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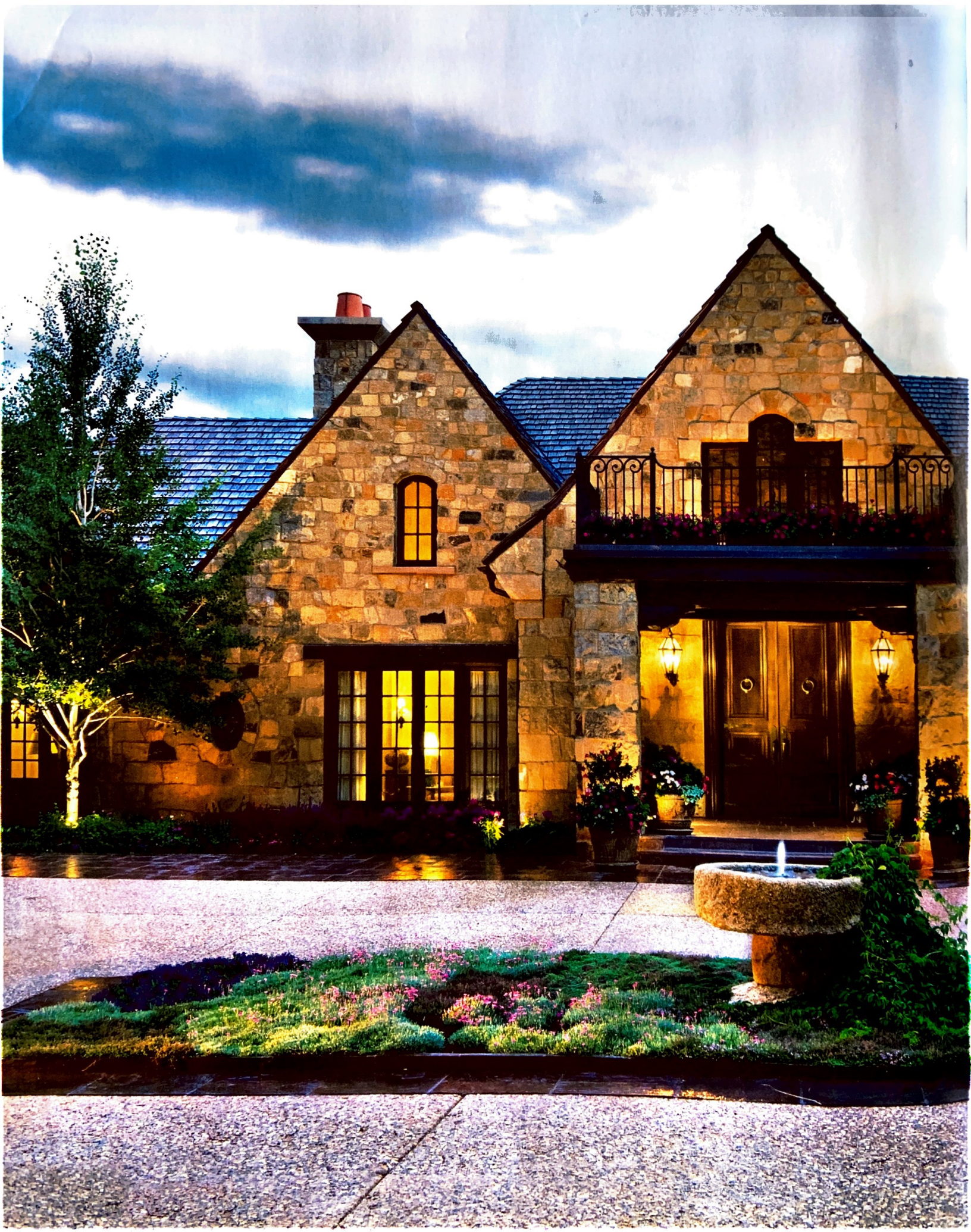
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GOOD ALTITUDE

WRITTEN BY LEILANI MARIE LABONG
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID O. MARLOW

SOMEWHERE IN THE PICTURESQUE EUROPEAN COUNTRY-SIDE, PERHAPS AT THE BRINK OF A FOREST PRIMEVAL, THERE IS A CHARMING STONE-CLAD COTTAGE WITH A GABLED ROOF, AND A WARM FIRE GLOWING INSIDE TO BECKON COLD AND WEARY TRAVELERS. Sound familiar? Now imagine this fairytale scene—popularized by legendary raconteurs Hans Christian Andersen and the Brothers Grimm—upscaled to luxurious heights and transported to a hilly 500-acre plot of land high in the Colorado Rockies, where such storybook architecture translates into a getaway of epic proportions.

