

Adirondack chairs on the lawn of the Main House offer seating that takes advantage of the stunning Lake Arrowhead views.

An Overriding Vision

Gail Claridge Designs A Lake Arrowhead Estate For A Special Period In Time

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"I call myself a period designer," says Gail Claridge of Gail Claridge Designs in Westlake Village. "I have traveled to Italy, France and England just to study architectural details...the use of stone and wood, plaster and beams and roofing materials. I create beautiful Country French, English, Italian, Tuscan and American Traditional homes." Claridge's design projects can be found throughout Southern California, from Newport Beach, to the San Fernando Valley, to the mountain resort communities.

Her clients, Norm and Glenda Kravetz, hired Claridge several years ago to re-design a San Fernando Valley home once owned by the late actor and director, John Houston. The original house was a fairly ordinary sprawling ranch from the early 1960s; however, it was situated on five beautiful acres of land, complete with huge trees, a small stream and a thirty foot working waterwheel. Claridge restored the house to a grander version of the original, creating a beautiful gambrel roofed entrance, a spacious second story master suite, and a huge country kitchen. "It became a Pennsylvania Mill House," says the designer.



In the dining room, the thick plank trestle table is custom made of alder wood, as is the custom hutch. The chairs are black English spindle back, and the ironwork chandelier with bronze rooster is from Dana Creath Designs. Accessories include a red antique coffee grinder. OPPOSITE TOP LEFT Designer Gail Claridge enters the front door of the Bunk House. Her personal "barn" home was featured in the December 2006 issue of CALIFORNIA HOMES. TOP RIGHT The entryway of the main house features an Adirondack table, moose lamp with a feather look lampshade, and Ralph Lauren suede-look wall covering. BOTTOM The owners' office is paneled in pine with a green chenille sofa. The draperies are handmade with fabric from Lee Jofa. The coffee table is custom made from an antique trough. All the paintings and artwork in the house are from Gail Claridge Interiors.





The five acre Lake Arrowhead property includes a restored Mill House and working water wheel. The swimming pool was rebuilt with an expanded stone deck. Adirondack rockers, that echo the original Adirondack style bridge, beckon visitors to relax and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. OPPOSITE TOP The focal point of the Main House living room is the fireplace with its custom designed twig motif screen. A faux fallow deer antler chandelier hangs from a wood paneled ceiling that was distressed and stained by Claridge. A large red armchair joins two small antique pull up ottoman chairs, covered in red plaid fabric by Thibaut. BOTTOM In the kitchen, the central island features red cabinetry and a pine counter. The remaining cabinets are pine topped with very special red granite counters. The hood is copper and the red chandelier with planter is antique. The double layered custom draperies coordinate with the custom lampshades.



When the Kravetz's purchased a second home in Lake Arrowhead, they naturally turned to Claridge again. The owners were hoping for a mountain retreat that could be used for entertaining friends and hosting family gatherings. Claridge, a professional affiliate of the American Institute of Architecture, is an interior designer, as well as a general contractor. For the Arrowhead property, she used both her architectural and building skills to tackle the many challenges presented by the property including changing the unusable attic into a functional third story.

"The third story presented some problems. How was it going to be accessed from the second story? Where would the new staircase go?" Working with her son, Joe, a builder and owner of Claridge Construction, these and other problems were resolved easily. Claridge transformed the two original cottages into a stunning three story main house and a charming guesthouse. She added fireplaces, molding, and wall units, and even designed some of the furniture. "The clients wanted to have the feeling of Christmas all year round," says Claridge. "I used a color palette of red, green and gold to create a warm, cozy look."




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Beginning with the idea of rustic charm, the designer added a sophisticated overlay. The home is now quintessentially a mix of old and new, with allowances made for today's casual living. The kitchen is warm and inviting and includes a fireplace. The living room is a tranquil refuge, and each bedroom is unique. "I wanted every room to stand on its own architecturally," says Claridge. "I took advantage of the stunning Lake Arrowhead views. What you see out the window is very important."

Marrying form and function, the designer transformed the original property from two small nondescript cabins into an impressive 7,000 square foot mountain estate for her clients. "I'm always proud of the finished product," Claridge says. "I try to put myself in my client's place. I help them realize their dreams and open up a world of design possibilities they might never have envisioned." 



OPPOSITE TOP The powder room with deer theme includes a custom cabinet, crimson wall coverings with deer, and custom wainscoting. BOTTOM The "Indian" room features Ralph Lauren fabrics and bed coverings, Indian baskets, a custom embellished staircase to the loft, and an inlaid dresser. TOP A child's saddle and blanket adorn the stair railing in the Bunk House. ABOVE The Bunk House master bedroom uses a soothing monochromatic palette. The linen look wall coverings, leather headboard with cowhide finish, and leather and suede pillows create a rustic and cozy feeling. Antique chaps, holster and saddlebag accessorize the custom bench. Drums serve as small tables. The lamps are made from moose antlers, and an antique arrow is displayed above the bed.