

LIVING HISTORY

The architecture and design of a Durango, Colorado home pay tribute to the area's past

BY DAVID M. BROWN

Enter this strong 8,000-square-foot home located at The Glacier Club, an exclusive golf community 18 miles from Durango, Colorado, and you get an authentic taste of the area's rich history and astounding natural beauty. Perched atop Glacier Cliff, the home offers astounding views and is a well-crafted story of mining, steam trains, cowboys in a land of white-water rapids, pristine lakes, groves of pine and fir, golden eagles and elk.

"The inspiration for the home came from the natural land forms of the Animas River Valley, the local mining history and the influence of the Durango Silverton Railroad that still runs today," says Richard W. Fawley of Fawley Bryant Architects, the firm that designed the home.

To create a sense of entering a mine, the portecochere was recessed into the surrounding land, a job that required significant blasting. Limestone quarried in Telluride as well as western red cedar, reflective of mining ruins in the area, completes the home and intensifies its rustic appeal. Inside, the same limestone appears with oak doors, cabinets and hand-scraped floors.

The focal point of the front elevation is a simulated water tower. "There are a couple of these towers along the railroad tracks along the way to Silverton," notes Troy Dyer, who along with his father owns the Durango-based Dyerbilt Construction, which built the home.

An impressive 18-foot diameter circular stairway ascends the limestone-walled water tower; windows following the circumference of the exterior wall admit light into the home.

While the home is intimate with recesses, nooks and cozy retreats, it is undeniably large-scaled like its surroundings. "There is an obvious mining influence in the home that shows with the vertical massing," Dyer explains. "This is often frowned upon in custom home design, but it works here. He adds that the siding and the rusted corrugated roofs also contribute to the mining motif.

A massive ornamental glass door marks the front entry. Inside, the home opens in all directions, reiterating the architectural themes. A stone railing leads to a wine grotto with a barrel-vaulted redwood ceiling. Capable of holding 750 bottles, the cellar is an intoxicating nook



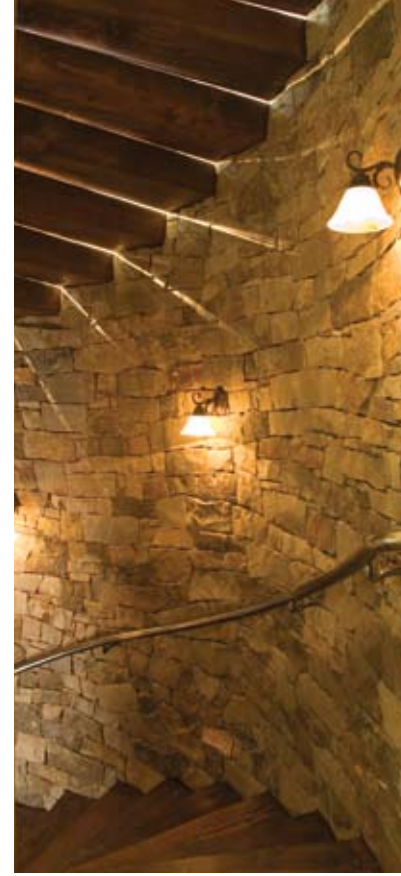


with a waterfall that can be heard into the foyer and the main living area.

Above the wine cave at eye level, a two-story high double-sided fireplace frames the view of the landmark 14,000-foot-high Needles Peaks.

"It's like a picture that changes with the hours of the day," says Jim Goodman, sales and marketing director at The Glacier Club.

Up on the second floor, a bridge modeled from the nearby trestle over the creek at Hermosa, a stop on the train route, connects the two bedroom wings. To meet building codes, Dyer and his team installed tempered glass panels. Hinged at the bottom for cleaning convenience, the glass panels maintain the open-bridge feeling. On one side of the bridge, the spacious master suite offers a gas fireplace, a coffee/wet bar with refrigerator, a walk-in closet with a washer and dryer and a bath suite with a rain-head shower and six body sprays as well as a Jacuzzi tub. The master suite is illustrative of both the large and intimate scales working in unison in this home: A private balcony provides 20-mile 300-degree views of the surrounding peaks, while a private study is quaint and quiet.



