



SPRUCED UP From left: Rowland+Broughton architect Sara Upton incorporated natural surfaces like stone and wood to update this 2,000-square-foot, four-level duplex in Vail. She reconfigured the kitchen space to bring in more sunlight.

MOUNTAIN LOFT

A remodeled hillside retreat in Vail becomes a home away from home for an itinerant music manager.

*By Linda Hayes
Photography by Brent Moss*

For Rowland+Broughton architect Sara Upton, renovating a Vail duplex for a Vancouver-based client who was constantly on the move proved to be an interesting—and entertaining—challenge. “At the beginning, we played a game of Pinterest for a few days,” Upton shares with a laugh. “I would do video conferences with him and show him ideas on the screen. Our conversations were by email or phone. It was the only way to actually grab him.”

It helped that the client, Dan Braun, a stage production manager who works with high-profile clients in the music industry and accompanies them on world tours, had certain ideas in mind. “It was an extension of what I like,” says Braun. “Natural wood, stone, fabric. A mix of a minimal look and a modern look, with some very natural surfaces.” Upton says the mission remained constant throughout the project. “Dan wanted it to be unique to his lifestyle during the rare time he gets to spend there,” she says. “He was so precise. As an architect, it makes you really hone in on the details and get it right.”

Though amply sized at 2,000 square feet, the four-level duplex was inconveniently configured; the finishes, dated. Along with R+B interior designer Leslie Cope and principal John Rowland, Upton set about cleaning up the floor plan for a more seamless flow. On the main level, opening up the kitchen and

SLEEK AND CLEAN The dining area floats within the open floor plan. A sleek walnut-topped table from Urban Hardwoods pairs with sculptural Ligne Roset chairs and a sideboard from BoConcept.





WALL ART Throughout the space, interior designers used the client's own black-and-white photos taken from his travels around the globe, helping to make the duplex feel like home.



LIGHT AND BRIGHT From left: The bathroom's interior palette parallels the airy feel of the kitchen: white oak floors and gleaming white cabinets are enhanced by white dining chairs.



ON THE RAILS The main staircase was retrofitted with a glass rail, adding a contemporary touch.

repositioning a powder room helped to bring more light into the duplex and gave it a loftlike feel. Up a main stairway fitted with a new glass rail, the second level was reorganized to better accommodate a full master suite and a pair of guest bedrooms. A spiral staircase to the top-most level was rejiggered, and the space itself repurposed as an office. R+B also tapped Albright & Associates (albright-associates.com) for any structural engineering considerations for the home, which backs up against a hill.

Solid white oak flooring and walnut cabinet systems in the main living and dining space set the backdrop for the interior palette. The selection of French Ligne Roset chairs, lamps, dining chairs and counter stools set the tone and style for the furniture program, which Upton describes as “clean geometry.” Other key pieces include a custom tweed sofa from DC Upholstery and a walnut dining table from Urban Hardwoods with a white sled base. Along with the walnut

cabinet system, the high-gloss white kitchen cabinets and island were all by Benchcraft.

Adding character to the space are a hundred or so mostly black-and-white photographs taken by Braun during a yearlong seven-continent trip. The images convey emotion, texture, and environmental and architectural elements. “They were an attempt to put myself in that space again when I wasn’t there, to help me remember what it was,” says Braun.

In addition to thoroughly enjoying his Vail retreat, winter and summer, Braun pays the R+B team the ultimate compliment—the opportunity to furnish a new high-rise apartment in Portland. “I can’t think of better people to work with,” he says. “They were able to understand what I wanted and make it wonderful. When I get there, I’m home.” *Rowland+Broughton Architecture/Urban Design/Interior Design, 234 E. Hopkins Ave., 970.544.9006, rowlandbroughton.com* ■