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Mountain Majestic

ON CULLOWHEE MOUNTAIN IN NORTH CAROLINA,
A FAMILY'S DREAM HOME TAKES FULL ADVANTAGE
OF THE EVER-CHANGING VIEWS.

TEXT: MARSH LATEY ROSE | PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN O'HAGAN



At dawn on any given morning, Rob Hunter is savoring his first cup of coffee from his perch on Hughes Knob at the top of Callowhee Mountain. "The views are different every day, and often from minute to minute," he says of the ethereal sight of swirling mists and fluffy clouds that drift into the valley. In effect, his daily routine epitomizes Rob's love for this remarkable spot in the Blue Ridge Mountains, where he and his wife, Carol, built their swilling house, named Hunter Lodge, in 2014.

It all began in 2005 during an annual fall foliage ride that Rob and several others from Birmingham, Alabama, enjoy every year on their Harley motorcycle. This time, "base camp" was Bryson City, North Carolina, from which the group planned to take an epic story day ride into the countryside that Rob thought he knew so well. "In truth, I actually didn't know it at all. We got really hot and had to stop at the edge of Lake Cherokee to get our bearings," he says of the peaceful, man-made lake that was dammed up in World War II to provide electricity for an aluminum plant. "I remember commenting that this area is so unspoiled and beautiful that I could see myself living here someday."

That "someday" came three years later when Rob reconnected with Bill Hunter, a

Timothy page. The study no longer have with it, angled roofline, vintage window placement, and hand-cast metal door entry marks above 20-year-old vinyl. These pages. The two-story front hall and great room wonderful define the contemporary vocabulary of Hunter Lodge with spacious open floor with old barnwood that contrasts with horizontal shiplap walls.

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Top and left: Drooping hilling down on the screened porch create a seamless indoor-outdoor flow. The open layout, Courtney's penchant for high-performance fabrics and floor wider that create a "captive environment." The seating views include Flat Mountain and Bell Covey Mountain. Above: Carol's garden, celebrated by landscape lawn Callaway, with beds of wildflowers as well as masses of dahlia. Opposite: The great room has a charcoal velvet sofa, substantial leather ottoman that double as extra seating, and a cement bar stool.

distant cousin who owned land in the area. Soon after, Rob joined Still in a venture called Hughes Knob, Inc., which owns over 100 acres sub-divided into a conservation easement, as well as 24 lots they planned to sell. Rob and Carol decided to purchase one of the 2-acre lots for their own house.

Four years later, after major land-clearing efforts, the couple asked their daughter-in-law, Courtney Stubbs Hunter of CHH Interiors, to architect the interiors for the new house. "When they first showed me the property in 2011, I could see the excitement in Rob's face as he was visualizing the family home," says Courtney. "I knew at that moment that I wanted to help create the dream house he envisioned."

It took another two years before the property was ready for construction. At that point, the couple hired architect Jim Robinson of Design South to handle the design. "It was obvious from his tedious process of grading and siting that Jim understood the fragile land," says Carol. "He staked out the location and visual aspect of every room and porch, and he knew what every unobstructed outlook would be."

Aside from maximizing views, the Hunters' overarching goal was to fit the entire family of 12 into the house at the same time and also make it inviting for entertaining friends. "We focused on the needs of granddads in that





The Lucles features cabinets of repurposed vintage, Ohio barnwood, stone-tile, copious backdrops and more. The marble island is perfect for breakfast, on-the-go meals, or casual meals. Monogrammed leather barstools, designed by Courtney, contrast the deer frame of the dining room's chandelier. The glass-fronted cabinet holds Casel's grandmother's collection of silver and Spode "Toucan Peak" china.



This page, left and bottom right: As the master bedroom in the house, the first-floor guest room opens up the charm with its plastered-wood wallpaper and chiseled beds. Bottom left: The powder room features a remarkable 1910 bamboo, marble-topped vanity that Courtney purchased in a Paris flea market.

range from ages 3 to 18," says Carol. "Very young children needed tubs for baths, while older ones wanted showers. We created two bunk rooms that the bigger kids love sharing with their cousins. One is on the lower level next to the media and workout rooms. Another, with open-air lower bunks that are perfectly comfortable for grownups, is on the second floor."

