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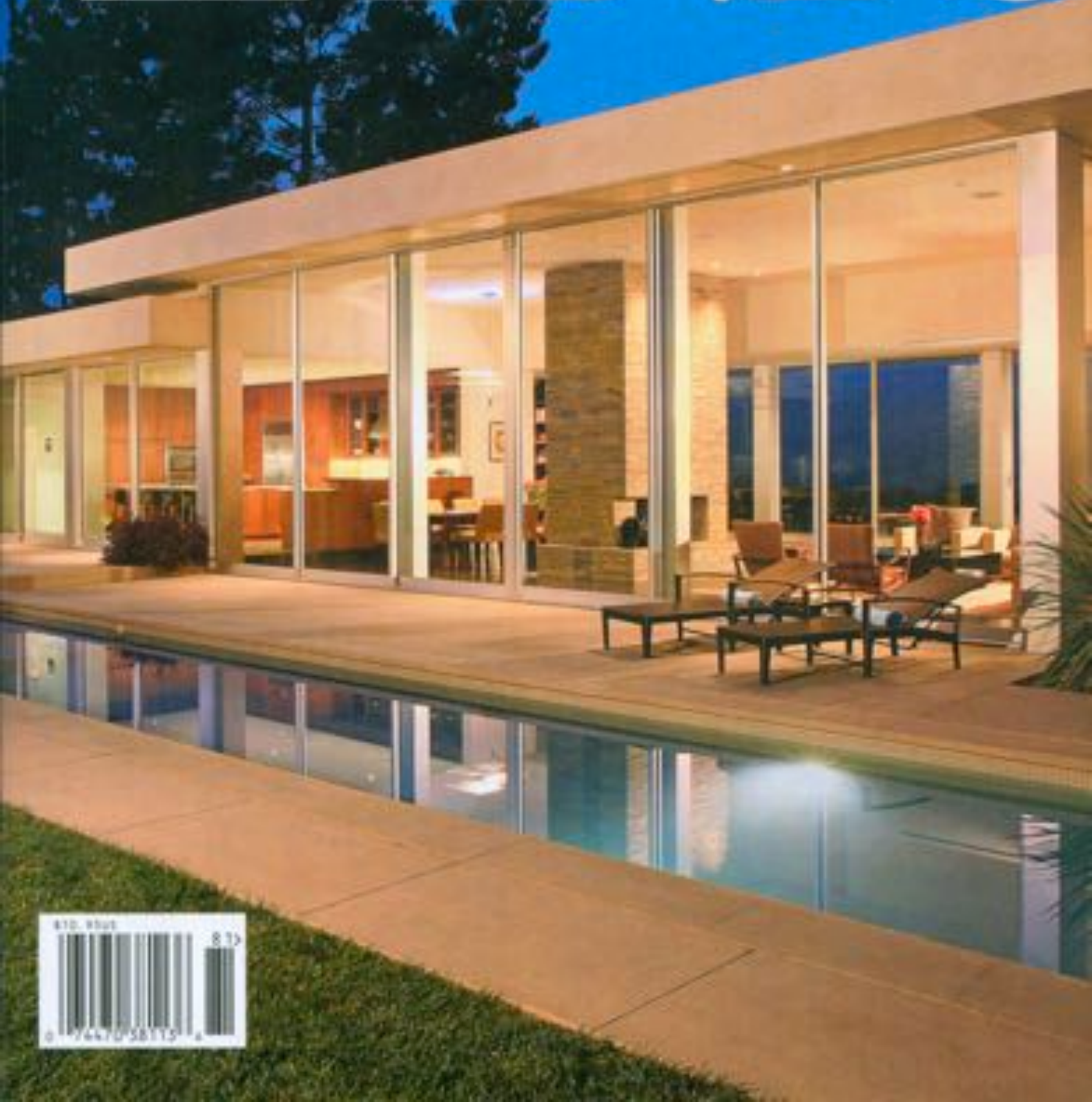
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ARCHITECTURAL

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# TRENDS



European influences

# Continental calling

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## To the manor born

With materials and details imported from France, this house fulfills the homeowners' desire to create a French chateau in the Napa Valley

Homeowners are often influenced by architecture they see while traveling — and European buildings are the basis of many a design theme. However, it is less common to invest in near-complete authenticity to this theme when building a new home.

The aim of the owners of this house was to build a French manor-style home on a hill above the Napa Valley. Architect Tom Taylor from Taylor Lombardo Architects says that in all aspects of the design, the French model was considered and used.

"Whenever a problem came up, the homeowners employed us to find French, but occasionally there were alterations made to fit with the Californian environment," he says.

The result is one example of the authenticity of the manor style. Situated at a steep pitch, it is exceptionally tall. Taylor says a concern was that the house would be too conspicuous from the valley floor.

