

The Hergenrader Residence

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Western Retreat

When it came time for Tennesseans Wil and Sally Hergenrader to design the kitchen in their Colorado mountain retreat, they said no to common cowboy and Indian motifs, and yes to a fresh Western theme that nods to the state's rich mining and railroad history.



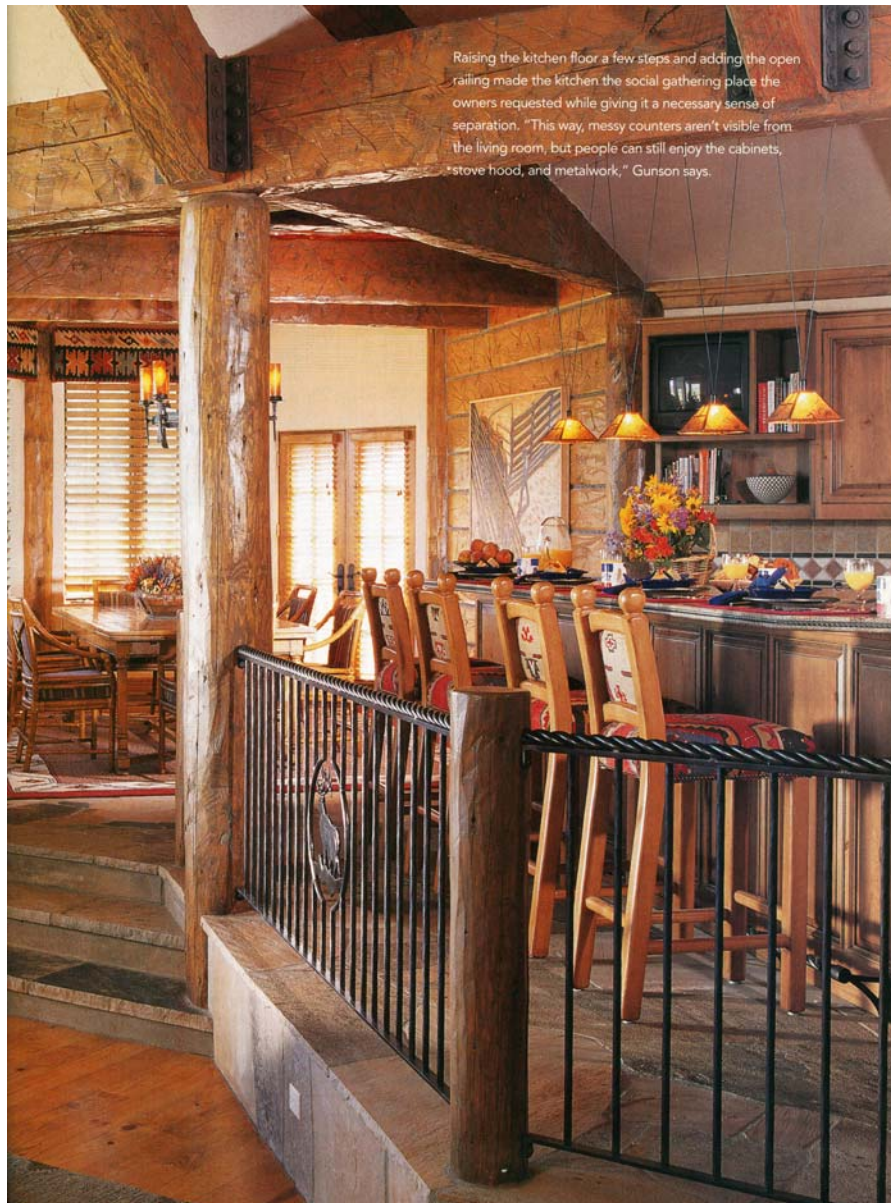
ABOVE: The Colorado retreat's exterior smacks of Western flavor, from the timber handrails leading to the entry, to the trusses joined by steel plates over the doorway.





LEFT: Pine cabinets and antique marble tiles provide a warm foil for the hard-edged iron-and-copper range hood. "I designed the hood, and the excellent craftsmen I worked with did a cardboard mock-up to get the proportions just right," Gunson explains. "The materials were heavily hammered, and the heat striking the materials caused the color variations to emerge."

The Hergenraders wanted interiors that addressed the local vernacular-but not in a cliché way. Distressed fir trusses, befitting of the home's mountain locale, define much of the interior. "When you go into a mine, heavy timbers are what you see," Wil points out.



Raising the kitchen floor a few steps and adding the open railing made the kitchen the social gathering place the owners requested while giving it a necessary sense of separation. "This way, messy counters aren't visible from the living room, but people can still enjoy the cabinets, stove hood, and metalwork," Gunson says.

"We wanted a gathering space and a dining room that could accommodate our whole family, including the grandchildren," Wil says. And like the rest of the house, the room brims with custom, Western-style touches—from the metal rope trim on the granite counters to the Colorado sandstone floors.

One other notable detail: the railing that separates the kitchen and great-room. A collaborative effort between the architect and a local metalworker, the rope-top railing is forged from iron and includes animal-motif inserts. The architect also intentionally raised the kitchen floor level to make the two spaces even more distinct.

The architect and the metalworker also masterminded a unique design for the stove hood. "Because of the layout, the hood became a focal point," Gunson says. "We didn't want it to look brand-new, but more like it came from a blacksmith. The combination of forged iron and copper works."



ABOVE: The compact workstation provides just enough space for menu planning and bill paying.

how this kitchen works

- A triangular island is home to the cleanup center and a snack bar large enough to accommodate four diners.
- The island snack bar has been raised to bar height so that the sink is not visible from the family room.
- Hanging fixtures,
- designed by the homeowner, light the island's surface.
- The long expanse of counter adjacent to the cooktop is often used for food preparation.
- A lowered section at the end of this food preparation countertop serves as the kitchen planning center. A shelf above it houses a small television.
- A change in elevation and an iron railing separate the kitchen and breakfast area from the family room.



“We chose Jon over 11 other architects,” Wil says. “Our home was so complete when we moved in, people assume we’ve been here for years.”

BELOW: “It was important to give every room a view of the golf course in the foreground and the mountains rising behind it,” says architect Jon Gunson, who answered the request with an ample number of oversize windows to frame the stunning vistas.



BELOW: In a nod to the mining culture that used to be prominent here, distressed Douglas-fir trusses are joined by metal plates, much like they might have been in a mine shaft. “The fir pieces are drawknifed (a distressing technique) to give them a handmade look,” Gunson says.