Throughout the house, the clever design and attention to detail create a warm color that is not purely artistic but rather country-house comfort fused with a bit of chic sophistication. Overall, Courtney and Jim, along with Courtney's teens of Dan Diamond and David Mills, instilled the interiors with a sense of age by using repurposed hardwood in cabinets, doors, and trim. Full-length Elbe accordion glass doors allow for a seamless connection to the screened-in terrace and outdoor seating areas. And to ensure that everyone can kick back with no worries about spills, Courtney used high-performance fabrics throughout.

As the heart of the house, the open-plan kitchen was a requirement for Carol "so that the cook is always part of the party," she says. "But, I love



Top and left: The light-and-airy master bedroom evokes a sympathy in blues that Carol chose to mirror the bolded Carolina sky. The four-poster king bed, dressed in the same fabric used for the window treatments, anchors the room, while mid-19th-century English bedside chests flank either side. Above: The spacious bathroom with marble-topped vanity features French-inspired, wall-mounted lights with crystal drops.



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the look of the warm, old wood co-existing happily with the modern appliances and cool white marble island."

Upstairs, the library overlooks the first floor and offers an unbeaten 20-mile view across the Blue Ridge Parkway. The lofty space includes a wall of 12 windows that brings in plenty of natural light and adds a European flavor. Open shelves hold Robb's comprehensive collection relating to British Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson, as well as Card's father's medical books and leather-bound classics.

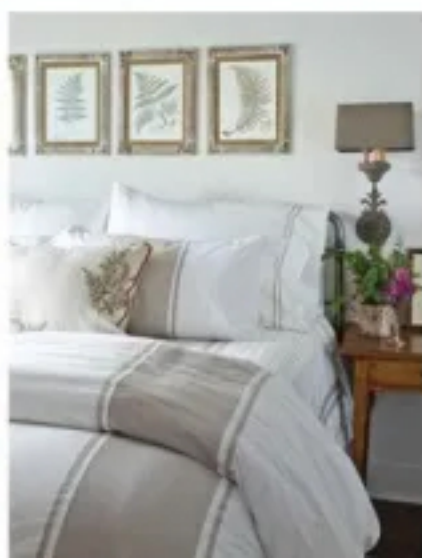
"All in all, I call this house a total success," says Rob. "Not a day goes by without me or us saying how much we love it here." Adds Card, "And we love sharing the house with others. We moved in on a Friday and Saturday, so it was our first party that Sunday!"



Opposite, top and bottom: The library's reading nook, bed, like a secret perch overlooking the great room. This page, left and bottom left: The "queen room" represents the interests of daughter Katie, who is an accomplished equestrian. The adjoining bathroom features butcher-paper wallpaper and a blue stone-topped vanity. Above: The bunk room, with its lower queen beds and upper twins, is perfect for a large family or weekend-long couple. (Below) The warm lightwood "ben room" features top-to-bottom white lines and walls hung with framed fern botanicals.

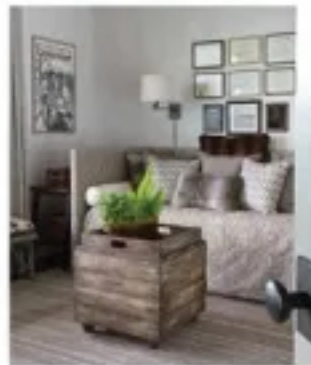
"I HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF WORKING ON THIS HOUSE FROM DAY ONE. MY HAND WAS ON EVERY DETAIL FROM LOCATION OF WINDOWS TO THE TRIM ON A THROW PILLOW."

—COURTNEY STUBBS HUNTER





Above: The wine cellar features with remnants of ancient European cellars. Rob has water, finished off of antique, stained brick from Calhoun, Georgia, the space holds 1,000 bottles of wine. Right: The media room, with its ultra-cozy, ultra-stylish furniture and built-in shelves, offers video and/or a great spot for visiting children's books. A small table in the corner of the workout room opens into a king bed.



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