“A quaint, rustic cabin this is not,” says Bill Poss, partner in Aspen-based Poss Architecture + Planning. “When the homeowners arrive from their primary residence, they usually bring two or three other families with them. It’s the ultimate entertaining house.”

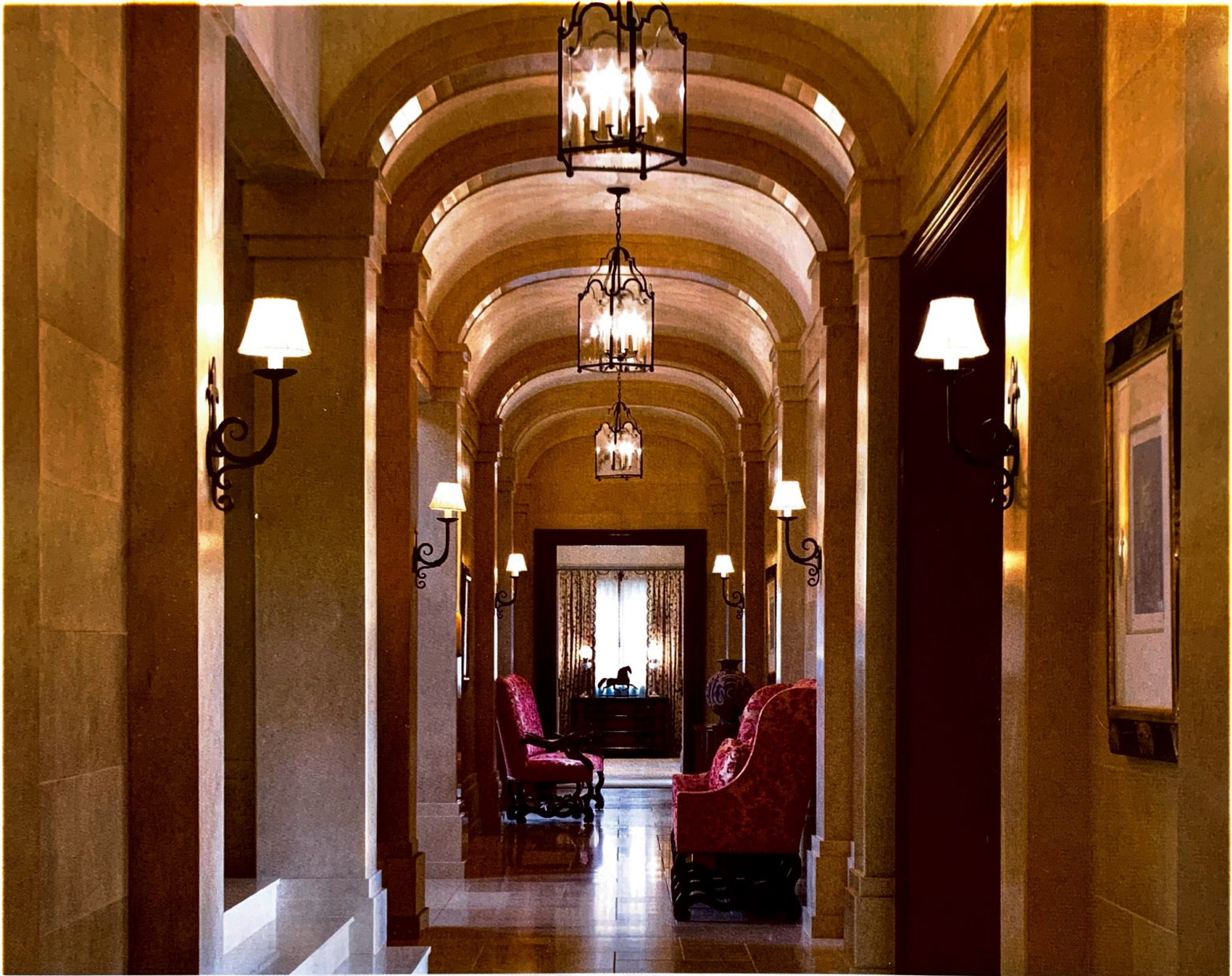
Though the sheer size of the estate—which encompasses guest quarters, a two-story horse barn, a traditional carriage house, a pool cabana and a man-made fishing pond stocked with trout—does disqualify it from being labeled as “quaint,” the “rustic” attribution may still be applied. After all, the territory of indigenous sagebrush and scrub

