



# This Gorgeous Utah House Could Probably Survive a Nuclear Apocalypse

Every material involved is seriously built to last.



BY KAITLIN MENZA OCT 14, 2019



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It would've been a difficult project even if the clients weren't her parents. Architect and interior designer Anik Pearson couldn't say no when Malou and Patrice Humbert, European expats who run an ornamental ironworking business, bought a remote ranch in southern Utah in 2003 and asked for her help. The previous property had to be razed to create the home of their dreams.



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"The climate is very aggressive," says Pearson of Salt Gulch, the valley where the home is situated. "The wood siding was completely deteriorated from UV rays. Birds were trying to burrow in the boards," she recalls. "It was just going back to the land."

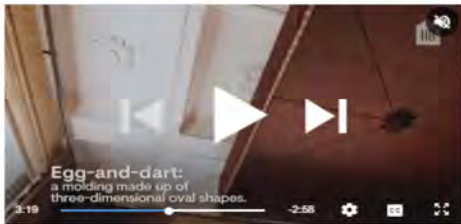
Their plans for the new build: an attached guest house for visits from family and room for their metalwork and pottery, as well as furniture picked up on their travels. Fire-resistant materials like steel, copper, and concrete were trucked in from as far as three hours away.

So that occupants can "see long distances across the vista and

catch the elk, coyotes, mountain lions, and mule deer that walk through," Pearson placed five-paneled glass windows throughout. These also maximize sunlight, warming up surfaces and cutting down on energy costs.

While the home was imagined as a vacation spot, Pearson's parents now live there full time. "They like it so much, they

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never like to leave," she says of their self-sufficient estate. "They run out of wine before they run out of food!"

## Entrance



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The oak front door of the property hints to the themes found within, as the steel strap hinges, ring pulls, cane bolts, and decorative sconces were designed by Pearson but manufactured by her stepfather, Patrice. The dramatic eaves and cabin-like appearance of the exteriors—those are louvered steel panels, not wood beams—call to mind a Swiss chalet, which was one of Pearson's inspirations along with Japanese residential spaces.

"We just have the biggest affinity for the Japanese style and the Swiss overhang, the way the wings are designed for heavy snow," she says. Indeed, the eaves are just one of the many ways the home is prepared to brave the harsh Utah elements.

## Breezeway



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Those adjustable slatted panels, similar to large shutters and fabricated once again by Patrice, aren't just for aesthetics either. They protect the path between the main house and the guest house, with Pearson's thinking that "they would act like a sun screen. So in the winter, you could open up the louvers to let the sun through. And in the summer, when it is hot and dry during the day, close the louvers and only let in a sliver of light, so it is pleasant and cool to walk from building to building," she explains.

## Living Room



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The living room is yet another alliance of stepfather-stepdaughter skill sets. "The language of the metalwork is repeated in different elements through the house," Pearson points out, so here the mantel and fireplace mimic the steel panels from the exterior. The sconces reappear as well. Still larger steel beams soar across the ceiling, several of them still clearly bearing the measurement notes from the metalworker.

From this elevated space, the Humberts and their family can sit and watch the animals creeping across the desert. Logs from the local piñon tree make for fragrant winter fires.

## Kitchen



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The family's passions collide in the kitchen: metalwork, pottery, and impeccable design. Pearson's mother Malou oversaw the acid etching of a striking metal backsplash. The colors of the panels complements the hues of the pottery Malou loves to collect, with ultra tall shelves displaying her collections of Van Briggles, McCoy, and Roseville pieces.

The gridded laylight ceiling is not simply beautiful, but problem-solving; the home's kitchen falls in the middle of the floor plan, away from any windows. The glazed panels shed light on the cooking (and playful countertop accessories) below.

## Master Bedroom



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Three soothing shades of celadon are a cool backdrop for the eye-popping objects found in the couple's master bedroom, such as the gem sculptures above the bed by artist John Torreano, the Basculant chair by Le Corbusier, and the jazzy fabric on throw pillows and curtains by Donghia. For yet more texture, the shiplap ceiling is comprised of cedar siding by ABTCO, while the walls are lined in Craftsman-style high paneling.

The colors are a trio of Farrow & Ball paint: Stone White on the ceiling, Lime White on the wall above the paneling, and Old White on the paneling itself—which, despite their names, are indeed gray-green tones.

## Master Bathroom



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While the large slabs of Costa Smeralda in the master bath are stunning, they are also something like practical. "There are a lot of slab stone in the bathrooms [because] when you are in a dry climate, grout tends to dry out and crack and fall out," Pearson says.

Meanwhile, "The color of the granite, the wall paint, and the stained concrete floor are inspired by the range of colors of the native stone and minerals found in the landscape around the house," she says.



## Guesthouse Sitting Room



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After more natural hues in the main house, the guest property is an explosion of color, as exemplified in the sitting room. Anchored by canary-colored Chesterfield leather sofas that Pearson purchased in Southampton, NY, the Craftsman-style paneling reads contemporary. “It offers human proportions to an otherwise overscale room,” says Pearson.

The pool table, rug, mirror, and midcentury chairs were all vintage finds, while the coffee table between the sofas is a steel and limestone piece created by Patrice.