"To counteract this, we designed the roof with both gables and hips, and also used a blend of colors in the shingles, to

provide paper. The house, which sits on a hill above the Napa Valley, is designed in the style of a French manor.

Above left: The lower level of the house is partially underground and includes a wine cellar and heating ducts. Because of the subterranean view, the three-story tower looks to be just two stories.

Above: In the manor style, an arched stone entrance way leads to a steel entrance door. A circular staircase is contained within the turret to the right of the entrance.



place of the traditional black slate."

To further blend the house with its environment, the lower level was designed to be partially underground, so that the house sits into the hill. This means that although it is three stories, the house appears to be just two. The lower floor contains an office, an exercise room, a bathroom, a wine cellar and a tasting room. The cellar is mostly subterranean, while the tasting room has a partial view out to the valley.

"A two-acre vineyard is planted on the grounds. The homeowners grow Cabernet

Sauvignon grapes for their own personal enjoyment," says Taylor.

The materials used for the outer facade of the house demonstrate the architect's efforts to allow the traditional model to fit with the environment.

"Because California is prone to earthquakes, masonry - which is the wall material used in four French stone houses - was replaced with Durock bonded plywood and masonry treatment to give a traditional look," says Taylor.

The entrance hall is an aspect of the

house that is true to its origins. It opens offway into a grand entrance into the black-and-white tiled rectangular room. Tall ceilings and a stone staircase, combined with a barrel-vaulted ceiling.

"The stone stairwell was built in France and shipped over for the house," says Taylor.

The first level is designed with two wings radiating from the central foyer. The public spaces on the left wing include the living room, dining room and kitchen. To the right are the more private spaces of



above left: View along corridor from the entrance hall. To the left are the public spaces of the living room, dining and living. The master bedroom, bathroom, library and laundry are to the right.

above: The granite staircase was built in France and shipped over especially for this house. The stone, inside and outside, were also imported from France.

left: A terrace with an outdoor fireplace is situated in the space between the two wings.



the master bedroom suite, his and her's bedrooms, the library and library.

"It is not traditional to have the master bedroom on the lower floor, but it seems appropriate to have to climb the stairs if you don't need to," says the architect.

The space between the library and living room creates an external courtyard that features a smoking fireplace.

In many rooms, including the living room, timber trusses visually unite the space, as well as bringing a structural quality to the house. This also links the house

to an element of informality, says Taylor.

"The living room also features a Juliet balcony, accessed from the office and second bedroom space on the top floor."

French doors lead from the living room to the dining room. Here, and in the library, curved wall panels have been imported straight from an 18th-century French chateau that was being demolished. Taylor says that over 90% of these panels are original.

"It was also vital to reconstruct panels to fit with those that were usable. In the dining room we created the panels

around the fireplace, as the originals did not work with the fireplace and surround."

The glass used for the painted panels in the dining room was chosen for its traditional look, while the bookcases in the library were built to fit the corners of the room and match the oak panels.

Accessible from the dining room, the kitchen is designed as comfortably accessible around several ovens in one. The aisle between the cabinets and the central island was made for this reason. A fireplace is a feature of this traditionally styled room,



as is the high-end La Courne inspired piano finish stone.

"The house has a traditional look, but modern functionality, which made it the right choice for this home," says Taylor.

Other notable features include the house designed to fit the older style. Through the use of lamps and surface-mounted fixtures, the house still appears as well lit as a modern home, without the use of modern light fittings. An elevator accesses all three floors, with the interior painted like the inside of a hot air balloon and basket.



Looking up in the space of the entrance to the living room is a Juliet balcony. The view above this is a house office. Timber trusses add visual warmth to the house.

Below: Original oak wall panels were imported from a chateau in France that was to be demolished. Around 90% of the panels in this dining room are original, while some had to be reconstructed for the project.

Left: The kitchen features a custom hot air balloon and a surrounding wooden wall.



**Stone** The kitchen is designed to accommodate several cooks. The range is La Cornue, equipped with a seven-burner, three-paneled top and oven with

stone right in the dining room, the stone is used with oak wall panels imported from a French chateau. The fixtures in the kitchen were selected to complement the panels.

**Light** A contemporary feel is formed by built-in pendant lights. A new area structure is also on site.



**Architect** Thomas Pope Architects, London, UK  
**Contractor** The Landmark Construction Co., Princeton, NJ

**Kitchen Designer** Maggie West, Deerfield, IL  
**Stone** La Cornue

**Kitchen Manufacturer** Heritage Woodworks

**Builder** The Landmark Construction

**Structural Engineer** The Landmark Construction

**Lighting** The Landmark Construction

**Pool** The Landmark Construction

**Swimming Pool** The Landmark Construction

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**Lighting** The Landmark Construction

**Wall panels** The Landmark Construction

**Kitchen cabinets** The Landmark Construction

**Countertops** The Landmark Construction

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**Chandelier** The Landmark Construction

**Lighting** The Landmark Construction

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