ARCHITECTURE Bill Poss, AIA, and Julie Maple,
Poss Architecture + Planning

INTERIOR DESIGN Paul McDonnell, Paul McDonnell Interiors

HOME BUILDER Don Carroll, KC Builders, Inc.

BEDROOMS 6 **BATHROOMS** 12 **SQUARE FEET** 28,500



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 205

oak—enhanced with groves of native aspens chosen by Shannon Murphy, of Basalt’s Shannon Murphy Landscape Architects—is far off the beaten path. Wildlife sightings of black bears, mountain lions, deer, elk and beaver are everyday occurrences, and the architecture nobly reflects, as it should, the mountainous setting.

Since Colorado brown stone cloaks the exteriors, in the summertime—from a bird’s-eye view—the property is camouflaged into its environment. Steeply pitched rooflines are designed to shirk off avalanche-grade snowfalls, and they also provide ample surfaces for the generous, arch-topped, mahogany-trimmed windows by Zeluck, which were custom designed to command breathtaking alpine views.

STYLE SELECTION

Boasting a Napoleonic flair, this French-inspired bench is etched with gilded detail accenting the solid wood frame. *Budapest Bench*, suggested retail \$1,460; durablee.com





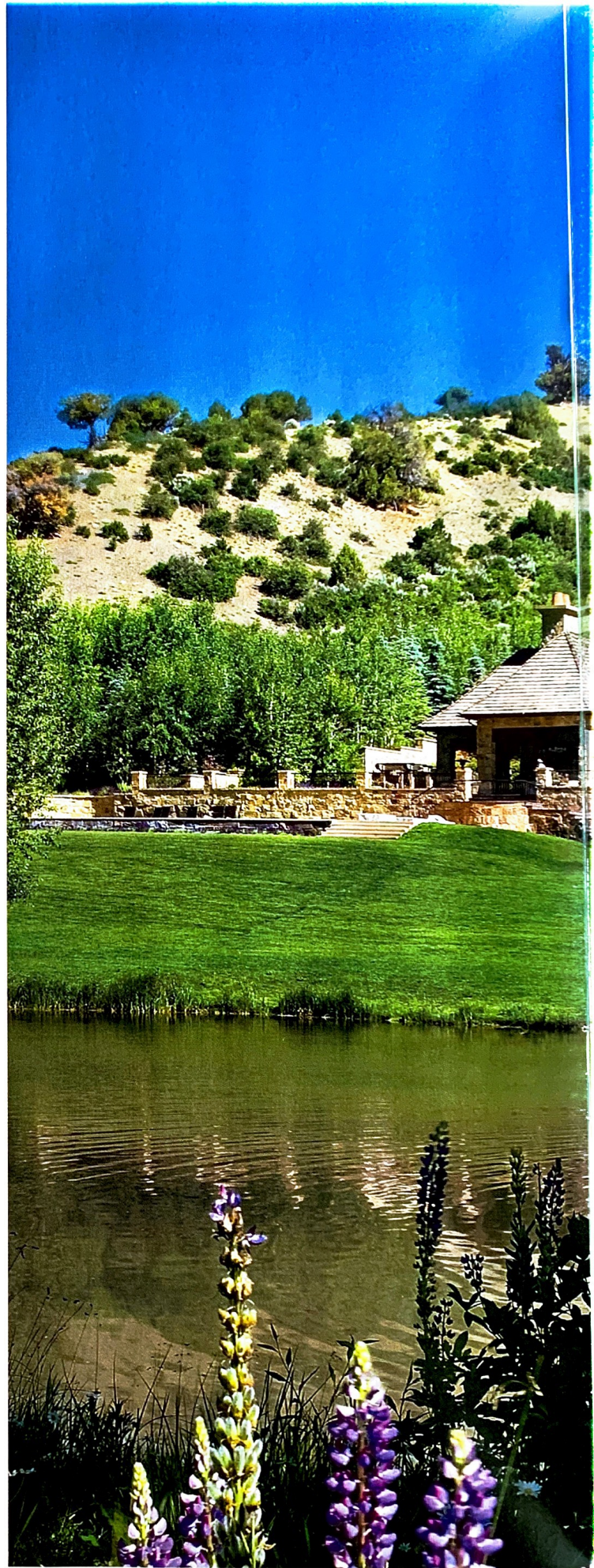
TEXTURAL CONTEXT
 Luxurious appointments were made in the living room: the rug is hand-knotted New Zealand wool from F.J. Hakimian, walls are upholstered in Carleton V linen-silk, and Clarence House fabrics color the pillows on sofas with leather wilting. The limestone chimneypiece from Barry H. Perry joins a cabinet that was faux-finished by Boyd Reath, both based in New York.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 206