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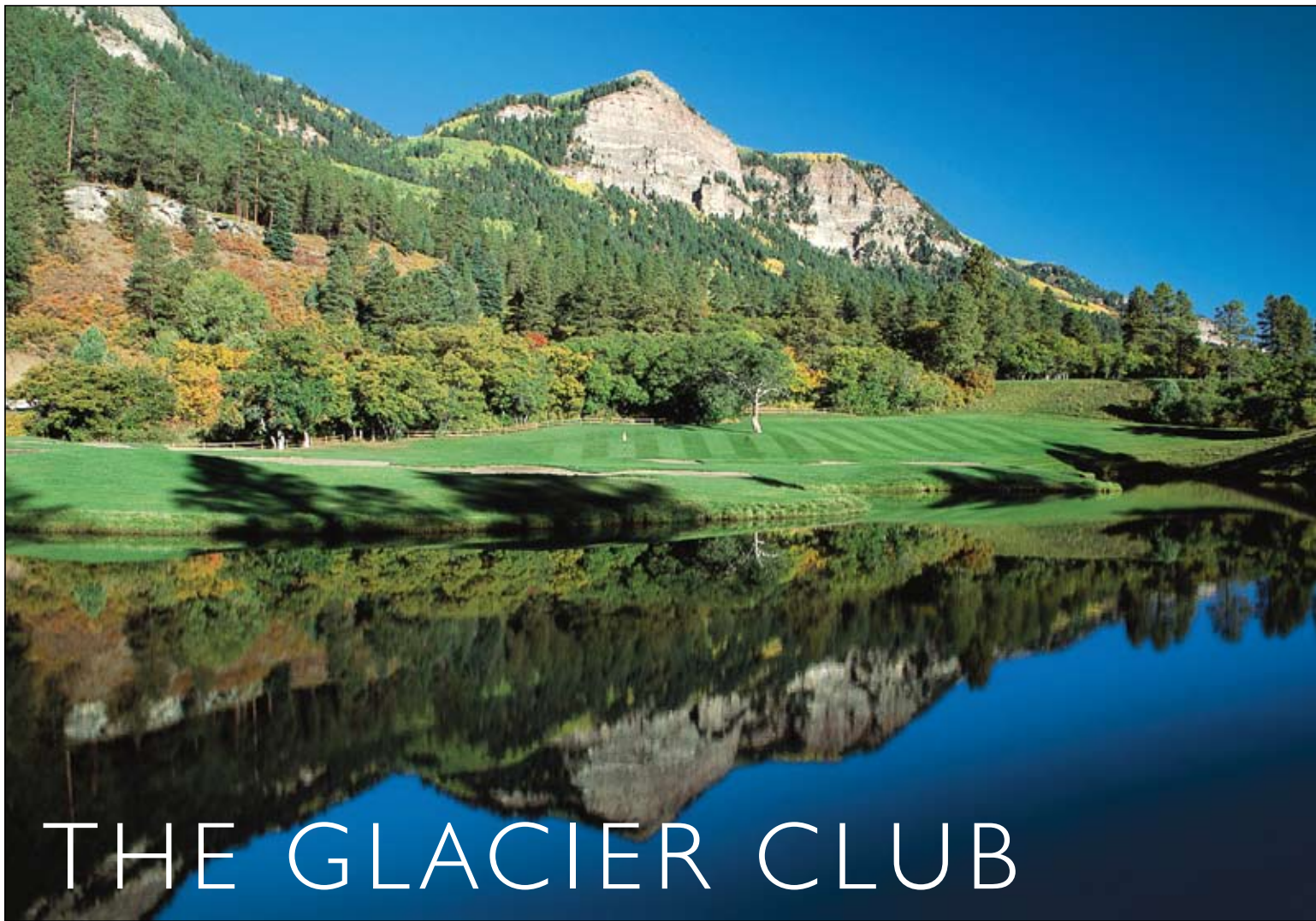


Throughout the home, details display fine craftsmanship, heritage and pride. Timber connection plates, for instance, are intricately patterned, and the kitchen hood and the ceiling outside the wine cellar are fabricated from steel plates, with a strap and bolt pattern similar to those found on a train's engine. Old-world details conjoin with new-world technologies: the kitchen includes a Wolf six-burner stove, a GE Profile electric wall oven, three Fisher & Paykel dishwashers and a side-by-side Sub-Zero refrigerator and freezer. The downstairs media room features an 84-inch projection screen with rear projector, and the "let's party" sports bar, also downstairs, has four flat-screen televisions (including one in the powder room above the urinal), a sunken pool table, and a bar big enough to hold up to 15 people.

The master suite, entryway, porte cochere, driveway and garages are heated by a hydronic heat system, and the home is protected by a security system including two exterior cameras that provide full property scanning and the capability to be accessed via computer from anywhere in the world.

"It's the best of both worlds," Dyer says. "We wanted a home that offered intimacy and the capability to effortlessly entertain a large group—all while possessing a sense of strength and security." ■

SOURCES: Dyerbilt Construction, (970) 385-4676, www.dyerbilt.com; Fawley Bryant Architects, (970) 382-3466, www.fawley-bryant.com



THE GLACIER CLUB

The restaurants, art galleries, historic homes and countless recreational opportunities of Durango are less than 20 miles away, and the beauty of the San Juan National Forest and Mountains is just outside your home when you live at The Glacier Club. Listen during the daylight hours and you'll hear the steam-powered Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad making its way into and out of the mountains, where more than 100 years ago miners' lives were enriched and lost.

The 750-acre Glacier Club offers its members other riches, beginning with 27 holes of championship golf on three nines: the Hermosa, Cliffs and Glacier courses. The club also boasts one of southwest

Colorado's finest practice facilities including an indoor practice area and a 20,000-square-foot clubhouse. Reaching 200 feet above the Glacier nine, the clubhouse has fine dining, a full-service bar and grill, a billiards and card room, men's and women's locker rooms, a private dining room, wine cellar and a golf shop. Outside are tennis courts and a cliffside swimming pool and spa looking down into the valley and out to the mountains.

Residents can choose from custom homesites priced from \$267,000 to more than \$1 million; townhomes priced between \$590,000 and \$2.4 million; cabins and cottages from \$727,500; and custom homes priced at \$4.5 million. A full-equity membership is required.

"The Glacier Club is special because of its location, its incredible scenery, wildlife and amenities," says Jim Goodman, the club's director of sales and marketing. "But the people here are the kicker. Most of our members are very active and love to be on the go. There are no couch potatoes here."

He notes that Durango is served by Delta, US Airways and United airlines through two nearby airports, and the club has its own helicopter pad.

"Durango is special," he says, "and The Glacier Club is that much more special because of it." —*David M. Brown*

The Glacier Club, (970) 382-7805, www.theglacierclub.com