

A linen sofa, light-colored rug and shell-strung chandeliers offset the weight of the great room's broad beams and wood-planked ceiling.
Right: Heather Humphrey, interior designer with Alder & Tweed Home Outfitters, Park City.





Mountain High

Mixing modern and mountain styles, interior designer Heather Humphrey elevates a Deer Valley home's décor

BY BRAD MEE

PHOTOS BY DOUGLAS BURKE



Modern Barcelona-style chairs contrast with the living room's rustic stacked-stone fireplace and heavily grained floors. The texture-rich braided rug delineates the conversation area.



aced with an interior backdrop of beige walls, dark granite and copious wood, some designers might surrender to a rustic mountain décor. You know the look: big and brooding, rough and tumble. But Heather Humphrey had other ideas. Asked to furnish and finesse parts of a newly built resort home, she envisioned something lighter, more contemporary. “I wanted to do something less typical for Park City, push the boundaries a bit toward modern and organic, yet still mountainy,” she says.

The home’s location in Empire Pass—a premier, wooded ski-in/ski-out enclave in Deer Valley—inspired Humphrey, a principal designer with Alder & Tweed in Park City. “I wanted to bring the beauty of the mountain setting indoors but with a fresh take,” says the designer, who was hired specifically to target the great room and master suite.

The great room—a long, lofty space housing the kitchen and living area at opposite ends with the dining room in between—is dominated by wood, from exposed beams and a planked ceiling to generous case and base and heavily grained flooring. Humphrey’s goal: offset the inherent weightiness with unexpected elements and enlightened treatments. “I needed to change the room’s dynamics,” she says.

The designer began with shell-draped, shadeless chandeliers that draw the eye upward with their shimmering, delicate strands. “Today’s contemporary relies on organic elements, and the shells help supply this.” The



Above: A patchwork hide rug provides pattern below the dining room’s French country table and contemporary chairs.
Right: A metallic, manzanita-branch candelabra exemplifies the décor’s organic-meets-modern mountain style.





Hide-upholstered bar stools provide relief from the kitchen's brown wood treatments while creating a connection with the adjoining dining area's light-toned host chairs and patchwork cowhide rug.



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Heather Humphrey's tips for choosing and using pillows

Custom pillows are the best and easiest way to upgrade and personalize a store-bought sofa.

Sofas are investment pieces best upholstered in neutral fabrics. Use pillows to have fun playing with colors and patterns.

Begin with the color scheme when choosing pillows. "I chose one dominant and one complementary pattern and then fill in with textures," says Humphrey. "You don't want it to be too busy."

Too large is better than too small. "Depending on the size of the sofa, I prefer to use 22- to 24-inch pillows," Humphrey says.

Modern animal prints rely on fresh colors and the right fabric to look stylish. Choose linen weaves and avoid chenille with animal prints.

Don't over trim. "I like a basic flange, self-welt or occasional cord but dislike tassels and pom-poms."

Try kidney pillows on chairs. Not only do they add a layer of style, they also make a fun focal point.

Clockwise from upper left: A natural hide performs as a free-form tablecloth; a metal sculpture adds an elemental modern touch; carefully chosen patterns layer throughout the interior; an oversized photo and Asian table create an eclectic hallway focal point; a small bonsai sits between two Barcelona-style chairs.





iridescent fixtures appear to bring the ceiling downward, adding comfort to the voluminous space. Their semi-transparency allows light and mountain views to flow into the room, as do the patterned drapery panels below. “Panels dress the windows without blocking the mountain scenery,” says Humphrey, noting the treatments are also budget-friendly.

Anchoring the living room’s sitting area, two trunk-like cocktail tables are positioned side-by-side on a gold-flecked cowhide topping a heavily braided wool rug underneath. “The textured rug establishes the parameter of the sitting space while the hide adds an unexpected layered element,” says Humphrey. An assortment of tufted seating frames the grouping. A tall-backed library sofa, dressed in linen, provides a large scale without creating bulk while two pairs of Mies van der Rohe Barcelona-style chairs, upholstered in distressed leather, make a chic, modern statement. “You can mix traditional and starkly contemporary elements with stunning results.” Blocky end tables of recycled wood intermingle with mirror-topped, metal accent tables further fostering Humphrey’s organic, contemporary design. A pair of oversized black-shaded lamps add a touch of drama. Humphrey carefully positioned all of the pieces into a symmetrical arrangement. “Symmetry creates calming balance

and order,” she says.

The designer’s attention to detail extends into the adjoining dining area, where a French country table of reclaimed wood is encircled by tall-backed host chairs and modern armchairs devoid of shapely styling. “I left the curves to the table’s turned legs,” says Humphrey. A patchwork hide rug sits below the table lending texture and pattern. “I like to place less expensive rugs like hides, jute or kilims beneath tables where spills and maintenance are a concern.” The designer’s repeated use of hides successfully creates continuity. In the kitchen, white hide-upholstered barstools purposefully contrast with the room’s dark cabinetry, as do industrial metal pendants.

Humphrey’s modern mountain aesthetic merges with ethnic elements in the master suite. Sepia-toned Native American photography, vintage artwork and the interplay of pattern against pattern calmed by strong solids shapes a cozy ambiance. Staged in a nook, a handsome settee furthers the effect.

For Humphrey, like any talented designer, keeping pace with evolving styles and clients’ needs is always important, but so is staying true to the character of place. With this mountain home, she did both by melding modern with mountain in a livable and enlightened manner. **USD**

Stained timbers frame a light-filled nook that hosts a settee, where the homeowners can retreat in the master suite.