Poss's colleague, architect Julie Maple, attributes the aesthetic to the homeowners' wishes that were set in motion along their travels. "The family became enamored by this French Provincial style while on a European vacation," she says.

The grandeur of the main house is most evidently due to the vast layout. East and west wings contain, respectively, such celebrated spaces as the billiard room—a handsome chamber inspired by French designer Jean-Michel Frank—and the country-modern estate kitchen. Both are linked by a monumental entrance gallery bedecked in lavish stone. "This corridor is my favorite space in the house," says builder Don Carroll, principal of Salt Lake City-based KC Builders. "The cool French stone and the warmth of the mahogany finishes make a really special combination." Adding to the home's stature are extraordinarily tall and wide doorways and pass-throughs, and ceilings that are vaulted to an 18-foot elevation.

Attuning to the home's function as a luxurious base for outdoor pursuits, New York-based designer Paul McDonnell prioritized the livability of the interiors, taking over the project midway through with the blessing of the initial designer, Raul Morillas, when he stepped down. The living room, billiard room and master suite, for example, feature custom-designed, overstuffed sofas covered in cozy chenille. Wet bars in the billiard room and master suite thwart late-night skulking to the kitchen.





FISHING EXPEDITION

The surrounding mountain geography, dotted with sagebrush and scrub oak, is a counterpoint to the well-manicured grassy knolls—inspired by French-chateau gardens—and a man-made, trout-stocked fishing pond. Groves of hand-planted aspen trees form the Colorado version of an enchanted forest.





SEPARATE PIECE

The architects created the pool cabana as an independent structure to give the property the appearance of an estate built upon over many years. Outdoor furnishings provide comfortable spots to soak in the sun, and the cabana, which contains a large fireplace, can be used as a guest room in any season, not just when the swimming's good.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 211

Additionally, Murphy and landscape architects Peter Cummin and Brian Chandler, of Cummin Associates in Stonington, Connecticut, created the gardens in a style befitting a French chateau (think manicured lawns, planted parterres and fountains). And the architects, not to be outdone, designed the home's crowning feature: a majestic, all-marble master bath, channeling legendary icons of extravagance—a few old French kings named Louis. **L**

FOREIGN AFFAIR

The master suite features a cozy sitting room with a fireplace and plush sofas covered in soft chenille from Jeffrey Aronoff and custom silk trim from Scalamandré. The sofas flank an antique table from Christie's and are illuminated by floor lamps from Stephen Miller Siegel in New York. The custom-embroidered draperies are from Chelsea Editions in New York.



REFLECTIVE MOMENT

Arguably the most extravagant space in the house, the master bath is clad in floor-to-ceiling marble from Walker Zanger. The vanities were custom-designed by the architects and built by Colorado Architectural Millwork Supply in Colorado Springs; Boyd Reath finished them using an oil-gilding technique. Gilt metal and crystal sconces are from Chameleon Fine Lighting; the tub and faucet are by Kohler.