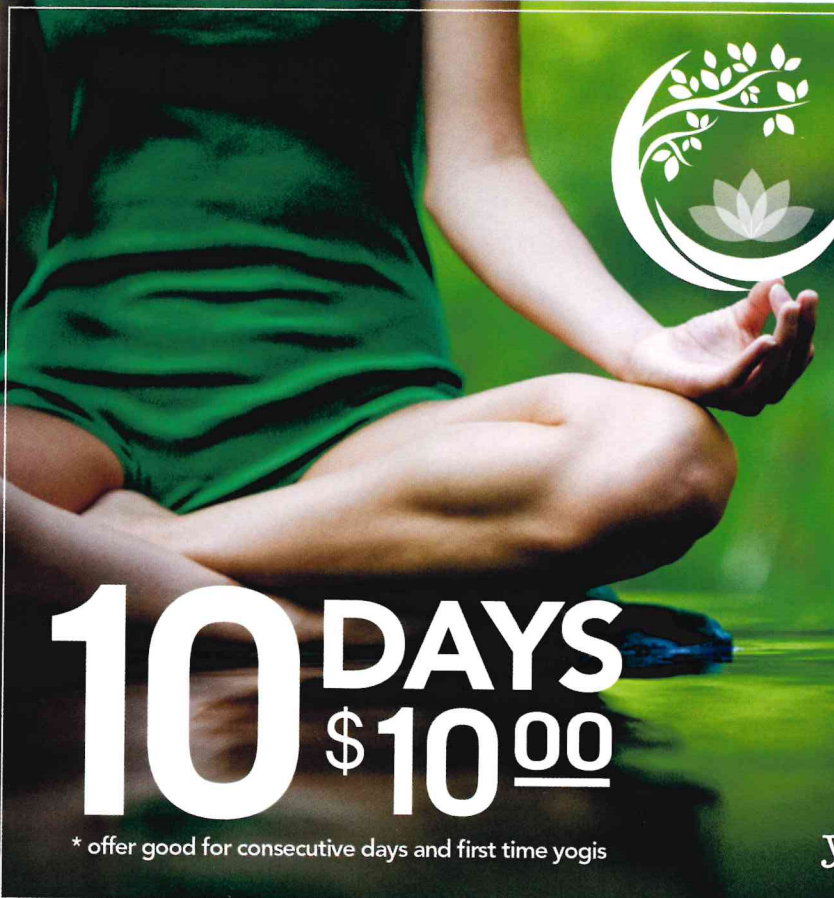


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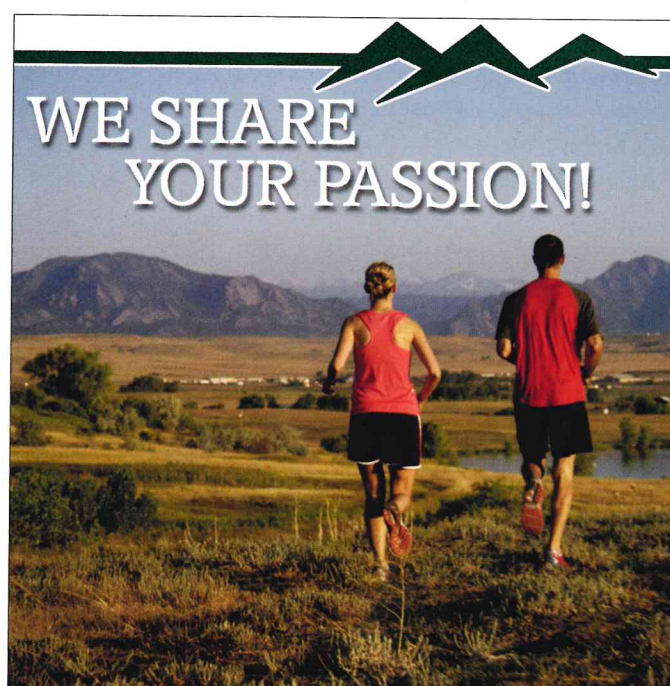
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right isn't necessarily easy. Rodwin Architecture is a fairly unique firm—they not only help pick fixtures, but they also design the landscape, plan the energy modeling of the house and, of course, both design and build. They offer something Rodwin calls “architect-led, fully integrated design/build.” While the design/build model has become increasingly popular as a way to save time and money, Rodwin and David feel that the architect-led aspect is critical.


“The architect is responsible for guiding the client through a complex process,” says David.

One of the most important functions is to help establish a realistic budget right from the start and then maintain that throughout the project. By having the builder in-house and involved from the very first meeting, they were able to make sure that every decision was the most cost-effective way to meet Dineen's design desires.

Navigating the incredibly rigorous site and Boulder's building requirements is something of an art form. Rodwin likens it to being a “whitewater river rafting guide,” something he used to do professionally on the weekends.

“We just try and keep everyone in the boat,” he says with a smile. Fortunately for Dineen and the neighbor who initially recommended Rodwin/Skycastle to her, their guides did a great job of keeping them off the rocks. ●

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