

VERDE REAL

Location: Carmel Valley, California

Size: 2,500 s.f.

Built for a forward thinking 'green'-conscious client, this contemporary home was sited to take full advantage of passive solar design as well as natural day-lighting and ventilation. While the overall design style is definitely contemporary, our original design concept is reminiscent of Carmel Valley's history of farm and ranch-style homesteads.

The home is made up of three separate buildings with covered outdoor living spaces between. In its contemporary context, these spaces are useable for outdoor living in the seasonally temperate climate of the Valley rather than feeding pigs or chickens, but are flexible enough to allow for any number of uses. Long eave overhangs in specific locations contribute to the passive solar design and protect outdoor spaces during the cooler months.

The three separate interior living spaces include a main living unit, an office/guest room suite, and a garage and storage building. The floor plan of the main living unit is interconnected, a contemporary layout which reflects our modern way of life. With large windows in carefully considered locations this allows for valley vistas from almost every room and living spaces that are bright and airy. The home feels spacious without requiring a large footprint on the site.

The separate guest suite can be re-defined as a second unit, a working office or a caretaker's suite, allowing flexibility to the homeowner throughout many years of use.

The exterior materials include traditionally accurate redwood siding and metal roofing, however the siding is reclaimed from a demolished building and the roofing company uses recycled aluminum, reflecting the shift that we hope is occurring in building design and construction to more sustainable practices.

For more information regarding the systems and finishes that were a part of this project, see our Sustainable Design Statement.

Sustainable Design

Our client had a strong interest in sustainable design objectives. We were able to research many sustainable systems and use numerous recycled, reclaimed and sustainable materials in the design and construction of this home.

The systems we explored were:

Rainwater catchment system with bio-pond filtering

Structural Integrated Panels (SIPs)

Grid-tie photovoltaic panels

Solar water heating
In-floor radiant heating
Natural day-lighting and ventilation

Some of the sustainable materials used in the home include:

Integral-color high fly-ash content concrete slabs (used as finished flooring on the lower level)
FSC certified lumber
Blown-in recycled denim insulation
Reclaimed exterior redwood siding
Metal roofing
Low VOC paint
Low-e double-glazed windows and French doors
Ceiling fans instead of air conditioning in summer and to distribute heat in winter
Energy Star appliances and programmable thermostats
LED and fluorescent light fixtures
Low-flow water fixtures
Bamboo flooring
Recycled glass kitchen and bath countertops and tile
Drought tolerant and fire safe landscaping

Our approach to land utilization and preservation of site ecology included studies of seasonal sun and wind patterns on the hillside site in Carmel Valley. There was an existing well on the property and no existing trees were removed for construction.

Refreshingly contemporary in both aesthetic and spatial order, this residence integrates well with the site's rolling topography, mature oak stands and cross-valley views.

Three separate buildings make up the residence, providing wonderful opportunities for outdoor living. The buildings were each sited separately to take advantage of maximum passive solar orientation as well as natural day-lighting and ventilation with minimal site grading.

The home also uses its concrete foundation slab as the finish floor throughout the lower level, one of the many ways it's possible to reduce materials and achieve a sustainable lifestyle.