

INTERIOR DESIGN[®]

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eye on the future

WALK through

firms: mark ulnes architects; office of charles de lisle
site: glen ellen, california



BRUCE DAMONTE

sojourn in sonoma

Behind the guesthouse stretches a 56-foot lap pool. ➤



WALK through



A self-proclaimed “diplo-brat,” Casper Mork-Ulnes was born in Norway, moved to Italy at age 2, and came to San Francisco at 16. He also lived in Scotland and studied architecture at California College of the Arts and Columbia University before establishing Mork Ulnes Architects back in San Francisco. He now has an Oslo office, too.

That’s an unusually lengthy introduction, granted, to an unusual small project in the Sonoma Valley town of Glen Ellen. Mork-Ulnes had remodeled the property’s original house for its previous owners. The new ones, a family of five, brought him back for a guesthouse. At 840 square feet, it comprises three volumes, each of which contains a bedroom and a bathroom. They’re arranged in a stepped configuration, sharing party walls and a canted roof but no internal corridor. Roof overhangs shelter three terraces.

As for where the guesthouse would sit on the heavily wooded ridgeline property, he had no choice. Only one spot was flat enough to install a lap pool alongside. He did make the choice to build in concrete, due to its “performative nature for structural integrity and thermal massing,” Mork-Ulnes explains, and the ability to withstand the area’s all too prevalent wildfires. ➔

Clockwise from top left: Bedrooms have Charles de Lisle’s custom beds in knotty pine, paired with his brass lamps set on custom nightstands in plywood and linoleum by Doug McCollough. Glass walls face north and east. A breezeway wraps around to a bedroom’s covered terrace. Before the 2017 wildfire, Douglas fir and knobcone pine trees and manzanita evergreen shrubs dominated the 18 acres.

BRUCE DAMONTE

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The concrete roof is smooth-troweled, and exterior walls are board-formed concrete. "Inside, we got more refined, using large panels," Mork-Ulnes says. Concrete flooring is radiant-heated. Even the bathrooms' sink vanities are concrete.

Furnishings show the hand of the Office of Charles de Lisle. "I've known Casper since our 20s, so it's cool to come full circle," Charles de Lisle says. His interpretation of the architecture's minimal Scandi look takes the form of headboardless platform beds with bedcovers in "a '70s burnt orange," he continues, also noting Martino Gamper's pine side chairs. "They add a toasty and familiar quality to these bunkers."

That's surely appreciated by guests as well as by the owners. They've been camping out here lately, as the main house has been demolished to make way for a new, larger one by Mork-Ulnes. —**Edie Cohen**

FROM FRONT CRATE AND BARREL: CHAISE LOUNGES (POOL AREA). **JOHNSON POOL & SPA:** POOL. **OFFICE OF CHARLES DE LISLE:** CUSTOM BEDS, TABLE LAMPS, BEDDING, DRAPES (BEDROOMS). **DOUG MCCOLLOUGH:** CUSTOM NIGHTSTANDS. **I-VESTA:** DRAPERY HARDWARE. **CURTIS & SONS DOOR:** CUSTOM WOOD DOOR, CUSTOM HANDLE. **PERFORMANCE IN LIGHTING:** SCONCE. **MARTINO GAMPER:** CHAIR, SIDE TABLE. **MAHARAM:** CUSTOM RUG. **BOHEMIAN STONEWORKS:** CUSTOM SINK (BATHROOM). **VOLA:** SINK FITTINGS. **DURAVIT:** TOILET. **AXO LIGHT:** CUSTOM PENDANT FIXTURES. **KLUS:** MIRROR BACKLIGHTING. **DOUG MOCKETT & COMPANY:** CUSTOM TOWEL BAR. **THROUGHOUT VITROCSA:** SLIDING GLASS DOORS. **DEFAUW DESIGN + FABRICATION:** CUSTOM GUARDRAILS. **BGL GLASS COMPANY:** FIXED GLAZING. **SURFACEDESIGN:** LANDSCAPE DESIGN. **REVOLVER DESIGN:** LIGHTING CONSULTANT. **ZFA STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS:** STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS. **INTERFACE ENGINEERING:** MEP. **ADOBE ASSOCIATES:** CIVIL ENGINEER. **PARTNERS CONTRACTING:** CONCRETE CONTRACTOR. **NORDBY SIGNATURE HOMES:** GENERAL CONTRACTOR.

Clockwise from top: Martino Gamper designed the chair and stool in each bedroom. A troweled concrete roof ties the three volumes together. Sink fittings are powder-coated. Vanities are concrete.

