



A new take on enjoying the great outdoors

Monterey-area couple build a home that's comfortable inside and out

An intriguing part of this beautiful Monterey Peninsula residence is a comfortable outdoor sanctuary, where the homeowners enjoy living and working.

Not only do they enjoy mild temperatures all year round, but they have every luxury, whether they're poolside, in a partially-roofed pergola or in the outdoor kitchen. And every home system is available at the touch of a button, outdoors or inside: music, video, security, and even outdoor patio heaters, because nights in northern California can be chilly.

Making life easier

"It's very important to understand, it's not about what your technology can do, it's about how it makes your life easier," says Vanja Thompson, General Manager of Carmel-based, David Vincent Design, which installed all the electronics on this property.

For example, Thompson says, these homeowners have some beautiful artwork, and their lighting designer set up each room's lighting to show it off. "But if you walk into the house with an armful of shopping bags, you don't want to think about flipping a large number of switches. Instead, they can touch one button to turn on the lights they need, and the lights are dimmed independently so everything looks its best."

The home consists of four indoor structures, totaling 12,000 square feet. The main house has a living room, dining room, theater, kitchen, wine cellar, library, a model train room, bedrooms and offices. The barn-shaped structure features a billiard room that opens on two sides to let outdoor breezes in. The guest house has two guest suites and the pool house features its own entertaining area.

Behind the main building is the outdoor kitchen and pergola with table, chairs and lounge area. On the left is the barn and guest house. On the right is a fountain, the pool house and an infinity-edge pool that draws your eyes out into the hillside wilderness preserve that borders the property.



This is a gated community, so there's little concern about human intruders. Mountain lions are another story, however, so the home includes a multi-camera security system that the homeowners use to watch for animals that may threaten their dog.

Music and more

Music is important to these homeowners, so David Vincent Design Owner Jim Zoyiopoulos designed a music system that covers 43 individual areas of the property.

"We set it up so they can keep the volume at a low level but still hear their music clearly as they walk around outside," Zoyiopoulos explains. "I've visited homes where you have to turn the volume up too high in one area so it can be heard in another. They didn't want anything like that." The idea, he says, is to enhance the beauty of the property, not overwhelm it or distract from it.

These homeowners are not big TV watchers, although they do enjoy a movie on occasion and they watch the nightly news. "They use the theater regularly," says Thompson. "It's their main TV viewing area."

To enhance the experience, Zoyiopoulos designed a system with a high-end, high-definition projector and super-comfortable theater seats. He included a movie server, which can hold thousands of movies on DVD or Blu-ray Disc®, plus DIRECTV®

with a high-definition DVR. The homeowners and their guests can access these same sources from 40 to 50" flat panel TVs in each of the bedrooms plus the barn, train room and billiards room. "We also gave them a wireless, battery-operated TV," Thompson adds. "It lives in the desk off the kitchen, but they can take outside and watch if they want to, with full access to their movie server and satellite system."

Tailoring the electronics to the owner

To give the homeowners all these options, Zoyiopoulos and Thompson turned to Crestron. "A lot of our clients will say, I don't need all of that. I'm not a techie. Well, it's the opposite of what you might think. The bigger the brain of the system, the less of your brain you should have to use," Thompson explains.

For example, Zoyiopoulos likes to combine lighting settings into pathways, and the intelligence of the control system makes using them very easy. Press a button on the nightstand controller, for example, and the system will light up a pathway from the bedroom to the bath. "If it's two a.m., the system knows that, and it will dim the lights to 15 or 20%, just enough to see," he says.

The Crestron control units give users the options they want in a particular place. Wall-mounted keypads in the pergola, for example, provide control of lights, music, two fountains, the radiant heaters, and a bug zapper. Bedroom keypads control lights, music, temperature and the TV and video system.



There's also a handheld remote in each bedroom. Five larger, multi-screen Crestron touch screens give the homeowners full control over the entire home system.

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Vanja Thompson,
General Manager of Carmel-based, David Vincent Design

One concern that the homeowners expressed was knowing when guests arrived on this large property. Zoyiopoulos set up two driveway sensors that trigger a chime on all keypads and touch screens when someone drives up. The system also sends an image of the car from an outdoor camera to each of the five touch screens, so the family members can see who is coming to visit.

At the request of one of the homeowners, Zoyiopoulos programmed each of the Crestron panels to anticipate what the user would next want to do and light up that button. “A simple example,” Zoyiopoulos says, “is if you walk into a dark room, the button for ‘lights on’ would be lit up and very easy

to spot. Or touch a button to turn on the music system, and then the source select lights up. It makes it easy even for guests who have never used this system before.”

The homeowners are wine lovers, and they have a large collection housed in a basement wine storage and tasting room. Wine is very sensitive to temperature and humidity, so Zoyiopoulos set up the Crestron thermostat to text each of the homeowners should any problem arise.

“One of the things I love about Crestron,” Thompson says, “is that their products are working constantly, even behind the scenes. Very few of our clients have any idea how many Crestron boxes they have or what the boxes do. They don't need to. They just work reliably and make things easy.”

“Often people don't take advantage of the nice things they have, because it's too much of a bother. Think about it. If you're in the middle of a project and the CD you want to play is in the other room, are you really going to stop and go get it? In this house, everything the homeowners most enjoy is always at their fingertips.”

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